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Some adult refugees learning English in Ireland: the motivational role of goal-setting and the European Language Portfolio.

Lorna Carson
PhD in Applied Linguistics
April, 2006

School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Studies
Trinity College, Dublin

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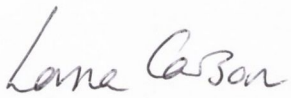

Lorna Carson

April 2006

Summary

This thesis examines how goal-setting in the L2 classroom, supported by the European Language Portfolio, contributes to learner motivation. It is argued that a sociocultural understanding of learning, and an approach to the provision of formal instruction which fosters autonomy, provides an appropriate theoretical framework for examining the concerns of second language provision for refugees. This study of motivation in the classroom is pursued by means of an empirical investigation of adult refugees learning English in Ireland. An ethnographic study, using multiple data collection techniques including participant observation, audio interviews and attitudinal questionnaires, is reported.

Chapter One explores some general theories of learning and instruction. It focusses on Vygotsky's contribution to our understanding of thought and language development. This discussion is applied to the context of the L2 classroom. Chapter Two looks at language learning for adult refugees. It has four concerns which are treated in turn. First, it examines the notion of learner autonomy and its contribution to L2 learning and pedagogy. Second, it reviews the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the European Language Portfolio as tools for supporting autonomy. Third, it discusses relevant issues related to adults and formal instruction. Fourth, it provides an overview of refugees in Ireland, and examines a best approach to provision of English language classes. Chapter Three looks at motivation and goal-setting in L2 learning. Various paradigm shifts in motivation research are discussed. It is argued that self-determination theory seems to offer a useful means of understanding motivated behaviour, creating a bridge between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and foregrounding three fundamental

psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. The relationship between goals and motivation is explored, and how this is enacted in a classroom setting.

Chapter Four outlines the design of the empirical study. Ethnographic methodology is first described in general, and then applied to the organization of this investigation. The various data collection techniques employed during fieldwork are presented. Chapter Five provides a description of fieldwork, which was conducted over a twelve-month period at Integrate Ireland Language and Training. An account is given of this organization, the site of fieldwork and the students who participated in the study. Their characteristics are presented, and an overview of the data collected is given. Chapter Six presents the data in a narrative account, divided into four cross-sections occurring at approximately equal intervals over the twelve-month period of fieldwork. Learners' experiences in the classroom were analyzed by examining generic categories and individual chronologies, along with counter-patterns. These are presented episodically and thematically. Chapter Seven summarizes the narrative account, and discusses the relevance of self-determination theory to the language classroom. It examines how this approach to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation offers a means of understanding both the positive and negative patterns of thinking and behaviour recorded during fieldwork. It concludes by asserting that the process of setting regular, personal goals in the classroom, supported by the European Language Portfolio, seems to create a positive classroom environment and learner outcomes.

Disclaimer

The findings of this thesis, and the opinions expressed in following pages, are entirely the author's, and do not necessarily represent the views of Integrate Ireland Language and Training, its directors, managers, teachers or students.

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Introduction

This thesis examines the dynamic of motivation in language learning. It focuses on how the process of goal-setting can help learners discover personal targets and exploit their own intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and on how this can be aided by use of the European Language Portfolio. The empirical investigation concerns a group of adult refugees learning English in Ireland.

My research is based on a theory of motivation as something which is not generated by external factors (teachers or learning materials), but which comes from within learners. The role of the teacher and educational institution is not therefore to devise ways of motivating learners, but to create ways of helping learners motivate themselves. In order to find out how to create the optimum conditions for learners to exploit their intrinsic motivation throughout the learning process, we need to understand more about the dynamic of individuals' motivation, such as factors which may have a positive or negative effect, the role of the teacher, the role of the learning environment itself, and the daily range of tasks and activities.

Psychologists have extensively investigated the role of motivation in human behaviour, and some of their findings have only recently been applied to language learning. This perspective understands motivation as an essential component of a set of life skills (rather than a narrower definition of language learning motivation) which together equip individuals to take responsibility for their own actions and adopt an attitude of ongoing self-appraisal, allowing them to become healthy and engaged members of society. The importance of these life skills for adult refugees studying the language of their host country cannot be overstated. The ability to develop a personal learning agenda and to work towards clear and optimally challenging goals is central to developing and sustaining such motivation.

Goal-setting is related to motivation. Although we have an innate curiosity and capacity to appreciate the enjoyment intrinsic in many tasks and activities, human behaviour is also purposive. We can envisage future outcomes, and plan how to achieve these. Studies of goal-setting suggest that selecting and achieving optimally

challenging personal targets contributes to our drive, sense of ability and achievement (Bandura 1997; Dweck 1986, 1999).

(i) Investigating motivation

Motivation is a difficult topic to investigate. It is not something tangible, although its outcomes can be observed. It is a construct which researchers have developed in order to facilitate its study. Motivation is not a new research topic. It has been an ongoing subject of investigation by philosophers and psychologists, managers and doctors, who have sought for centuries to work out what makes people do what they do. Indeed, the term has been used so frequently and in so many ways that it has lost much of its meaning and impact. However, despite the prominent role that motivation plays in each of our lives, and the vast amount of research that has been conducted into the topic, there is no single unifying theory that can be applied to motivation. Even within the classroom, there are no comprehensive models to explain all the facets of why people choose to work hard at certain learning tasks and to sustain interest in them.

The reason for the lack of any all-encompassing theory is mainly because of many competing psychological theories. Motivation cannot be directly observed; it must be inferred. It differs from person to person, depends on the context, and changes over time. Importantly, motivation is really only an overarching term for a wide variety of interlinked thoughts and actions, involving why people decide to want to do something, how long they try to succeed and how much effort they expend in the process. In other words, motivation refers to initiation, intensity and persistence in relation to specific actions. The construct of motivation is a combination of thought and action, and is associated with outcomes. People are not seen as motivated if they only think about doing something. Motivation comes when individuals take action.

The current understanding of motivation derives from empirical studies conducted mainly by cognitive psychologists (e.g. Deci and Ryan 1985b, Ryan and Deci 2000). Previously, the behaviourist approach had dominated the study of motivation, where motivation was understood as resulting from various drives or impulses. These could be altered by using reinforcements, conditioning or punishments. However, behaviourists ultimately failed to account for many puzzles in human motivation, such

as the interest people derive from doing certain tasks for their own sake, why individuals fail to engage with an activity which brings rewards and benefits, or why people change their mind.

Cognitive theorists contend that the choices made by an individual, conscious thought processes and feelings, lead to different types of motivated behaviour. These thought processes and feelings include the individual's belief in their ability to carry out the activity, how worthwhile and enjoyable the activity is, and how they deal with failure. They also acknowledge that motivation is influenced by the context in which individuals operate and the people with whom they interact. It is argued that the learning context influences the learning process, and that significant others, tasks, activities and materials all play an important part in shaping individual motivation. One important implication of this argument is that motivation can thus be either positively or negatively affected. The aim of this thesis is to discover how the learning environment can positively influence motivation.

(ii) Motivational role of goal-setting

Research on motivation in the classroom has highlighted the central role of goal-setting in encouraging and sustaining motivation. First, as stated above, human behaviour is purposive in nature. We have the ability to conceive and imagine future goals, which then give us the impetus and envisaged patterns to change our current behavioural patterns to meet such goals. Goals help learners develop personal learning agendas. Second, learning how to set regular, personal goals and achieve these brings about experiences of success, which subsequently lead to challenging goals, helping develop and sustain motivation over an extended period of time. Proximal subgoals help individuals go further than they perhaps may imagine at the outset. Third, setting and working towards goals requires learners to take responsibility for their agenda, and evaluate their progress. The ability to step back, assess progress, and account for both success and failure, contributes to healthy patterns of thinking and behaviour. I argue that these three facets of the goal-setting process contribute to the initiation, intensity and duration of motivation. Encouraging goal-setting in the learning environment and providing learners with materials which help frame explicit regular targets contribute to the development of motivation that can be appropriated by

learners and applied to contexts in the host community outside the language classroom.

Goal-setting does not come naturally to all learners, nor is it an automatic or easy skill. One means of helping students learn this process is the Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio (ELP). The ELP is essentially a language learning tool with two complementary functions. The reporting function enables learners to record their learning progress in a manner which facilitates mutual recognition across Europe, and provides concrete examples of language use and achievements inside and outside the classroom. The pedagogical function helps open up the process of learning to its users, enables them to plan, monitor and evaluate own progress, and promotes learner reflection and autonomy. Goal-setting and the development of learner motivation are facilitated by the ELP through helping learners visualize and account for their own learning progress, and work towards a learning agenda tailored to individual needs. The dynamics of this process and its effect on the motivation of learners are the subject of this empirical study.

(iii) Learner autonomy

This project's understanding of goal-setting and motivation both in and beyond the classroom can be found in the theory of learner autonomy. Interest in learner autonomy grew out of studies in the field of adult education, where it was recognized that the traditional understanding of teaching did not account for how learning takes place in the classroom and in life. This approach has since spread to other learning contexts and foreign language learning.

Learner autonomy involves learners taking an active role in their own learning, becoming aware of how they construct new knowledge, and being able to assess their own progress. The foundational text on learner autonomy is recognized as Holec's report (1981) for the Council of Europe, in which he describes autonomy as taking responsibility for one's own learning. Autonomous learning does not imply independent learning, but instead taking responsibility for one's own progress rather than assuming that someone or something else can do the work. Little (1991:4) defines learner autonomy as essentially "a capacity – for detachment, critical

reflection, decision-making and independent action". This capacity to stand back, consider and act according one's own needs is perceived as inherently motivating. As Ushioda (1996a:2) contends, "autonomous language learners are by definition motivated learners". Learner autonomy however is not simply a question of individual thought processes and responsibility, but also draws upon a sociocultural understanding of learning (Vygotsky 1978, 1986). The sociocultural paradigm is central to the conception and organization of this thesis.

Although the pursuit of autonomy is an important aim for all fields of education, language learning is a subject unlike any other. Language learning involves more than learning a set of rules, but instead involves taking on board a linguistic and cultural reality that is different to one's own. The inherently social act of language learning takes place through language use, and it is through trying to make themselves understood that learners acquire proficiency.

Learner autonomy has two important implications for the remit of this project, namely that learning is both social and political. Turning firstly to the social aspect of learning, it is important to stress that autonomous learners who gradually take responsibility for their own progress do not do so in a vacuum, independent of others. Indeed, as Little (1991) stresses, autonomous learning is essentially a capacity which involves interdependence, working in a social group and interacting with significant others in order to form meaningful interaction.

Secondly, learner autonomy has political implications for the power structures which make up educational institutions. Handing responsibility over to the learner is an act of empowerment, which, if not followed up by the learner assuming responsibility beyond the classroom, is meaningless. It is difficult to envisage individuals acquiring the capacity to account for their own actions and acting to meet personal needs in one domain (the classroom) whilst remaining dependent and purposeless in other domains (life outside the classroom). It is through acknowledging the social and political implications of learner autonomy that the link between learning and living can be elaborated. The artificial divide between classroom and real life crumbles, and what Barnes (1976: 81) defines as "school knowledge", knowledge which someone else presents, becomes "action knowledge", knowledge incorporated for use in real life.

(iv) Adult refugees learning English

The learner group selected for my empirical study were students at Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT). IILT is the designated body for providing and coordinating English as a Second Language for adult refugees in Ireland. It offers language classes across the first four of the six Common Reference Levels (A1 – B2). Part of IILT's pioneering approach to language provision for refugees is its use of the European Language Portfolio in all classes and all levels of proficiency. From the outset, students are assisted in developing individual learning agendas which respond to personal needs. Learners are introduced to the notion of goal-setting on first arrival in school. Teachers systematically place responsibility on learners to choose the content and modalities of the course, as well as encouraging ongoing self-evaluation and reflection on the learning process.

In Ireland, fluency in English is necessary for employment purposes, optimum social functioning and harmonious relations with the host community. Breaking down the artificial divide between the classroom and life beyond is vital in order to enable refugees to fulfill their potential in a new and demanding environment. Refugee learners bring to the classroom different needs and problems to other language learners. These needs require an approach to learning and training which will ensure their chances of becoming active, informed members of society equipped with skills for life.

Chapter 1
Formal instruction and language learning

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the nature and purpose of formal language learning. In the first half of the chapter, I discuss theories of learning and education. I briefly review four schools of learning theories, before turning to sociocultural theory in particular. I discuss Vygotsky's concepts of mediation and internalization, and how thought and language develop from social functions. I argue that learning is best understood as a socially embedded process. I then turn to some theories of education which consider the purpose of formal learning in individual development and society. The second half of the chapter applies these theories of learning and education to second and foreign language learning in an educational setting.

1.2 Theories of learning

Learning is part of the human condition, we learn from birth until death. Dixon (1999:39) describes us as "a learning species". Alan Rogers (2003:12) outlines the characteristics of human learning in its widest sense: it is embedded in daily living and activities, it is all-pervasive and active, it is something we have to do for ourselves, and it can be intentional or unintentional. In psychology, learning has been generally understood as a relatively permanent change in behaviour resulting from experience (Hergenhahn and Olson 2001:6). However, there have been many controversies regarding the process of this change and the nature of experience.

Theories of learning can be separated into four schools: behaviourist, cognitive, humanist and social (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:121). Behaviourism was the earliest approach to the scientific study of learning. The basic tenet of behaviourism is that various stimuli in an environment generate responses which are equated with learning (Watson 1913; Thorndike 1932; Skinner 1971). Repetition and reinforcement are regarded as valuable ways of enhancing learning.

Gestalt psychologists (Wertheimer 1912; e.g. Kohler 1929) challenged these assumptions. They criticized the atomistic approach of behaviourists and argued that the cognitive dimensions of human functioning are responsible for how individuals process stimuli and experiences (Hergenhahn and Olson 2001:272). The individual learner, with innate perception and insight, is responsible for learning, not the environment (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:129). The work of the Gestalt psychologists, and later publications by Piaget (1966) and Bruner (1965) shaped the current cognitive understanding of learning in which human mental faculties, such as information-processing, metacognition and memory, determine the processes and outcomes of learning.

The third approach to understanding learning is the humanist school, based on the work of Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1983). From this perspective, learning is understood as a human propensity to achieve individual maximum fulfillment. In Maslow's pyramid hierarchy of needs (1970), each level of physiological, safety, belonging and esteem needs contributes to the goal of self-actualization: to become all that the individual is capable of becoming (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:132). In this model, learning is a means of self-actualization, and part of healthy human functioning. Rogers (1983) saw a similar therapeutic value in learning, which he regarded as a means of contributing to an individual's development, based on self-initiated exploration and personal evaluation.

Fourthly, a social orientation to learning theorizes that learning takes place as individuals interact with each other and their environment, and from observing other people (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:134). Proponents of Vygotsky (1978, 1986) argue that the origin of cognitive functions is in speech and social interaction. In Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986), people learn through observation and interaction, in a two-way relationship between individuals and their environment. Other significant work in this field has been conducted by Lave and Wenger, whose model of situated learning describes learning as engagement in a "community of practice", where people are involved in joint activities in different communities over time (1991:98). Learning occurs in situations and by participation, and through movement from the periphery to the centre of the community (ibid.:29).

Behaviourism has been largely discredited in the study of learning, but its tenets are still apparent in some assumptions (for example, reward schemes in the classroom). Humanistic approaches to learning have had an impact on theories of education, which I discuss later in this chapter. The dominant cognitive research paradigm has also been criticized because of its metaphor of the human brain as a information-storing and processing device (Skinner 1987), and an atomistic approach which overlooks the importance of observation, participation and collaboration. Some social and observational theories have been dismissed because of a disregard for evidence of the individual, cognitive dimensions of learning. In the next section, I examine the work of Soviet psychologist Vygotsky, and argue that sociocultural theory offers a useful framework for understanding how individuals learn in a social context.

1.2.1 Sociocultural theory

Sociocultural theory, based on the work of Vygotsky and his colleagues Luria and Leont'ev in the years following the Russian revolution, offers a framework for understanding the relationship between human development, learning and social context. Vygotsky's work has been built upon in recent decades by, amongst many others, Rogoff (1990), Moll (1990) and Wertsch (1985; 1991).

For Vygotsky, human thought development is determined by language (Vygotsky 1986:94). His interest in learning was that it provides the social and cultural context for developing higher cognitive functions in individuals (Vygotsky 1978:84, 90), learning "awakens" intellectual processes. There is no body of knowledge or language to be passed on and assimilated by the learner. Instead, students engage in socially mediated activities through which they develop individual skills and an awareness of their own intellectual abilities. Vygotsky argued that learning was a socially situated activity, and what individuals can first accomplish in a social setting, they will eventually be able to accomplish independently.

Sociocultural theory is essentially a theory of learning and development which contends that higher order mental functions are developed through mediation between humans and their environment through the use of psychological tools. We use these tools to establish an indirect, or mediated, relationship between us and the world.

Vygotsky also argued that human development and language are socially determined, and occur first on an interactional, interpersonal plane, and subsequently on an individual, intrapersonal plane (Vygotsky 1978:27). In the following section, I explore the various elements of sociocultural theory outlined above, in particular the concepts of mediation and internalization, the social origins of thought and language, and the Zone of Proximal Development.

1.2.2 Development of higher order cognitive functions

Within sociocultural theory, the human mind is conceived as a system wherein lower order, biological or natural mental functions, such as involuntary attention or short-term memory, are transformed by mediation into higher order mental functions such as selective attention, logical memory, decision-making and planning. The higher forms of human mental activity are the products of the mediated, or indirect, relationship between humans and the world. The mediators are psychological tools or signs, employed by humans to organize and influence the world around them, passed on to and improved by future generations.

> The basic characteristic of human behaviour in general is that humans personally influence their relations with the environment and through that environment personally change their behaviour (Vygotsky 1978:51).

Examples of psychological tools or signs are numbers, mathematical systems, music, and most importantly, language. These psychological tools help us have an impact on our behaviour, and allow us the power to change and influence human activity. Leaving a reminder note, putting up our hand in class to attract the teacher's attention, using written sums or a calculator to multiply large numbers, all of these are mediated activities which use symbolic tools to augment our natural abilities (Vygotsky 1978:51).

Internalization is the concept used in Vygotsky's work to explain the dynamic of reorganization when lower, natural forms of behaviour are transformed into the higher order mental (or cultural) forms of behaviour that are uniquely human. The process of internalization is a transfer, or a reconstruction (Vygotsky 1978:56), from a social and external plane to an individual and internal plane. External behaviour is internalized

by individuals who then appropriate the psychological tools available for their own personal use. The concept of internalization underscores one of Vygotsky's key arguments, that human consciousness, and therefore thought, is situated in social activity.

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals. (1978:57)

Human mental processes do not lie dormant in our heads awaiting activation, but are "socially rooted and historically developed" (ibid.:57). Individuals move through stages in which they are at first controlled by the objects in their environment, then by others in this environment, and finally gain control over their own activities.

1.2.3 The social and intellectual functions of language

Vygotsky examined the relationship between human thought and language. He identified the two functions of speech as firstly social, and consequently intellectual. Unlike Piaget (1959), in whose theory of development cognition preceded language acquisition, Vygotsky plotted the human developmental process from social speech to internal thought. Speech is initially social, and then is internalized, becoming inner, intellectual speech or "verbal thought" (Vygotsky 1986:94). In the transition from social to intellectual, he outlined three different stages or structures of speech: social, egocentric and inner speech (ibid.:86). He argued that rather than human thought moving from the individual to a social plane, the development of thinking moves from the social to the individual (ibid.:35). Children's thoughts are initially nonverbal and their speech nonintellectual; their first words are social in nature and not a reflection of verbal thought (ibid.:91).

According to Vygotsky, the primary function of speech is social, for contact and interaction. Young children make extensive use of social speech during their play and as they organize their environment. As they develop, they begin to make use of what he termed egocentric speech, which comes to serves as the link between external

social speech and their developing internal, verbal thought. This is when children talk to themselves as an accompaniment to their actions. Vygotsky describes egocentric speech as "speech on its way inward" (1986:86), part of the child's organization of his behaviour. Egocentric speech can also be heard re-emerging in adults, often in moments of concentration. It differs from the social speech a child uses to communicate with others, as it is partly incomprehensible to anyone but the child, yet is still audible. Vygotsky believed that after egocentric speech, the child's speech turns inwards as its function changes from serving social purposes to serving intellectual purposes. The change from voiced to unvoiced speech marks the secondary function of speech, its intellectual function. Children begin to "think" words inwardly instead of producing them aloud, and egocentric speech branches off to become inaudible. Inner speech can be understood as the fragmentary and abbreviated unvoiced language, language for oneself, often without syntactic structure, which we produce for ourselves, inside our heads.

> Inner speech is to a large extent thinking in pure meanings. It is a dynamic, shifting, unstable thing, fluttering between word and thought, the two more or less stable, more or less firmly delineated components of verbal thought (Vygotsky 1986:249).

Vygotsky believed that inner speech was the child's most important psychological tool for organizing and structuring thought processes, "the speech structures mastered by the child become the basic structures of his thinking" (ibid.:94).

1.2.4 Scientific and spontaneous concepts

Vygotsky examined how concepts, or word meanings, develop in the mind. He distinguishes between spontaneous or everyday concepts, which evolve in everyday life, and scientific concepts which are the result of classroom instruction. He stresses that the mind faces different problems when assimilating concepts at school and when left to its own devices (Vygotsky 1986:158). Vygotsky gives the example of a student who is more capable of explaining Archimedean law than defining the concept of "brother": a concept which is deeply assimilated and part of the learner's personal experience, yet more difficult to explain than an abstract concept which is not part of his own experience (ibid.).

Scientific and spontaneous concepts show how learners have different attitudes towards word meanings which result from instruction, and word meanings which have evolved in their everyday life. The two different types of concepts are also represented in different ways in the consciousness, where spontaneous concepts, or practical and active meanings, have been assimilated and are fully appropriated by learners for their own purposes, yet are unsystematic and cannot immediately be elaborated upon. Although distanced from their own experience, scientific concepts are systematic and can be related to other concepts, allowing learners to reach a degree of abstraction and generalization:

> The difficulty with scientific concepts lies in their verbalism, i.e., in their excessive abstractness and detachment from reality. At the same time, the very nature of scientific concepts prompts their deliberate use, the latter being their advantage over the spontaneous concepts (ibid.:148).

The conscious use of word meanings, and the ability to reach a degree of abstraction and generalization, implies that scientific concepts can be controlled voluntarily by learners. Vygotsky argues that this distance and abstraction enables learners to see the world around them from a different point of view, and opens up new levels of consciousness and self-reflection:

> School instruction induces the generalizing kind of perception and thus plays a decisive role in making the child conscious of his own mental processes. Scientific concepts [...] seem to be the medium within which awareness and mastery first develop, to be transferred later to other concepts and other areas of thought (Vygotsky 1986:171).

Despite the value of scientific concepts, and their place in the classroom, Vygotsky stresses that direct teaching of such concepts tends to be impossible and fruitless:

> A teacher who tries to do this usually accomplishes nothing but empty verbalism, a parrotlike repetition of words [...], simulating a knowledge of the corresponding concepts by actually covering up a vacuum (ibid.:150).

The result of such direct teaching in the classroom is that learners only engage on a surface level with the contents of the lesson, just enough to demonstrate they have been paying attention. They do not internalize the concepts presented to them, and

will be incapable of using them for their own purposes in or outside the classroom. Classroom instruction cannot simply attempt to teach concepts which are completely beyond the learners' spheres of everyday life. Instead, instruction should aim to link learners' everyday knowledge to the new scientific concepts, a process which in turn will allow learners to apply their newly developing capacities for abstraction to previously unanalyzed everyday concepts. Lave and Wenger (1991) represent this relationship between spontaneous and scientific concepts as the relationship between the active or individual (spontaneous) and the understood or cultural; the mature concept or grasp of word meaning is achieved when both have merged together.

1.2.5 Zone of Proximal Development

The Zone of Proximal Development, or ZPD, is one of the most frequently applied concepts of sociocultural theory. However, the principle that learning is primarily social and not individual means that it is difficult to maximize the potential of Vygotsky's concept if it is taken out of a context of internalization and semiotic mediation.

Vygotsky developed the concept of a zone of proximal development whilst working on a critique of how children's intelligence was measured. In recent years, it has become an important tool for analyzing the relationship between development and learning. Thorne (2000:226) describes the ZPD as "a theoretical approach to development based on the close analysis of activity made possible through collaboration". Vygotsky (1978:86) defined the ZPD as:

> the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

Vygotsky also paraphrases this definition, "what the child can do with assistance today she will be able to do alone tomorrow" (1978:87). Little et al. (2002:12) identify three claims made explicit in Vygotsky's definition: that what we are able to learn is constrained by what we already know; that learning is led by interaction; and that the goal of all learning is autonomy, or "independent problem solving" (Vygotsky 1978:86).

The notion of a ZPD has a number of implications for our understanding of learning and instruction. Firstly, Vygotsky argued that good instruction is that which is aimed at the learner's ZPD, learning which is in advance of the learner's actual developmental level (1978:89). Learning within the ZPD is characterized by tasks which are too difficult for individuals to perform independently, but which can be mastered through collaboration with the teacher or more capable peers. Secondly, learning is not an individualized process, but instead is a social process which occurs as a result of collaboration and scaffolding. Scaffolding (Wood, Bruner et al. 1976) can be understood as the guidance provided by a teacher, which is gradually relinquished as the learner's ability to function independently develops, in order to allow the learner to develop autonomous control over the task once he or she has acquired the necessary skills. According to Vygotsky (1978:88), social context is a necessary prior condition for learning to occur, in which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them.

1.2.6 Activity Theory

Vygotsky's colleague Leont'ev formulated a theory of activity based on sociocultural concepts of tools and mediation. Some research in the sociocultural tradition has come to be described as activity theory (Thorne 2005). Activity theory can be defined as a set of basic principles which help describe and analyze human behaviour and discourse (Engeström 1993:64), with the aim of understanding the relationship between human cognition and the setting in which this occurs (Thorne 2005:394). Since the mid-1980's, it has been applied to a range of contexts including medicine (Engeström 1993), information technology (Nardi 1996) and education (Lantolf and Genung 2002). Engeström is the principal exponent of activity theory, and has built significantly on Leont'ev's original work. Within activity theory, the context is not just a setting for activity, but part of the unit of analysis of activity which includes three elements: the individual, different objects, and the surrounding community. Within this system, a historical perspective is essential: how an activity is carried out in time, and the progress made (Lantolf and Genung 2002:176). The unit of activity is holistic, but not harmonious; development can be examined through the study of disruptions and contradictions (Engeström 1993:71). Thorne (2005:394) states that

sociocultural theory and activity theory place emphasis "on using research processes and findings to enact positive transformations in problem situations".

Having briefly considered some of the main tenets and applications of Vygotsky's work, I now turn to a discussion of education and the formal language learning, where I examine how sociocultural theory has been applied to the field of L2 learning and studies of the L2 classroom.

1.3 Theories of Education

Learning and education are often used interchangeably (Rogers 2003:4). However, the two concepts are quite separate, whilst obviously interconnected: "[e]ducation must always include learning but not all learning is education" (ibid.). Learning takes place all the time, sometimes by design and sometimes by chance. Learning does not always take place in the context of the formal education, and sometimes, schools and courses may even hinder our innate propensity to learn. But theories of learning and knowledge shape every approach to education:

> Different approaches to learning and different forms of instruction – from imitation, to instruction, to discovery, to collaboration – reflect differing beliefs and assumptions about the learner – from actor, to knower, to private experiencer, to collaborative thinker (Bruner 1996:50).

1.3.1 The limitations of education

Formal instruction is frequently regarded by many people as unmotivating and futile, and often brings out the worst in most people at least some of the time: boredom, discipline problems and rebelliousness. Little et al. (2002:11) discuss the "sense of alienation" that learners often experience in formal learning environments. Dewey asks:

> How many students [...] were rendered callous to ideas, and how many lost the impetus to learn because of the way in which learning was experienced by them? How many acquired special skills by means of automatic drill so that their power of judgment and capacity to act intelligently in new situations was limited? How many came to associate the learning process with boredom and ennui? How many found that what they did learn so foreign to the situations of life outside the school as to give them no power of control over the latter? (Dewey 1938:26-27)

Somehow the fact of participating in formal education seems far from participation in the real world. "Formal instruction [...] easily becomes remote and dead – abstract and bookish, to use the ordinary words of depreciation" (Dewey 1916:8). Freire (1996:58) argues that the "transmission model" of instruction is the cause of this sense of alienation, based as it is on a "mechanistic, static" (ibid.) view of consciousness which transforms learners into receiving objects. This pedagogic model attempts to control the thinking and actions of students, leading them to adjust *to* the world, rather than encouraging them to act *upon* the world.

1.3.2 Purposes of education

Education is a planned endeavour designed to bring about change, and a process of "someone helping someone else to learn" (Rogers 2003:4). A traditional and common sense understanding of education is that it is concerned with the transmission of information. Students attend school as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge about the world, which they in turn will apply to their own lives.

> Books, especially textbooks, are the chief representatives of the lore and wisdom of the past, while teachers are the organs through which pupils are brought into effective connection with the material (Dewey 1938:18).

However, there is a fundamental flaw in this understanding of education. Bruner calls the transmission model an "impoverished conception" (1996:21): "[f]or only a very small part of educating takes place on such a one-way street – and it is probably one of the least successful parts". He notes that:

> in most matters of achieving mastery, we also want learners to gain good judgement, to become self-reliant, to work well with each other. And such competencies do not flourish under a one-way "transmission" regimen (ibid.).

Bruner argues that "education is not simply a technical business of well-managed information processing, nor even simply a matter of applying "learning theories" to the classroom" (1996:43).

> It is only in a trivial sense that one gives a course to "get something across" merely to impart information. There are better means to that end than teaching. Unless the learner also masters himself, disciplines his taste, deepens his view

> of the world, the "something" that is got across is hardly worth the effort of transmission (Bruner 1966:73).

Freire was a radical critic of the received wisdom of educational theory in the twentieth century. He criticizes the transmission model of education, and its metaphor of learners as receptacles to be filled by the teacher, in which education is likened to an act of depositing. He calls this the "banking" concept of education. In the process of depositing information, teaching and learning lose their meaning. Freire argues that this approach to education reduces knowledge to "a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (1996:53), and stultifies the creative and critical faculties of learners, who assume the role of passive spectator, rather than "re-creator" of the world (ibid.:56).

Instead of a "banking" concept of education, Freire proposes "the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world" (ibid.:60). Students in the problem-posing model are transformed from docile listeners and spectators to participants, critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. Education which liberates, rather than represses, our ability to act on the world, is found in thinking critically, not in the transfer of information. In problem-posing education, Freire explains, "people develop the power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world" (1996:64). Learners come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a work in progress in which they have a pivotal role to play.

Barnes' distinction between "school knowledge" and "action knowledge" (1976:81) helps shed light on the gulf which separates formal learning from the real world. According to Barnes, school knowledge is the knowledge which someone else presents to us. Learners may partly grasp this knowledge in order to satisfy the demands of the classroom, however it remains someone else's knowledge. Action knowledge occurs when learners begin to incorporate knowledge into their own view of the world on which their actions are based, and is used by learners for their own purposes.

Education then seems to be not just a matter of helping students obtain knowledge, or learn facts or skills. Educators and psychologists agree that it is also a process of

bridging the gap between the real world and the classroom, and helping learners, whether children or adults, develop their own mental capacities, think critically and participate fully in society.

Reflection, rather than accumulation of knowledge, becomes a vital concern of education if the transmission model is discarded. Dewey emphasizes the sound psychological basis of the phrase "stop and think" (1938:64). He associates thinking with self-control:

> Thinking is thus a postponement of immediate action, while it effects internal control of impulse through a union of observation and memory, this union being the heart of reflection [...] The ideal aim of education is creation of power over self-control (ibid.).

Bruner also observes that education must help learners appropriate for themselves the world around them:

> it is to teach him to participate in the process that makes possible the establishment of knowledge. We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather to get a student to think mathematically for himself, to consider matters as an historian does, to take part in the process of knowledge-getting (1966:72).

1.3.3 Individual and social growth

Bruner differentiates between two purposes of education, for individual growth as well as the ongoing renewal of a society's culture. Education is a means of helping individuals realize their own potential:

> it is unquestionably the function of education to enable people, individual human beings, to operate at their fullest potential, to equip them with the tools and the sense of opportunity to use their wits, skills, and passions to the fullest (Bruner 1996:67).

Education is also a means by which a culture maintains and develops itself, not just by simple reproduction, but also through furthering "its economic, political, and cultural ends" (ibid.). Education is vital for the continued existence and self-renewal of society (Dewey 1916:4), and an important means of imparting shared values and knowledge. The relationship between these two purposes, individual and collective, is "a complex pursuit of fitting a culture to the needs of its members and of fitting its

members and their ways of knowing to the needs of the culture" (Bruner 1996:43). Disagreements between those who advocate one of these two facets of education at the expense of the other is not new. Dewey wrote that "[t]he history of educational theory is marked by opposition between the idea that education is development from within and that it is formation from without" (1938:17).

The connections between individual growth and advancement of a society are evident in the Council of Europe's emphasis on education for democratic citizenship, and the importance of developing the individual's capacity for participation in the process of democracy (Forrester 2000). The social and political agenda underpinning education is clear in Holec's argument for developing autonomy in learning; the purpose of adult education should be to prepare the learners for participation in the democratic process (Holec 1981:1). He cites Janne (1977): "from the idea of man 'product of his society', one moves to the idea of man 'producer of his society'" (Holec 1981:1). This echoes Freire's argument for learners to become "re-creators" of the world (Freire 1996:56). Dewey believed this democratic process should start in education, rather than education preparing students for democracy (Dewey 1938:34). Barnes writes,

> We educate children in order to change their behaviour by changing their view of the world. We want to change the way they perceive the world they live in, not so that that they will carry out our purposes, but so that they can formulate their own purposes, and estimate their value (1976:80).

Individual growth is a process of becoming autonomous. Rogers believed this was a process of "actualization", an innate propensity which leads individuals to fulfill their potential (1959). He developed a model of a "Fully Functioning Person" (1961): where activities and thoughts were congruent with a sense of self, and actions were taken independently and freely. Autonomy is the goal of all developmental learning (Little 1999:14), and our development is incomplete until we can operate as an independent member of society. This can be seen from a very early age in children, who strive to be able to act independently without help or support from others.

Although autonomy is implicit in ontogenetic development, autonomy in formal education is a highly conscious process. One traditional notion of schooling has always been to turn children into young adults, ready for the demands of society. But

unlike childhood development, learners do not automatically develop autonomy in the classroom. Little (1999:15) explains that the pursuit of autonomy in formal learning contexts involves a decisive shift from the implicit to the explicit, which often challenges learners' expectations of their role as a pupil or student. Autonomy in learning involves critical thinking about the form and content of instruction on the part of the learner, and participation in each aspect of learning. Rogers (1961:168) argues that this quest for autonomy is a process, "a direction, not a destination".

1.3.4 Purposes of L2 instruction

It is perhaps helpful to approach the aims of the foreign language classroom on two levels, immediate and long-term. The long-term view of the L2 classroom is that it is an environment where learners gain proficiency in the target language, and become successful language learners. Success in language learning is generally understood as the capacity to communicate spontaneously and independently in the L2, and express personal needs or opinions in a range of everyday contexts.

The immediate view of the L2 classroom is that this process starts straightaway, and is not a future date suspended beyond the classroom walls. Bruner (1996:98) argues that "school is a culture itself, not just a "preparation" for it, a warming up". The classroom is not a drill for rehearsing before learners enter the 'real' L2 universe, the L2 world starts in the language classroom. The learning environment is in fact a microcosm in itself where L2 learners are L2 users who engage in authentic communication about tasks and issues through collaboration and interaction.

Learners who seek to gain proficiency in an L2 can only do so by starting to speak the L2, the paradox of learning (Vygotsky 1997:324). They will reach a stage of independent functioning in the target language by immediately trying to act independently, even if this is far from the case. The L2 classroom is thus an environment which must offer learners the opportunity to learn in the here and the now, but also beyond the walls of the classroom. In order for learners to become self-reliant in the target language, they must first become self-reliant in the classroom. Learning a second language entails grappling with partial knowledge in order to make oneself understood in a variety of situations, and involves negotiation and interaction.

L2 language instruction presents rich opportunities for encouraging the development of self-reliance and self-awareness within the classroom, as well as preparing learners for life beyond the classroom. In many ways, the foreign language classroom has an advantage over the classrooms of other subjects. The L2 classroom is a micro community of interaction, which comes into existence as soon as learners engage in authentic communication through the target language. The challenge however, is to convey the real nature of foreign language learning to both students and teachers who are products of a traditional, pseudo-communicative language teaching/learning model. Developing autonomy in the language classroom, responsibility and reflection, is by extension a means of developing autonomy in individuals beyond the classroom:

> Autonomy in an individual in [language learning] cannot be dissociated from his autonomy in other areas, and the problem that arises is one both of accountability on the part of the individual as between acceptance of the responsibility in language learning and in the rest of his affairs, and the problem, so far as society is concerned, of accountability as between educational responsibility and responsibility as regards occupation, politics, and so on (Holec 1981:34).

It is unlikely, as Holec goes on to explore, that individuals who have attained a level of autonomy in the classroom will exist outside the classroom in a state of dependence and passivity. If the aims of formal learning are essentially to enable individuals to make their own contribution to the world and to live their lives to their maximum potential through development of critical thinking and independent functioning (Dewey 1916; Dewey 1938; Bruner 1966; Rogers 1969; Bruner 1986; Freire 1996), then the foreign language classroom is surely one of the most appropriate fora.

1.4 Second and foreign language learning

The theories of learning and education described above in Section 1.2 have been applied to second and foreign language (L2) learning. In the following section, I examine some contributions of sociocultural theory to L2 learning, and the purposes of L2 instruction. I use the terms language acquisition and language learning interchangeably.

Behaviourists (e.g. Skinner 1957) regarded language learning as the formation of habits, through reinforcement by stimulus and response. Chomsky's critique (1959) of Skinner's stance was the first significant step towards a cognitive view of language learning, where innate mental propensities and processes are understood as responsible for developing all language proficiency. Current views of the L2 learner as language processor (Mitchell and Myles 2002:20) and as a social being who learns through participation and observation are not mutually exclusive (Lantolf and Appel 1994; Ohta 1995; van Lier 2000).

> *Social* and *cognitive* are all too often considered to be discrete categories, separated and isolated in an attempt to better understand their nature. If considered developmentally, however, the dialogic origins of cognition are evident because cognition itself is formed through social interaction (Ohta 2001:21).

Larsen-Freeman (2002:36) discusses two different understandings of success in language learning, which Sfard (1998:5-6) terms the acquisition metaphor and the participation metaphor. The acquisition metaphor deems successful learning to be the acquisition of increasingly accurate production compared to a native speaker. The participation metaphor sees success as the process of becoming an active member of a certain community.

1.4.1 Sociocultural theory and L2 learning

Sociocultural theory considers that L2 knowledge is constructed through social communication, or making meanings, in the target language: "language is not a unique product of just the individual's brain, but of a mind that actively draws on the interactive environment of the setting in which the language is used" (Ohta 2001:4). As language learners struggle to make themselves understood with peers and teachers, the dialogues they engage in contribute to their emerging L2 competence. This explains why language use is necessary for language learning: we need to communicate socially (or perform) before we attain any level of competence (Swain 2000:97). The view that knowledge of the target language is constructed through dialogue differs from Krashen's (1985) "comprehensible input" hypothesis and similar models of target language acquisition. Rather than dialogue in the target language constituting a bank of input to be acquired by learners and transformed into

output, the sociocultural approach understands collaborative dialogue as the mechanism by which social talk is transformed into internal competence. Learners are not simply exposed to the target language, but instead actively engage in creating meaning through working on problems and tasks which require social interaction.

1.4.2 Internalization and L2 learning

Vygotsky developed the concept of internalization to explain transfer and reorganization between the social and internal planes (cf. Section 1.2.3). Ohta describes internalization as "movement of language from environment to brain", and "the process by which the foreign language gradually becomes an interactive and cognitive resource for the learner" (2001:11). Although Vygotsky refers to children in his descriptions, the principle of internalization has been applied to the context of L2 instruction, for instance in a study of adults learning Japanese (Ohta 2001).

In the context of foreign language learning, communicating in the target language, no matter how limited, enables learners to internalize elements of the L2. Meaningful social interaction functions as the mechanism through which the transformation of the target language from an interpsychological, social plane to intrapsychological functioning takes place (Vygotsky 1978:57). Language learners appropriate this language for their own personal thought processes.

Vygotsky argued that the shift from the social to internal plane was accompanied by a shift from social speech to private (egocentric) speech and ultimately inner speech, or "verbal thought" (Vygotsky 1986:94). These ideas have been usefully applied to studies of L2 acquisition (McCafferty 1994). Ohta (2001:12) calls private speech "a window into the mind". Fragmentary private speech or "thinking out loud" has been understood as a indicative of L2 mental processes (Saville-Troike 1988). Inner speech has a vital role to play in language learning. Inner rehearsal seems to be dependent on language proficiency, and is preceded by vocalized rehearsals (MacKay 1992). The ability to imitate utterances silently in the target language appears to depend on prior oral practice (Ohta 2001:20), suggesting that language acquisition involves internalizing the language of social interaction.

1.4.3 *Mediation and L2 learning*

Dialogue has been shown to mediate and assist learning of conceptual content in a range of educational subjects such as science and history, including foreign languages (Barnes 1976; Swain 2000). A study by Holunga (1994) showed that adult language learners who verbalized their strategies (through social interaction and dialogue) in trying to produce accurate verb use were more successful than language learners who did not verbalize their strategies. (Swain 2000:109) suggests that this use of external speech mediated the students' language learning through helping them develop awareness of potential problem areas, set goals, monitor their language use and evaluate their overall success. This process of dialogue appears to have helped learners internalize correct grammatical forms.

The difficulty in appraising the role of dialogue in constructing L2 knowledge is that language is both the mediator and the product of knowledge construction. Foreign language learning is thus a particular case of mediated learning. Swain (2000:110) points out that this notion of "language mediating language" is more difficult to conceptualize than language mediating mathematics or science.

> As a tool, dialogue serves second language learning by mediating its own construction, and the construction of knowledge about itself. Internalization of process and knowledge is facilitated by their initial appearance in external speech (Swain 2000:112).

1.4.4 *Scientific and spontaneous concepts in L2 learning*

Vygotsky compares the relationship between the development of scientific and spontaneous concepts to that of the link between the acquisition of native and foreign languages (Vygotsky 1986:160). How we learn a foreign language is entirely different from how we learn our native language, because the word meanings we learn exist already as concepts in our L1. L2 classroom instruction is a systematic process which builds on the concepts already established. Our L1 acts as a mediator between the world of objects, and the new language we are studying. Spontaneous concepts mediate the acquisition of scientific concepts in the classroom. Part of the teaching process is to enable learners to make links between their everyday, practical, active knowledge, and the abstract, schooled knowledge of the classroom.

According to Vygotsky, scientific concepts are fundamental to developing self-awareness, consciousness and critical thinking; the ability to think beyond personal experience and allow abstract thought. Instruction was the driving force of development for Vygotsky (Daniels 2001:55). The challenge for the L2 classroom is to relate "school" knowledge about the target language, such as grammar, vocabulary, register, to the learners' everyday experience and active knowledge outside the classroom. It is two-way process of mediation, where everyday knowledge acts as a connector to school knowledge, which in turn develops learners' self-awareness and capacity for critical thinking, and allows learners to examine their everyday experience in a new light. According to Barnes (1976:83),

> [learners] will be both putting old familiar experience into words in order to see new patterns in it *and* trying to make sense of new experience by finding a way of relating it back to the old [...] the new knowledge helps them to discover new meanings in the old experience, and finding words for the old helps them see the application of the new.

The types of activities which usually take place in the language classroom are centred on the scientific concepts: correct syntactical constructions for questions or negations, how to express past or future events, questions of register and style. The difficulty with these concepts is that they are far removed from the everyday life of learners. Yet learners are usually incapable of explaining their grasp of everyday or spontaneous concepts. For example, native speakers of English would find it difficult to articulate the differences between the words "some" and "any", and would not necessarily see a link between the two words. The relationship between the two different types of knowledge lies in their degrees of abstraction and verbalization:

> The difficulty with scientific concepts lies in their verbalism, i.e., in their excessive abstractness and detachment from reality. At the same time, the very nature of scientific concepts prompts their deliberate use, the latter being their advantage over the spontaneous concepts (Vygotsky 1986:148).

1.4.5 ZPD and L2 learning

Whilst Vygotsky wrote about the role of the ZPD in children's development, it has been applied to a wide range of different learning environments, including L2 learning

(Ohta 1995, 2001). Thorne describes the ZPD concept as "a popularized and ostensibly accessible dimension of Vygotsky's work" (Thorne 2000:226) and notes that there has been a tendency to use elements of sociocultural theory in an otherwise incompatible approach to second language acquisition research. Applied to the context of L2 instruction, Ohta defines the ZPD for the L2 learner as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or a peer (2001:9).

Various studies of interaction between language learners, more capable peers and teachers suggest that learners perform at a higher level of competency through collaboration in groups of different skill levels. Studies have examined a range of L2 tasks, such as story reconstruction (Swain and Lapkin 1998), planning (Donato 1994) and pair-work (Ohta 1995). Ohta observes that the ZPD has an impact on task choice:

> The construct of the ZPD and its role in internalization shows that what is important is not just tasks, but tasks that provide a developmentally appropriate challenge combined with the availability of developmentally sensitive support (2001:270).

Learning in the ZPD is not guaranteed through collaboration (ibid.), but rather it seems that the combination of optimal challenge and scaffolding (Wood, Bruner et al. 1976) contributes to increased proficiency and subsequent independent functioning.

1.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed theories of learning and education, and applied these to the field of L2 instruction. I argued that sociocultural theory offered a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals learn for themselves within a social context, and how growth occurs from the outside in. I discussed how the human propensity for self-fulfilment and independent functioning can be encouraged in a classroom setting, equipping learners to participate fully in society. In Chapter 2, I examine how fostering autonomous language learning creates an environment where the type of learning described by Vgotsky is enacted, and within which learners are assisted to reach their full potential through taking control.

Chapter 2
Formal language learning for adult refugees

2.1 *Introduction*

The chief concern of this chapter is a discussion of adult refugees as language learners. There are a number of issues which need to be unpicked before this topic can be properly addressed. First, I discuss how learner autonomy has become the aim of some language practitioners and theoreticians, drawing on a sociocultural understanding of learning, and a humanist approach to education. I then examine a learning tool which has been designed to support learner autonomy in the language classroom, the European Language Portfolio. I proceed to review some of the general characteristics of adult learners before turning to the specific situation of adult refugees in Ireland. I close this chapter by arguing that the most useful way of leading adult refugees to proficiency in English is through an approach which fosters independent functioning, collaborative learning and reflection.

2.2 *Autonomy in language learning*

The shift away from a behaviourist understanding of learning (Chapter 1, Section 1.2), and towards a more humanist approach to education (Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2), along with a socio-cognitive understanding of how individuals learn (Chapter 1, Section 1.4), is related to a shift in L2 pedagogy, towards greater learner autonomy.

2.2.1 *Learner-centredness*

One of the key developments in pedagogy in the late 1980's was the principle that the learner, not the teacher, should be at the centre of the learning process (Nunan 1988; Tarone and Yule 1989): "language teaching will be more effective if teaching structures are made more responsive to the needs, characteristics and expectations of learners, and if learners are encouraged to play an active role in shaping their study programme" (Tudor 1996:1).

The learner-centred approach has been central to theories of adult education and lifelong learning. In a review of needs analysis for adult migrants in education, Brindley (1984:15) argues:

> [E]ducation should develop in individuals the capacity to control their own destiny and that, therefore, the learner should be seen as being at the centre of the educational process. For the teaching institution and the teacher, this means that instructional programmes should be centred around learners' needs and that learners themselves should exercise their own responsibility in the choice of learning objectives, content and methods as well as in determining the means used to assess their performance.

2.2.2 *Learner autonomy*

The learner-centred approach has been built upon and expanded by practitioners and theoreticians in the field of learner autonomy, who believe that the goal of teaching and learning should be to allow learners to take control of, and responsibility for, their learning in the classroom as a prerequisite for independent functioning in life (Little 1991; 1996; Benson and Voller 1997; Little 1999; Benson 2001). There has been much research in the last decade into autonomy in the language classroom (e.g. Dam 1995; Dam and Legenhausen 1996; Legenhausen 1999a; 1999b; Dam 2001), and many definitions of autonomy have been developed, viewing it both as a capacity (Little 1991), and as behaviour (Wenden 1991).

Within humanist psychology, Rogers (1961:170) defines autonomy in life as choosing personal goals, and accepting responsibility for oneself and one's actions. According to this view, being in control of one's actions and being responsible for their outcomes is a prerequisite for self-fulfilment. Esch (1996:35) describes autonomy as "a concept which arises from a fundamentally optimistic view of man according to which learners are able to be in charge of their own learning". Holec's definition of autonomy in language learning is concerned with "taking charge of one's own learning", "to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of learning" (Holec 1981:3). He argues that autonomous language learners are capable of determining the objectives of learning, defining its content and progression, selecting the methods used, monitoring and evaluating what is being learned. Some argue that developing autonomy has important political and philosophical ramifications (e.g. Benson 1997). The concept of teacher autonomy has also been developed, as the capacity to support learner autonomy (Little 1995; Aoki 2002). The various definitions of autonomy seem to share a core notion of autonomous learners as individuals who are in charge of their own learning, who take responsibility for their own learning process, and who are able to reflect on what and how they are learning.

Interest in autonomy has been sustained by a growing realization that these capacities, or behaviour, can contribute to greater linguistic proficiency (Legenhausen 1999a; 1999b), and learner motivation (Ushioda 1996b).

Little (1991) stresses that learner autonomy in the language classroom is not an automatic process, despite the fact that autonomy is the aim and ultimate result of most learning outside the classroom. The nature of a formal learning environment has accustomed learners to adopt a passive role and accept decisions made for them (Little 1996:206). Early practitioners in learner autonomy argued that learners need to be "psychological prepared" for a learner-centred mode of learning (Benson 2001:10). Learner training has become a subject of research (Wenden 1991; McDonough 1999), and many language programmes now encourage "learning to learn" strategies. Benson (1996:28) stresses that although considerable contributions have been made in theories of autonomy, and in understanding autonomy in language learning, there is still "no theory of *autonomous* language learning".

2.2.3 Autonomy in the language classroom

Practitioners' interest in autonomous language learning developed from a dissatisfaction with the processes and outcomes of language classrooms, which, whilst communicative in ethos, did not generate sustainable interest and participation. Danish secondary school language teacher, Hanne Thomsen recalls the beginning of her language teaching career, when she arrived "armed with an array of teacher-directed methods and techniques" (2000:71).

> I worked hard to come up with new and exciting things almost every lesson, and spent a lot of my time instructing the learners to do this and that [...] nearly all the initiatives were mine. I was "the owner of the projects", and through my enthusiasm I succeeded in making the learners take part in "my projects" with enjoyment and good results – or else I talked them into it. If I was away from school for a few days, it would honestly surprise me to discover how little work my learners had been able to do with their substitute teacher in my absence.

Thomsen analyses the reasons for this lack of motivation and participation, and concludes that "[my learners] were never allowed to take any of the initiatives or have any responsibilities for what was going on in the lessons, let alone their own learning"

(ibid.:72). She states that "simply organizing the lessons took up most of my energy", leaving little time to get to know individual learners (ibid.). Dam explains why she too decided to change her conventional language classroom:

> I was up against the tired-of-school attitude [...] as well as a general lack of interest in English as a school subject. In order to survive I felt I had to change my usual teacher role. I tried to involve the pupils – or rather I forced them to be involved – in decisions concerning, for example, the choice of classroom activities and learning materials (1995:2).

Learner autonomy literature stresses the key role of the teacher in fostering learner autonomy. Some teachers realize that their teaching does not necessarily lead to learning (Nunan 1996:14). This realization may lead them to "abandon any lingering notion that [they] can somehow guarantee the success of [their] learners by [their] own effort" (Little 1991:45). The teacher, as "expert", guides learners as negotiate the content and modalities of the course syllabus, contents and activities. Learners are "novices" and their perceived needs are not always in their own best interests; Cook gives the example (2001:232) of graduate students who wanted to do more and more of the same activity week after week, until their teacher suggested helpful alternatives. Cook points that that fostering autonomy in the classroom necessarily requires "well-trained and confident teachers who can handle this constant process of negotiation" (ibid.), and that the teacher has the complicated job of turning learners' initial preconceptions of language and of language learning into attitudes that are most effective for each particular learner; "the best thing I could do was to help them find ways of doing their own learning" (Nunan 1996:14).

2.2.4 Control in the classroom

The conventional language classroom generally entails the teacher selecting materials, initiating activities and feedback. Such an approach may hinder the learner's developmental potential – that is, the potential to attain independent functioning in the target language, and to apply what has been learned to everyday life (Little 1996:206), as well as diminishing learner motivation (Dam 1995:2). For example, Cook (2001:143) states that about seventy percent of the utterances in most language classrooms come from the teacher. Moreover, most of these utterances are not authentic speech acts between two interlocutors, and are generally instances of "teacher talk". This is characterized by a three move IRF structure – teacher Initiation,

student Response, teacher Feedback. Learners are limited to a small number of discourse roles, unlike the wide range of discourse roles they would normally assume outside the classroom. Frequently, the language classroom is seen as a forum for language practice, rather than language use (ibid.:147). This explains in part why learners may feel that the language classroom is distanced from their everyday lives.

Dam, in her account of implementing an autonomous approach to learning, recounts how she asks learners to set learning targets, decide class and homework activities and find materials (1995). From their first days of learning English, learners are given a significant amount of control over what is being learning and how they learn it. Little et al. (Little, Ridley et al. 2002:15) point out that "in motivational terms, the importance of this step can hardly be overestimated". The motivational effects of feeling in control of a process are considerable, as I discuss further in Chapter Three. If learners are never given the opportunity to take responsibility and share in the range of decisions of the classroom, they will remain in a powerless, ineffective and ultimately frustrating, position. Dam concludes that:

> the development of learner autonomy in the language classroom is a long and difficult process – especially for the teacher. "Letting go" and trusting in the learners' ability to "take hold" [...] seems to be the biggest problem (1995:78).

Encouraging learner autonomy entails learners generating the content of both the long-term syllabus, and short-term activities, in negotiation with the class and the teacher: "the curriculum now comes from within the learner, as a product of his past experience and present and future needs" (Little 1991:7). Taking the learner as the point of departure for planning, choosing content and implementing a language course seems to fit with the sociocultural understanding of how learners develop skills and proficiency. Designing a syllabus or learning activities without taking into account learners' prior knowledge is unlikely to enhance linguistic proficiency. Little (ibid.:13) argues that "learning is possible only to the extent that the learner is able to integrate the new information that is being offered with the sum of his experience to date".

2.2.5 *Learner reflection*

Little et al. (2002:17) argue that it is impossible for learners to accept responsibility for something, and then act on that responsibility, without thinking about what they

are doing. The kind of empowering and motivating responsibility described above begins as a group responsibility, accompanied by group reflection. The teacher and learners together make explicit their different objectives for the learning programme, negotiate content and activities, and evaluate their value and success. By providing scaffolding (Wood, Bruner et al. 1976) and corrective feedback, the role of the teacher in helping learners develop metacognitive proficiency in the target language proceeds by offering a simple reflective structure for learners. As Bruner (1986:127) has noted, "much of the process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one's knowledge". From a sociocultural perspective, reflection and assessment as a regular class routine precedes individual reflection and assessment. Vygotsky argued that all learning appears on two levels, firstly on a social level, and subsequently on an individual level (Chapter 1, Section 1.2.1). The development of thought occurs as individuals gradually internalize speech from social interaction for their own reflective purposes (Vygotsky 1978:56).

Writing is a valuable means of developing reflection in the classroom. Olson argues that it is not simply a reorganization of mental processes, but a new structure for learners to master, which affects cognition and consciousness (1995:97). This transforms the conventional view of writing as transcribed speech. Little et al. (2002:18) give three key reasons why writing is fundamental to reflection. Firstly, writing something down gives learners something to think about in the first place. Secondly, it is easier for learners to step back from their own words and thoughts when they are written down. Thirdly, written notes help learners work out what they really think, facilitating the reflective process. From a sociocultural perspective, writing is a key process of mediation (Vygotsky 1978:38), where learners use the tool of transcribing to organize and transform their behaviour (Chapter 1, Section 1.2.2).

Dam (1995:31) uses five key questions as an aid for learner reflection: "What are we doing? Why are we doing it? How are we doing it? With what results? What are we going to do next?". She also uses learner diaries as a tool to help learners move away from teacher dependency and take responsibility for their own language learning. Each learner has their own "English Diary" where they write about themselves in English. In the diary, learners record activities they have undertaken each day in class, note new words and expressions. They also use it for homework purposes, and write

their reflections (individual, group or whole class) on the day's work (ibid.:40). The diaries act as a medium of direct communication between teacher and learner. Thomsen also makes use of logbooks as process tools in her English and German language classes, where her learners write down their work agenda for each lesson, and both teacher and learner can keep track of individual work, and positive and negative experiences of class activities (2000:74).

2.2.6 *Using the target language in the classroom*

Studies of L2 acquisition within sociocultural theory understand the emergence of individual L2 language ability as contingent upon primary social interaction (Lantolf 2000). Language proficiency is also a procedural skill, and like other procedural skills in other domains (such as swimming, driving, playing the piano) it develops through use (Little, Ridley et al. 2002:19),"the necessary simultaneity of being and becoming". Using the target language for all interactions in the language classroom is therefore a fundamental step for learners to develop linguistic proficiency.

A classroom which fosters learner autonomy is characterized by the amount and variety of learner talk. Research suggests that formulaic expressions also provide valuable props for the learner, that are firstly memorized as unanalyzed chunks and then later analyzed and appropriated (Myles, Mitchell et al. 1998). The teacher is the "expert speaker" who provides much of this input.

2.2.7 *Collaboration and group work*

Exponents of learner autonomy make a distinction between independence and interdependence. Rather than individuals working in isolation, it is argued that learning is optimized when people collaborate in small groups.

> Autonomy [...] includes the notion of interdependence, that is being responsible for one's own conduct in the social context: being able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts in constructive ways (Kohonen 1992:14).

As we have seen, Vgotsky envisaged that learning occurred in a Zone of Proximal Development (1978:86). In this learning space, students are able to achieve much more in collaboration that they could do individually without help (Chapter 1, Section 1.2.5). He believed that good instruction is that which is aimed just ahead of the

learner's actual developmental level (1978:89); what learners can initially achieve through collaboration, they will later be able to achieve independently (1978:87). More challenging activities which learners collaborate on will eventually become activities which learners will be able to accomplish on their own. Interacting through group work stretches learners by leading and scaffolding their development in the target language. As they work on activities and try to express themselves through the target language, the genuine dialogues they engage in contribute to their emerging proficiency in the language they are learning (Swain 2000:97). Working in small groups allows learners the opportunity to assume a variety of discourse roles. Whereas previously learners may have been limited in their utterances to responses to teacher-initiated questions, learners in groups become questioners, helpers and critics through a much wider range of utterances. This seems to lead to more authentic and flexible discourse competence (Legenhausen 1999b).

2.3 Learner autonomy and the European Language Portfolio

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) was designed, among other things, to promote learner autonomy in the language classroom (Council of Europe 2004). It is a learning tool which is based on a tripartite structure of a Language Passport, Language Biography and Language Dossier, and can be adapted to different groups of students and target languages. There are currently seventy-five different versions of the ELP used across Europe. The Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* formed the basis for the conception and design of the ELP.

2.3.1 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001) is a product of the Council of Europe's language policy, which aims to improve the effectiveness of language learning, and to promote collaboration between its member states in the areas of assessment and learning materials. These aims are motivated by the Council of Europe's political, cultural and social priorities, to foster mutual understanding and respect, to encourage cultural and linguistic diversity, and to encourage plurilingualism.

The CEF is a handbook for language teaching professionals involved in planning, implementing and assessing foreign language curricula. The CEF defines language proficiency in the context of language use.

> Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of **competences**, both **general** and in particular **communicative language competences**. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various **conditions** and under various **constraints** to engage in **language activities** involving **language processes** to produce and/or receive **texts** in relation to **themes** in specific **domains**, activating those **strategies** which seem most appropriate for carrying out the **tasks** to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences (Council of Europe 2001:9, their emphasis).

The Council of Europe has increasingly emphasized the importance of plurilingualism in the field of language learning, and this has shaped how the construct of language proficiency is understood in both the CEF and the ELP:

> the plurilingual approach emphasises the fact that as an individual person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples (whether learnt at school or college, or by direct experience), he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact (Council of Europe 2001:4).

Plurilingualism entails the recognition of partial competences as part of a greater linguistic repertory, rather than the aim of native speaker-like mastery of one or two foreign languages. It also presupposes that language learning is a lifelong endeavour; teachers and institutions should help students equip themselves for learning situations beyond the classroom and for years to come.

The CEF is based on a common set of standards, or Common Reference Levels, which are elaborated in a taxonomic fashion. Its core is a Global Scale defining L2 proficiency in six levels. Three bands indicate the learner's proficiency level from Basic User (A) to Independent User (B) to Proficient User (C). Each band is subdivided into 2, creating a scale from A1 to C2. Unlike many graded scales, the CEF is distinctive by its use of the A band to indicate the least proficient learners. The

global scale uses positive statements of communicative ability to describe what learners at each level are capable of accomplishing in the target language ("Can do" statements). Language proficiency is defined positively in terms of what the learner *can do* rather than negatively in terms of what he or she fails to do or cannot yet do. The B1 global scale reads:

> Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans (Council of Europe 2001:24).

These six levels form the horizontal axis of the Self-Assessment Grid. The vertical axis is divided into five skill areas: listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing. Again, illustrative descriptors of each skill area at each proficiency level are based on "Can do" statements, for example the B1 reading descriptor is:

> I can understand texts that consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters (Council of Europe 2001:26).

The self-assessment grid with its thirty descriptors forms the basis for detailed illustrative scales in each of the five skill areas. Each skill area in the CEF is subdivided into further subskills; reading, for example, is subdivided into three illustrative skills: overall reading comprehension, reading correspondence and reading for information and argument. The B1 "reading for information and argument" descriptor is:

> Can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects. Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts. Can recognize the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail (Council of Europe 2001:70).

The extensive and detailed nature of the CEF's description of language proficiency, its statistically measured and evaluated scales and descriptors, and the clear need for such Common Reference Levels has led to the adoption of CEF levels by many

educational institutions, associations and publishers, including the Cambridge ESOL examinations and the Association of Language Testers in Europe.

2.3.2 Criticism of the CEF

The CEF is not without limitations and critics. Although providing a common basis for assessment is part of its remit, some researchers are unconvinced. Fulcher (2004) argues that the CEF should be treated as just one of a range of options for language assessment. He expresses concern about the widespread acceptance and imposition of the CEF scales. Fulcher is also sceptical about the CEF's political and social mandate, and the Council of Europe's agenda of European citizenship (ibid.).

Weir (2005) cites an unpublished study (Alderson, Figueras et al. 2004) which has concerns about the choice of synonyms in the descriptors. Gaps and inconsistencies in the skills, subskills and descriptors are noted. Multiple verbs are used to describe tasks, for example, eight different verbs are used to describe comprehension: understand, scan, monitor, obtain, select, evaluate, locate and identify. Alderson et al. question whether these are intended as synonyms or indeed represent "real differences in cognitive processes" (Weir 2005:16).

However, there have been few empirical studies of the impact of the CEF. Criticism seems to have focussed thus far on inadequacies in the area of language testing. It remains to be seen whether these perceived weaknesses will be addressed. The contribution of the CEF to facilitating transparent proficiency levels has been welcomed by the wide range of organizations which have adopted its scales.

2.4 European Language Portfolio

Different models of ELP have been designed for a range of learner groups and target languages, from primary to adult learners. Each model requires the accreditation of the Council of Europe's Validation Committee, and its three parts, Language Passport, Language Biography and Language Dossier, are compulsory components. The ELP was piloted in a variety of learning contexts in fifteen member states across Europe from 1998 to 2000, and the report of the Pilot Project led its author to conclude that it is a "valid and innovative pedagogic tool" (Schärer 2000:7). By the time of the 2004

Consolidated Report on its implementation, the ELP had been used in 36 different member states, and by some 1,250,000 language learners working with 64 different versions (Schärer 2004:5).

The self-assessment grid and "Can do" statements of the CEF are key elements of the ELP. Whereas the CEF is designed as a reference tool for practitioners, the ELP has been designed as a pan-European tool for language learners. The ELP portal on the Council of Europe's website outlines its two main aims:

a) to motivate learners by acknowledging their efforts to extend and diversify their language skills at all levels;

b) to provide a record of the linguistic and cultural skills they have acquired (to be consulted, for example, when they are moving to a higher learning level or seeking employment at home or abroad) (Council of Europe 2006).

The Common Reference Levels of the CEF, described in Section 2.3.1 above, form the core of the European Language Portfolio. The ELP responds to the need for "a format in which language learning and intercultural experiences of the most diverse kinds can be recorded and formally recognized" (Council of Europe 2001:5). The ELP has two parallel functions, a reporting function, and a pedagogical function. The reporting function is concerned with recording learning outcomes in a recognizable and widely accepted configuration, responding to the need for transparency and comparability in assessment and certification. The pedagogical function makes the learning process as transparent and effective as possible, to foster autonomous and reflective language learning. The ELP, then, is a tool designed to facilitate both process, or "working", and product, or "showcase" (Kohonen 2000:7).

The three obligatory components of the ELP contribute to its dual summative and formative functions. The Language Passport has a summative function, enabling learners to record briefly their achievements and proficiency in the different languages which make up their linguistic repertory, including formal qualifications, extended periods of L2 use, and a self-assessment of proficiency for each language. It provides a complete overview of the owner's linguistic competence at a specific point in time, and can be continually updated. The Language Biography is used for target-setting and ongoing self-assessment, and is designed to help the learner to fix goals, plan

learning activities and reflect on the learning experience. It is "the main pedagogical device" which facilitates the learner's involvement in planning and reflection (Kohonen 2000:5), and it encourages the learner to be explicit in stating what he or she can do in each language. The Language Dossier contains evidence of the owner's work, and functions as a "showcase" for elements of learning which they feel best represent their abilities and skills in the target language. These three parts are contained in a folder which passes into the ownership of the learner. Ownership has been an important part of the ELP's philosophy, whereby the learner not only takes complete possession of his or her Portfolio, but also has ownership of the wider process of learning. This seems to be a popular notion with learners (Ushioda and Ridley 2002).

There are many ways of implementing this tripartite structure in the classroom; these are discussed in a guide to the ELP for teachers and teacher trainers (Little and Perclová 2001), drawing on extensive accounts of ELPs used in different countries and with different learner groups. The rationale of the ELP is not that it should be an added extra introduced during specific and limited sessions, but instead that it should be used as the basis for curriculum planning, implementation and assessment. The ELP is designed to help develop capacity for independent language learning; it is a "tool aimed at promoting learner autonomy" (Kohonen 2000:5), and as such, leads to the gradual transformation of learning habits rather than the reproduction of previous behaviour.

> [F]or reflective language learning to become a habit for students, it is necessary to use the ELP frequently in language learning, integrating ELP work with language curricula. The ELP should not be seen as "extra" work to be done occasionally, it should be an integral part of language learning (Kohonen 2000:30).

The Council of Europe's emphasis on plurilingualism and partial competence in the CEF is also evident in the ELP. All linguistic competence is valued and worth recording, including languages learned outside the classroom and without formal qualifications. The Language Passport encourages learners to record all aspects of language which make up their linguistic profile, including heritage languages, and partial and specific language competence.

2.5 Self-assessment

The self-assessment grid is fundamental to the ELP. The Language Passport is based on self-assessment, and is not just a means of recording formal qualifications. The checklists of the Language Biography are designed to encourage regular self-assessment, not teacher assessment. The contents of the Language Dossier are determined by the learner, who decides which documents are most indicative of his or her language proficiency. The ELP's two key aims of increased autonomy and transparency are understood to be realizable through the process of self-assessment. Essentially, self-assessment involves learners being able to determine their own proficiency level, what they can do, rather than this being determined for them by their teacher.

This shift from the teacher to the learner also involves a shift from norm-referenced assessment to criterion-referenced assessment (Little and Perclová 2001:54). Whereas most learners have become accustomed to the bell-shaped curve of norm-referenced test results, the "Can do" statements of the ELP are determined by whether each learner can complete the criterion-referenced task. This has enormous implications for learner motivation, particularly as norm-referenced testing unavoidably labels half of the class as below average.

Both summative and formative functions of assessment are found in the ELP's approach to self-assessment. The Language Passport and Dossier are designed to show the learner's proficiency at a specific moment in time, and may be used to indicate that the learner is qualified for a course or job. The process of selecting which documents are indicate of his or her ability, and the ongoing process of determining whether he or she can complete the tasks described in the checklists, are examples of formative self-assessment. This process performs a diagnostic function, helping the learner become aware of areas which may require attention. Little and Perclová (2001:55) call this "reflective self-evaluation".

2.6 Goal-setting

The process of goal-setting is an inevitable outcome of the diagnostic function of self-assessment described above. Learners, as they assess their own proficiency levels,

will encounter tasks that they can complete in certain conditions, and tasks they are unable to complete. The Language Biography provides a framework for responding to these needs, based on checklists of "Can do" descriptors. Different versions of the ELP have different checklists according to the learner group. Checklists ask students to prioritize, to set specific dates for the completion of targets, and to determine to what extent each target has been achieved, e.g., *"With a lot of help, with a little help, with no help"*; "! this is an objective for me, !! this is a priority for me"; *"I can do this under normal circumstances, I can do this easily"*.

2.7 ELP Research

Feedback from the ELP Pilot Project (Schärer 2000) and the Consolidated Report (Schärer 2004) claims positive effects on the learning process, learning outcomes and learner motivation (Schärer 2004:5). Increased learner motivation was reported, as well as "invisible outcomes" such as commitment and ownership of the language learning process, and the willingness to take risks in order to cope with communicative tasks (ibid.:15). Ushioda and Ridley (2002) report positive experiences from teachers who implemented the use of the ELP in the classrooms, and noted enhanced professional knowledge on the part of those teachers. Some criticism of the ELP has been made because of a lack of empirical research; studies of its implementation have been mainly small-scale and short-term. Teachers have criticized the time needed for implementation, and lack of training in its potential uses (Alkema, Kaldewaij et al. 2000). Little (2002:187) points out that from a pedagogical viewpoint, "the ELP is a tool that can be used well or badly, which means that empirical methods of evaluation cannot prove that the ELP is a good or a bad thing in itself". He argues that evaluation of the ELP can only be made in terms of the "effectiveness of implementation" (ibid.).

2.8 Adults and learning

Having discussed the concept of autonomy in language learning, and one learning tool which is designed to support autonomous behaviour, I now discuss some broad characteristics of the subgroup of language learners who are the subject of my empirical research. These learners are adult refugees, and I firstly examine some issues in adult education in general, and in refugee education in particular, before discussing the specific case of language learning for adult refugees.

There is a powerful myth that adults lose their ability to learn as they age (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:140). There is also an assumption that intelligence is measurable, and different people have different quantities of intelligence. Although this has been the subject of much controversy (e.g. Gould 1981), many adults adhere to such myths and assumptions. Recent years have seen a widening of how intelligence is understood, with concepts such as multiple intelligences (Gardner 1975) and "emotional intelligence" (Goleman 1995). It appears however that intellectual ability is relatively stable throughout most of adulthood (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:158), despite beliefs to the contrary. The processing capacities of adults to enter, store, retrieve and transmit information do appear to alter with age, particularly in the area of long-term memory. However, this may be counterbalanced by the benefits of prior knowledge and learning experience (Flavell 1970).

Rogers (2003:43) argues that there seems to be little difference between the way children and adults learn. Both show the capacity for learning by participation and experience. Brookfield (2000:89-101) writes about higher stages of adult development, and describes four developmental areas which are responsible for growth in adults: dialectical thinking, practical logic, metacognition and critical reflection. Rogers (2003:45) however argues that these are not solely characteristic of adult development, and are sometimes evident in children.

Merriam and Caffarella (1991:118-119) review the developmental characteristics of adults in relation to learning from three perspectives: physical ageing, psychological change and sociocultural factors. They conclude that the changes of physical ageing have no effect on learning. Psychological changes, in terms of intellectual and cognitive development, and personal life changes or transitions, do have an impact on learning. Sociological factors such as occupation, social status and different life roles have some effect on development in adulthood.

2.8.1 Adults and language learning

There are a number of variables which affect how adults learn in general, and these variables affect the process and outcomes of learning a second or foreign language.

Age is often seen by adults as an obstacle to language learning. There has been much research about age as a factor in language learning, and to what extent there is a critical period for language acquisition. The consensus view seems to be that the younger people are when they start learning a language, the better they will do in the long run (Singleton and Ryan 2004). However, research suggests that "the age at which one first encounters a second language is only one of the determinants of the ultimate proficiency level attained" (Singleton and Lengyel 1995:4).

2.8.2 How adults approach formal instruction

Studies of adult education report a number of barriers related to a return to formal instruction (Merriam and Caffarella 1991:35). These barriers include dispositional or psychosocial obstacles (ibid.:88). Adults who return to formal education often feel they have regressed "back to school", and experience feelings of insecurity and inferiority when they return to the classroom and are faced with a teacher who is academically "superior" to them, and may also be much younger than them. Adults may have very rigid ideas about how to learn, their own intelligence, and the best way to learn (Brindley 1984). Adults too may exhibit a "tired of school" attitude often seen in younger learners, especially if they have had negative experiences of formal education in the past. A review of adult education in Ireland has explored the experiences of those who return to the classroom later in life, concluding that "anything that gives you a *'school feeling'* is simply not acceptable" (Coleman 1998:56). Adults reflecting on their experiences of returning to classroom learning commented that they felt as if they were returning to their adolescence, and forced to assume the role of "pupil",

> Nobody said to me, 'What do you want?' They were too into the teacher and pupil thing. (Woman in her thirties) [...] It was just like school. I just froze when he corrected me and I never went back after that. (Man in his forties) [...] It was a school situation – desks and she sat at the top. (Woman in her forties) (ibid.:58).

Yet most adults in the classroom seem to construct for themselves the role of "student" (Rogers 2003:54). Some adults seem to create a strong construct of the teacher as the authority figure, and an authority, and suppress their adulthood and maturity. They may also expect a school-like atmosphere, including a teacher teaching from the front of the class, whilst learners learn sitting in rows taking notes (Merriam

and Caffarella 1991:22). They may find it difficult to work with adults who have a different construct of their student role.

> We have all found adult students who expect to be taught, who want a page of notes, who find discussion amongst equals a waste of time [...] they are constructing themselves as students in a way which will conflict with their own self-construct as adult. They see themselves – in this context – in need of guidance. They deliberately choose to subordinate their adulthood to a more dependent role as student in order to achieve their purpose (Rogers 2003:59).

A range of expectations engendered by this constructed role of student may lead some adults to expect an experience similar to their previous schooling, others may expect an entirely different situation with a less formal approach. Although the student role is often constructed out of some elements of childhood, adults bring their own maturity, wider horizons and knowledge of self to the process of language learning (ibid.:57).

> Other adult students however will equally purposefully construct themselves more as adults than as traditional students – more autonomous than children in their control of their own learning, keen and expecting to bring all their experiences to the learning situation, to build on rather than deny what they already possess (ibid.).

2.8.3 Adults and autonomy

I have already stated that interest in autonomy in language learning developed from the field of adult education (Section 2.2.1). From the 1970s, the Council of Europe called for a new approach to adult language education by providing opportunities for adults to develop abilities which would enable them to become more active and responsible citizens. Lifelong learning and self-directed learning were investigated, in an effort to help adults master a set of broad skills, and to experience freedom and control in their lives (Benson 2001:8). This development occurred against a backdrop of social change in the 1970s, and the growing realization that training adults for narrow applications would not be sufficient for the new demands of society. Holec's report to the Council of Europe in 1981 on autonomy in language learning discussed progress as no longer a correlate of material success, but also "in terms of an improvement in the 'quality of life' [...] based on the development of a respect for the individual in society" (1981:1). The humanist influence (Chapter 1, Section 1.2) in adult learning and instruction is evident in the emphasis placed on self-regulation and

personal growth, based on Rogers' concept of self-actualization (1983) and Maslow's psychology of needs (1970).

The emphasis on autonomy is not without controversy. Rogers (2003:61) points out that many adults do not want autonomy, they prefer the dominant construct of student in need of guidance, "they construct studenthood and adulthood differently and frequently at odds with each other. They prefer to place greater emphasis on the student element as traditionally interpreted" (ibid.). Rogers disagrees with the emphasis on autonomy and learner responsibility, arguing that it is at odds with some adults' self constructs. However, autonomy is still the dominant goal for, and approach to, adult education (Usher, Bryant et al. 1997:94), "[t]he fundamental requirement is that the adult must take, and must be allowed to take, responsibility for his or her own learning" (Illeris 2002:20).

2.9 *Adult refugees*

Having discussed some of the main characteristics of adult learners and issues surrounding adult instruction, I now turn to the specific group of adults who are the chief concern of this thesis: adult refugees learning English in Ireland. I summarize the political and legislative framework of immigration in Ireland, and discuss some factors which have an impact on language instruction for refugees. I close this chapter with a short discussion of how a best approach to English language classes for adult refugees seems to be based on the principles of autonomy and learner control.

2.9.1 *Refugees in Ireland*

The definition of a refugee in Article 1:A (2) of the UN Geneva Convention, as amended by the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (OHCHR 1951) is:

> Any person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of her/his nationality and is unable, or owing to such a fear, is unwilling to avail her/himself of the protection of that country; or (any person) who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of her/his former habitual residence, is unable, or owing to such fear is unwilling to return to it.

The influx of asylum seekers to Ireland came later than in neighbouring European countries. Historically it has been a country of emigration rather than immigration

where the "prevailing official attitude towards foreign immigrants [...] was one of caution, if not outright opposition" (Mac Éinrí 2001:6). Ireland has been an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic monocultural state with very few minorities and foreign-born residents of non-Irish extraction (ibid.:7). The Irish government has therefore had to create immigration and integration policies and infrastructures in a very short space of time with little previous experience in the field (Torode et al. 2001:49).

Statistics from the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner in Ireland (ORAC 2006) show only 39 requests for asylum in the early nineties, but a dramatic increase occurred in subsequent years. In 1996 there were 1,179 asylum applications, and in 2002 this had increased to 11,634 applications. Numbers have since decreased; there were 4,265 applications in 2004, and 4,323 in 2005. Approximately 15% of applicants are granted refugee status, either in the first instance or upon appeal. Those whose appeal is unsuccessful may apply for leave to remain. The following table (Irish Refugee Council 2006) indicates the top countries of origin of individuals awarded refugee status, by number of applications (at first instance and at appeal), in 2004:

Top countries of origin of refugees in 2004	
1. Somalia	8. Afghanistan
2. Iraq	9. Ukraine
3. Sudan	10. Russia
4. China	11. D.R. Congo
5. Iran	12. Albania
6. Zimbabwe	13. Moldova
7. Nigeria	14. Kosovo

Table 2.1 Origin of refugees in Ireland, 2004

The Irish government signed and ratified the 1951 UN Geneva Convention (OHCHR 1951), and its 1967 Protocol. The Refugee Act of 1996 (Government of Ireland 1996) provided for the incorporation of the Convention and Protocol into domestic Irish courts. Asylum seekers are people who arrive in Ireland and ask to be recognized as refugees according to the definition in the Geneva Convention, and await consideration of their application. If their application is refused, they are allowed to lodge an appeal. Refugee status grants people rights and entitlements similar to those

of Irish citizens, in accordance with the 1996 Refugee Act. Amongst other entitlements, they are able to work or start their own business, apply for housing, social welfare and travel documents, avail of vocational training and English language classes at Integrate Ireland Language and Training.

Convention refugees are those who fulfil the Geneva Convention definition, and are granted refugee status in Ireland. Programme refugees are those who have been invited to Ireland on the basis of a request to the Irish government by an international body such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. The earliest programme refugees were a group of Hungarians in 1956, followed by Chileans, Vietnamese, and most recently, Bosnians and Kosovars admitted in the 1990s (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:53). Programme refugees have the same entitlements as Convention refugees, and have been granted the right to settle in Ireland as a result of various Government decisions. Individuals who do not meet either criteria, and whose claim to asylum fails, may apply for "leave to remain". Leave to remain is granted for example to the parents of Irish citizen children (see Appendix I for details of subsequent changes in legislation). The Minister for Justice grants these cases on an individual basis, and individuals granted leave to remain are normally granted the same rights and entitlements as refugees. These three categories of successful applications are granted what is commonly termed 'Stamp 4' on their Garda[1] National Immigration Bureau card (GNIB or Green Card). This card regulates the rights and entitlements of non-nationals by designating differently numbered Stamps.

2.9.2 Refugee status

Being a refugee is a difficult and complex life situation (Torode, Trish et al. 2001; Fong 2004; Furuto 2004). Refugees come to Ireland from a changing mosaic of countries in turmoil and upheaval, fleeing war and persecution. The asylum process is long and complicated, marked by "fear and uncertainty, frustration and distress" (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:61). Once registered as a refugee, a whole new range of issues is encountered as people try to find their feet in a new and alien society (Fong 2004; Maguire 2004).

[1] *An Garda Síochána* is Ireland's National Police Service

Once individuals are granted refugee status, they have considerable bureaucracy to navigate including: annual police registration; Social Welfare; confirming eligibility for a medical card and finding a suitable GP; finding accommodation and arranging rent supplements or registering on waiting lists for Local Authority Housing; obtaining an International Travel Documents; accessing education, training and employment. They also have the difficult task of integrating into Irish society, whether on a temporary or more permanent basis.

The reaction of the majority population of Irish nationals has an effect on the minority population of refugees. Much of the Irish population is largely uninformed about the reality of immigration to Ireland, their responses have been "ambiguous, complex and varied" (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:59). Some may be suspicious and resentful of the arrival of what appear to be large numbers of outsiders and foreigners, especially those of different race and ethnicity. There has been considerable media coverage of the new arrivals to Ireland, some of it negative (Mac Éinrí 2001:6). There is confusion about the terms used: refugees, asylum seekers, economic immigrants and illegal immigrants (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:35), and there have been fears that refugees are welfare-dependent and exploiting Irish society. Refugees easily feel excluded and isolated (Collins 2002:37), and may perceive discrimination against themselves, even if this is not the case, which can in turn generate feelings of resentment towards the host community (Little 2000:10). This process of marginalization means refugees may not feel they belong in Ireland, leading to closed ethnic groups and ghettoization in Irish cities (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:59).

Refugees, like other minority populations on the fringes of society, are vulnerable to loneliness, anxiety and depression (Fong 2004). Without sufficient proficiency in English, some refugees may never access employment or anything more than minimum wage jobs, and become victims of the disadvantages which accompany poverty, such as low self-esteem, loss of dignity, mental and physical health problems. This vicious circle leads to a culture of dependency and prevents refugees participating in processes of Irish society. Refugees, unlike other minority groups, are individuals who have fled their homes and taken the risk of seeking new life elsewhere (Summerfield 2002; Furuto 2004). The psychological and emotional effects

of this disruption mean they may not have positive attitudes to the host community. Some may be relieved to settled in Ireland and look forward to founding a new life here; others may be angry that they had to leave their country and look forward to returning there at the first possible opportunity.

2.9.3 Language

Language is the one of the most serious obstacles for refugees who arrive in Ireland (Collins 2002:35). A Home Office report in the UK (Home Office 1999) states that language is the key to integration, and that knowledge of English is closely related to an immigrant's ability to obtain full economic and participation in the host community (Casciani 2003). Accessing interpretation services can be a problem, and is often unsatisfactory. Refugees have complained about partiality, insensitivity and lack of accuracy (Fanning and Mac Éinrí 1999). Gaining an adequate mastery of English is therefore one of the most important steps they can take to take control of their lives, to integrate into their new community, and to access training and employment (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:73). Initial ability to learn will in part be aided by typological similarities between the refugee's L1 and English (Little 2000:11). Learners also have to adapt to the norms of discourse types and communicative behaviour in Ireland, such as formal discourse and modes of politeness.

2.9.4 Gender

Women refugees face a number of specific problems linked to their gender (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:63). They are mostly responsible for the care of their children and perhaps more elderly relatives. Culturally, some come from countries where men make all their decisions for them, and where women are not accustomed to speak out or to express their own needs and wishes. Sometimes their husbands or male relatives may control their activities, and the women may require their permission to leave the house. Pregnancy brings a range of issues such as cultural incompatibilities, for example with medical staff, obtaining appropriate support (such as female doctors, antenatal care, culturally specific provision of bathing facilities). Often, being a woman will have meant less access to education in their home country, and some may have lower levels of literacy than their male counterparts.

2.9.5 Education and employment

Refugees enter Ireland with a variety of different employment prospects. Some refugees in Ireland are highly trained professionals in their home country (Collins 2002:28), others may not have completed primary education and may be semi-literate. Some may have experience of strict, rote learning; some may never have encountered female teachers; some may come with negative experiences of school. Their experience of language instruction is likely to be mixed, ranging from those who will have already learned English in a formal setting to those who will have picked it up naturalistically during their asylum process. Some may speak a number of different languages; others may only speak their mother tongue. In some cases it will be necessary to "unlearn" aspects of their knowledge of English.

2.10 Language provision for adult refugees

> Refugees [...] come from many different countries, have diverse reasons for flight, are of all ages, family status and social backgrounds, and have diverse needs (Torode, Trish et al. 2001:70).

Although there are a number of different methods and approaches to language instruction, it is difficult to see how anything other than a learner-centred approach to language learning would be appropriate for adult refugees. Past language provision in Ireland for refugees has included mainstream EFL classes alongside European students, ill-suited to the needs of immigrants. Language instruction for Vietnamese Programme refugees in past decades was severely lacking and inappropriate (Maguire 2004), provided by special educators trained in teaching the deaf.

The literature cited throughout this chapter suggests that the best approach to language learning for refugees will lie with the learners: their perceived needs, their reasons for learning English, their interests and ambitions. In the case of adult refugees from a wide range of different cultural and educational backgrounds, taking learners' own needs and goals into account appears to be the only satisfactory means of determining their knowledge base as they enter the learning process, and ensuring effective learning occurs out of their existing knowledge.

The Milestone project (Milestone ELP 2006) has developed versions of the European Language Portfolio (Section 2.3.3) for adult migrants. It is the result of collaboration between partners from five different European countries, seeking to develop autonomous learning in migrants learning the language of their host community. Milestone ELPs have been developed in English, German, Dutch, Swedish and Finnish.

Milestone ELPs have the same tripartite structure as all other ELPs. However, there are some differences deriving from the needs of its specific learner group. The Language Biography is divided into two sections. The first relates to the owner's previous language learning and intercultural experiences, and the relationship between the learner's previous life in their country of origin, and their new life in the host country (Milestone ELP 2006:6). The self-assessment grid common to all ELPs asks learners to assess their proficiency in all the languages they know; a simplified self-assessment grid is also included for learners with low proficiency. The first section of the Biography includes an assessment of "Past, Present and Future", comparing activities, interests and hobbies of the learner in their home country and in the new host country, as well as questions about the learner's experience of speaking the language of the host community since their arrival. The second part of the Language Biography contains checklists of "Can do" statements, as well as some specific components tailored to the needs of adult immigrants, asking learners about their expectations, degrees of cultural awareness and learning strategies.

I argued in Chapter 1 that the aims of formal instruction in today's society are to encourage the development of critical thinking, personal fulfilment and participation in society. This is facilitated by helping learners take control of, and responsibility for, their own learning and actions. Having reviewed the characteristics of adult refugees as a learner group, an approach which fosters independent functioning and control over learning seems to be most appropriate for adult refugees in the language classroom. The Milestone ELP appears to offer a means of supporting these capacities. It is in the interests of all that refugees become active, English-speaking members of Irish society, not passive recipients or an excluded minority.

2.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the principles of learner autonomy in the language classroom, and practices which seem to foster critical thinking, increased participation, and independent functioning in the target language. Research suggests that autonomous learning in the language classroom leads to more effective and motivated language learning, because specific learner needs and interests generate content and activities. Classrooms which encourage autonomy in learners not only help them to be more effective language learners, but also allow learners to see that the language classroom is not removed from their daily reality, and relevant to their everyday needs and goals.

The European Language Portfolio seems to be a valuable tool in creating an environment for autonomous learning, and providing a scaffolded approach which helps learners take decisions, make self-assessments and develop their own learning agendas. In the context of adult refugees learning the language of their host community, this approach seems to be the most appropriate means of equipping learners with the linguistic skills necessary to cope in a new environment, and to participate in a new culture. My empirical study investigates the use of the European Language Portfolio by adult refugees in an environment designed to foster autonomous learning.

In Chapter 3, I review some key studies of learner motivation in second and foreign language learning. In particular, I examine how goal-setting has an influence on motivation. I discuss some psychological theories which may help shed light on how a learning environment which encourages regular goal-setting activities might be conducive to enhanced learning outcomes as well as general well-being.

Chapter 3
Motivation and goal-setting in L2 learning

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews research in motivation and goal-setting in psychology and in language learning. Interest in motivation in foreign language learning emerged in Canada in the 1960s. A social psychological research agenda dominated the field for a number of years until developments in mainstream psychology brought new cognitive and sociocultural perspectives to the fore. A revival in interest in L2 motivation research occurred in the 1990s, focussing on context-bound, process-oriented research. The past decade has been particularly active, and much empirical research has been conducted drawing on definitions of motivation and goal-oriented behaviour traditionally beyond the scope of second language acquisition studies, accompanied by a reconceptualization of the construct of motivation.

3.2 Gardner and the social psychology of language learning

Research on motivation in second language learning has its roots in the work of Robert Gardner and his associates in Canada. In the 1960s, the Canadian government was keen to support and fund research into how relations between its English-speaking and French-speaking communities could be mediated. As in many other developed countries, the results of language learning programmes were typically disappointing. Social psychologist Gardner contended that language learning was the way to mediate between the two speech communities, and that for this to occur successfully, students required a certain openness to the culture of the other group. He stressed that learning a second language is unlike learning any other school subject; it is not just a case of internalizing codes and rules. The difference is that languages are inherently bound up with society and culture. In Gardner's opinion, the key was in learners' attitudes towards the other speech community. Successful students were those who were able to identify with the characteristics of the target language community.

Gardner and his associate Lambert had been involved in over a decade of studies investigating attitudes and motivation in second language learning by the time they published their seminal article on the topic in 1972 (Gardner and Lambert 1972), which seemed to indicate that motivation was correlated with achievement in language learning. The social psychology of language emerged as a field of study in its own right, and Gardner's work continued to influence L2 motivation research for the next few decades. Gardner and Lambert hypothesized that successful learners of a second language were those who were "psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behaviour" which characterized members of the target language group (ibid.:3). Gardner exerted his influence in three areas: the idea of orientations in language learning, the socioeducational model of learning, and the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. I deal with each of these in turn, before discussing the legacy of the social psychological perspective, and the criticism channelled at his work as L2 motivation research began to change direction in the 1990s.

3.2.1 Integrative and instrumental orientations

Gardner and Lambert used the idea of orientations to explain why students chose to learn the language of the target speech community. The term "integrative orientation" describes learners who seek to learn more about or identify with the other group: "if the student wishes to learn more about the other cultural community because he is interested in it in an open-minded way, to the point of eventually being accepted as a member of that group" (Gardner and Lambert 1972:3). "Instrumental orientation" describes learners involved in language classes for practical reasons: "if the purposes of language study reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement, such as getting ahead in one's occupation" (ibid.). It was hypothesized, supported by empirical studies, that "an integrative orientation would sustain better long-term motivation needed for the very demanding task of second-language learning" (ibid.), in other words students who demonstrated an openness to the target language community and a desire to integrate to some degree were more likely to achieve proficiency in the target language.

3.2.2 *Socioeducational model of language learning*

Gardner's socioeducational model of language learning (1985a) makes a distinction between orientation to learn a second language, and motivation in the learning process. The socioeducational model comprises five variables: integrative and instrumental orientation, two types of attitudes – integrativeness and attitudes towards the learning situation, and motivation. Integrative and instrumental orientations are deemed to act as motivational antecedents, operating on a goal level. Gardner specifies that the two types of attitudes measured are related variables which only support learner motivation. Attitudes alone, like orientations, are not responsible for achievement, although they do have an indirect effect.

In this model, motivation is the dominant variable which accounts for achievement. Gardner defines motivation as a combination of three components, "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner 1985a:10). He contends that all three components are required to capture the essence of motivation. Specifically, he terms the combination of these three variables "integrative motivation". In a review of Gardner's theory of motivation, Dörnyei concludes that this view of motivation is that of a "central mental 'engine' or 'energy-centre' comprising effort, want/will (cognition) and task-enjoyment (affect)" (Dörnyei 1998:122). Masgoret and Gardner elaborate on this definition of integrative motivation in their meta-analysis of Gardner's studies, "the integratively motivated student is one who is motivated to learn the second language, has an openness to identification with the other language community, and has favorable attitudes towards the learning situation" (Masgoret and Gardner 2003:174).

3.2.3 *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery*

In their empirical work, Gardner and his associates used a battery of tests called the AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery), designed to assess what seemed to be the principal affective aspects involved in learning a second language. It consists of a self-report questionnaire with nineteen separate subscales measuring factors such as attitudes towards the learning situation (evaluation of the course, evaluation of the teacher), integrativeness (attitudes towards the target language group, interest in

foreign languages), motivation (intensity, attitudes towards learning the target language, desire to learn the target language), and orientations (instrumental and integrative orientation). There is not one definitive AMTB; its items can be developed to suit the particular learner group under investigation. Continued and well documented use of the AMTB in a wide variety of contexts by a range of researchers appears to demonstrate its psychometric properties (Gardner 2001:7).

3.2.4 Gardner's legacy

Gardner's work was influential in setting the L2 motivation research agenda. The social psychological tradition dominated the field for much of the past forty years with a rather uniform view of motivation as a construct with mainly attitudinal/social characteristics. One reason for the sustained interest in this conceptual perspective is the extensive empirical work conducted over the years, as well as the widespread popularity of the AMTB as a psychometric measure of attitudes and motivation. The dichotomy between instrumental and integrative orientations, and the concept of integrativeness were popular "one size fits all" theories which seemed to account for many of the initial questions about motivation in language learning, and surveys of motivation studies consistently mention Gardner's theoretical framework, albeit sometimes without sufficient definition of his concepts.

This lack of sufficient definition was one reason for some of the criticism that was channelled at the social-psychological approach. The emphasis on the importance of attitudes towards the target language and its speech community led to the assumption that integrative orientation was somehow a superior form of motivation. Learners who were involved in language learning for instrumental, professional purposes, without professing any interest in the target language community, were assumed to be less successful learners than those who professed an integrative orientation. Gardner's work was challenged by researchers who believed it implied a hierarchy of goals and motivation which undermined the important role played by instrumental orientation in language learning (Williams and Burden 1997:117). Further criticism ensued, questioning whether such a simple dichotomy could account for the range of motivations for learning a second language. It was also argued that Canada was a particular case, with two prestigious world languages co-existing in a somewhat

imbalanced form of bilingualism. Attitudes to learning French or English in Canada could not be compared to learning English in China, or learning Swedish in Germany.

Gardner claims that such criticism is based on a serious misunderstanding of his work, where orientation and motivation have been confused. He stresses that orientations, or reasons to learn a second language, do not necessarily reflect motivation in learning process. Rather, learners profess instrumental or integrative *motives* to learn a second language. Masgoret and Gardner (2003), in a meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates, emphasize that these motives exist at a goal level, and are not part of the core component of motivation. Instrumental and integrative orientations function as motivational antecedents, helping arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals, whether these be of an interpersonal or a practical nature (2003:175). The authors also defend against accusations that an instrumental orientation is less correlated with success in language learning. "Nothing in the model claims that an integrative orientation will be more highly related to achievement in the second language than an instrumental orientation" (ibid.:176).

Part of the criticism of the social psychological approach focussed on the recurring theme of integrativeness, in the guise of integrative orientation, integrative motive and integrative motivation. Dörnyei (2003a) mentions the frequent appearance of these terms in discussions of motivation, which he contends are often undefined by other authors. In his review of L2 motivation theory and research, Dörnyei broadly defines integrativeness as "a positive interpersonal/affective disposition towards the L2 group and the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community", a kind of "psychological and emotional identification" (ibid.:5). Gardner argues that this identification is directed towards the target language community, but other researchers would contend that although this may be the case in Canada, in many countries learners have no experience whatsoever of the target speech community. Instead Dörnyei posits that in such situations, learners identify with the cultural and intellectual values and stereotypes associated with the language itself (such as is the case with English learners in Hungary or China), perhaps even projecting a self-concept of their 'ideal self' speaking the target language (ibid.:6). In both cases, the notion of integrativeness is that of attitude which favourably predisposes the learner and supports the development of motivation.

A further cause for dissent was the social psychological definition of motivation. Whereas Gardner was chiefly interested in the intensity and make-up of learner motivation during the language learning process and its contribution to achievement, the source of motivation was relatively unimportant to him. Ushioda, in a monograph on the role of motivation which appeared during the so-called renaissance in motivation studies, describes Gardner's concept of motivation as "curiously constrained in its descriptive scope, and effectively little more than a snapshot of strength of feeling and purpose" (Ushioda 1996a:8). The new emphasis on cognitive models in mainstream psychology led second language acquisition researchers to ask different questions. The source of motivation was of utmost importance to cognitive researchers, for understanding the source of an individual's motivation could explain why motivation increases or decreases. Understanding this could in turn help researchers discover how to improve low motivation in the language classroom.

Another perceived limitation of Gardner's definition of motivation was the relationship between motivation and achievement. In the socioeducational model of learning, motivation is described as the dominant variable which accounts for achievement, or success in learning the target language. The other variables, such as attitudes to the learning situation and integrativeness, are weaker correlates. This central role of motivation in accounting for achievement means that emphasis in such motivation studies is placed on predicting successful learning. As Ushioda argues,

> this assumption that we are only interested in predicting language achievement narrowly constrains our conception of what language learning motivation is. It is difficult to see how we can apply such a concept to an understanding of the motivational processes that characterize the whole of learning experience and sustain involvement in learning (1996a:9).

If motivation leads to achievement, how we initiate motivation in the first instance, and also, what effect will success, and therefore also failure, have on motivation? It is this "dynamic cyclical relationship" between motivation, the learning experience and success (ibid.:10) that has become of interest to researchers and practitioners in language learning, and specifically, how to mediate this relationship, encouraging positive motivation and minimizing negative experiences.

3.3 Reconceptualization of motivation

By the 1990s, the social psychological research agenda was increasingly being called into question. Research in the field of motivational psychology had already turned to cognitive studies, investigating the role played by thought processes and beliefs in instigating and maintaining motivation in everyday activities. The study of motivation in education had followed the lead of other psychological studies in areas as diverse as management, health and sport. Ames and Ames, in their introduction to a volume of research on motivation in education in 1984, describe the "current zeitgeist of cognitive views of motivation", in which "motivation primarily is viewed to be a function of a person's thoughts" (Ames and Ames 1984:1). L2 motivation studies soon followed this zeitgeist, and emphasis switched from attitudinal studies, previously the crux of L2 motivation research, to studies investigating why individuals made behavioural choices, why they failed in some activities and succeeded in others, and how they accounted for losses and failures. Attention focussed on thoughts and beliefs, and specifically those which transform into action (Ames and Ames 1984:1; Dörnyei 1998:118). Constructs such as achievement motivation, attribution theory, self-determination and self-efficacy emerged to challenge received ideas of motivation in language learning.

The reconceptualization of L2 motivation in the 1990s is generally recognized as coinciding with the publication of an article in the journal *Language Learning* by Crookes and Schmidt in 1991, entitled "Motivation: Reopening the research agenda" (Crookes and Schmidt 1991). Their article seemed to appear at a time when many other researchers in different institutions around the world were also beginning to question the received wisdom of motivation research in language learning. In 1994, a succession of articles appeared in *The Modern Language Journal* by a series of well-known authors (Oxford 1994; Dörnyei 1994a; Gardner and Tremblay 1994a; Dörnyei 1994b; Gardner and Tremblay 1994b) Since then, there has been an abundance of publications on the topic which have continued to broaden the scope of motivation studies. The result of this burgeoning research field has been a surfeit of motivation theories, rather than a lack of them.

Dörnyei (1998), in a survey of L2 motivation, distills three underlying themes shared by the publications which emerged during this period. He notes firstly a conscious effort to complement the social psychology approach with concepts from mainstream psychology which until then had not received sufficient attention in second language acquisition research. This effort was not a rejection of Gardner's legacy, but rather an attempt to incorporate other aspects as well as the social dimension of learning a foreign language. Secondly, researchers were trying to conceptualize motivation on a micro level, in order to explain specific language learning behaviours and problems. There was a call for more situation-specific research. Within a context-bound framework, how motivation is stimulated is of utmost importance to both researchers and teachers, in order to discover how best this might be encouraged. Thirdly, there was an explicit call for more practical, classroom-based research, which might be of use to practitioners as they sought to understand and deal with student motivation on a daily basis (Dörnyei 1998:124-125). In a later review of motivation studies in language learning, the same author believes that "the key assumption that energized this boom in research was that the classroom environment – and, more generally, the contextual surroundings of action – had a much stronger motivational influence than had been proposed before" (Dörnyei 2003a:11).

3.3.1 A qualitative approach to motivation

Ushioda was among the first authors to call for a shift in focus in L2 motivation research in the early 1990s, arguing that the dominant quantitative paradigm in social psychology excluded many of the motivational processes experienced by students when learning a foreign language. Ushioda contended that the study of L2 motivation had been too long restricted by its definition as a static quantity or level to be measured (Ushioda 1996a:7). A qualitative approach to motivation however defines it as patterns of thinking and belief which underlie activity and shape students' engagement in the learning process, and allows investigation of aspects of motivation inaccessible by a quantitative methodology. Ushioda stresses that it is only by understanding the dynamic aspects of motivation that we can hope to understand why motivation decreases at certain times and under certain circumstances, and how these motivational low points can be mediated and avoided (Ushioda 1996a:10).

In 1991 Ushioda began a small-scale empirical project investigating the qualitative content of learners' motivational thinking, arguing the value of incorporating a qualitative approach as a complementary paradigm, particularly for its potential to approach motivation from a fresh perspective (Ushioda 2001:96). She chose a small sample of university level learners of French in Dublin and used open-ended and semi-structured interview techniques in a study aimed to explore learners' own working conceptions of their motivation, and their perspectives of how their motivation changed over time. Her study identifies a number of patterns of thinking that seem effective in sustaining engagement and optimizing involvement in learning a language. The study's findings suggest that successful learners are those who maintain positive motivational thought structures by focussing on enjoyable experiences and not dwelling on failure. Positive patterns of thinking included attributing success to belief in personal ability and quality, whilst attributing failure to external temporary shortcomings, as well as avoiding demotivating learning conditions and concentrating on a personal learning agenda (2001:120).

3.3.2 A process-oriented approach to motivation

Dörnyei has been one of the chief proponents of the value of approaching motivation as a dynamic construct which changes over time, which he terms "a rather neglected aspect of motivation", attributing the lack of coherence in motivation research to insufficient awareness of temporal changes in motivation (Dörnyei 2003a:17). Discussing the lack of stability in learner motivation, he recalls that "learners tend to demonstrate a fluctuating level of commitment even within a single lesson, and the variation in their motivation over a longer period (e.g. a whole academic term) can be dramatic" (ibid.). In order to capture this temporal variation, Dörnyei has made repeated calls for a process-oriented approach that can account for the ups and downs of motivation over time.

Dörnyei's process model of motivation distinguishes between three different stages of motivation: the preactional, actional and postactional stages. He stresses that the different stages are characterized by different motives, in short this means that learners' motives change and evolve as they become more involved in the learning process. Students may start learning a language for a specific motive or goal, and then

find as they progress that this develops into a different goal. Learner motivation shows different characteristics according to where students are in the learning process. His model breaks down the overall motivational process into separate time segments organized along a progression in which:

> initial wishes and desires are first transformed into goals and then into operationalized intentions, and how these intentions are enacted, leading (hopefully) to the accomplishment of the goal and concluded by the final evaluation of the process (ibid.:18).

Williams and Burden provide a model of motivation, in which they draw together range of theories into a detailed framework of factors embedded in social context and social interaction. They offer the following definition of motivation:

> a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal (or goals) (1997:120).

Similar to Dörnyei's process model, they distinguish between different stages in the motivational process: the learner's reasons for doing something, deciding to do something and sustaining the effort, or persisting (Williams and Burden 1997:121). They stress that the model is non-linear, with each stage feeding into the other stages. Beyond the basic tripartite structure, Williams and Burden also incorporate a number of external and internal factors which affect each stage of motivation. Internal factors include the learner's intrinsic interest in the activity, the activity's perceived value, self-confidence, attitudes and sense of agency. External factors include the influence of significant others, interaction with significant others, and the learning environment. Both this model and Dörnyei's process model distinguish between two different phenomena which are often bundled together, i) the learner's reasons for wanting to do something (or motives), and ii) what is actually involved in acting in a motivated way.

3.4 Self-Determination Theory

Research from the wider field of general psychology seemed to offer a new slant on understanding learner motivation in the language classroom, particularly Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan 1985, Ryan and Deci 2000). Deci argues that

researchers have been asking the wrong questions about motivation, "how can people motivate others", instead they should ask, "how can people create the conditions within which others will motivate themselves?" (Deci 1995:10). Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a general theory of motivation and personality which focusses on the extent to which human behaviour is autonomous or controlled, that is, whether it is self-determined or imposed by external forces. SDT assumes that individuals are actors with innate tendencies to seek out challenges and integrate new experiences into their sense of self. The social environment is therefore of vital importance in either encouraging individuals to act in a self-determined manner, or in thwarting our natural tendency to control our own psychological growth. When individuals act in accord with their own will, they act autonomously. However, external factors such as rewards and imposed goals have a controlling influence on individual behaviour. It is the operation of will, "the capacity to choose behaviours based on inner desires and perceptions" (Deci 1980:5) that is the basis of self-determination. Within SDT, there are two general classes of motivated behaviour: (i) self-determined or chosen, mediated by internalized motives and decisions, and (ii) those which are not chosen but which appear to have been conditioned, motivated by controlling factors.

Self-Determination Theory is based on a number of sub-theories, essentially based on the hypothesis that humans have three inherent psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Satisfying these three needs is a prerequisite for promoting intrinsic motivation. Deci describes autonomous behaviour as self-governing, the autonomous individual acts freely and volitionally in accord with himself. Autonomy is the opposite of control. "When autonomous, people are fully willing to do what they are doing, and they embrace the activity with a sense of interest and commitment" (Deci 1995:2). The second fundamental need is for competence, the need to feel effective in one's environment. Deci asserts that feelings of competence result when individuals take on, and in their opinion, meet optimal challenges (ibid.:66). Feeling competent depends on our ability to see linkages between our behaviour and its outcomes. The third innate need is for relatedness, people do not develop in isolation but in interaction with a social world. Deci suggests that people need to integrate a sense of self and the world around them in order to feel truly themselves (ibid.:82).

3.5 *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation*

Deci suggests that the key to understanding why people work hard at some activities and not others may be found in the concept of intrinsic motivation, "the process of doing an activity for its own sake, of doing an activity for the reward which is inherent in the activity itself" (1995:21). Intrinsically motivated activities are those which are undertaken "simply for the feelings of excitement, accomplishment and personal satisfaction they yield" (ibid.).

Psychologist Csikszentmihalyi writes about a concept he calls 'flow', the subjective feeling of enjoyment which leads to feelings of concentration, control, elation and eventually loss of self-awareness as the individual becomes totally engrossed in the activity in question (Csikszentmihalyi 1978:213). Intrinsic motivation comes into play when the individual decides autonomously that certain goals are rewarding and worth striving for. Imposed extrinsic motivation is a closed system where these rewards are already imposed on us. We know some activities are meant to be fun or rewarding as they are predetermined by other influential actors as fun or rewarding. The possibility of triggering intrinsic motivation is much greater as it is potentially available in a whole range of tasks that individuals themselves determine to be enjoyable or satisfying. Csikszentmihalyi also contends that the feeling of flow, or intrinsic motivation, depends on a subjective assessment of ability, and the skills to engage in the task at hand. He argues that any activity can become rewarding if it provides information about a person's ability to meet a set of challenges, and that intrinsic motivation is essentially about skill acquisition, "only by having a set of skills is it possible to produce feedback that conveys information about how one has met challenges" (ibid.:211).

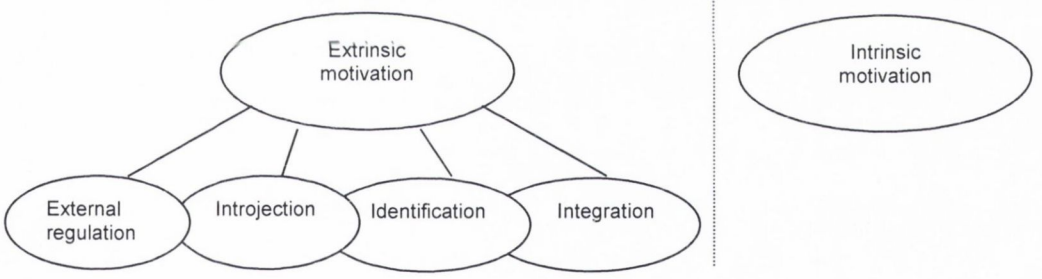
What is often termed extrinsic motivation may be a way of controlling individuals (Deci 1971; Deci, Koestner et al. 2001; Vansteenkiste and Deci 2003). Rather than encouraging individuals to work hard and become involved in an activity, rewards and deadlines become associated with performance and achievement. Once the reward has been attained, individuals lose interest, and without the reward the activity becomes meaningless. Intrinsically motivated individuals, on the other hand, continue to work

at the activity for its own sake. Intrinsic motivation is any behaviour that is undertaken in the absence of external contingencies.

Exponents of self-determiation theory suggest that deCharms' concept of personal causation (1968) offers an explanation for different behavioural patterns in intrinsically and extrinsically motivated actions (Ryan and Connell 1989:749; Deci and Ryan 2000). "Intrinsically motivated activities are ones in which people engage to experience a sense of competence and self-determination – that is, to feel good about themselves as effective causal agents" (Deci and Porac 1978:155). People want to feel that they are the origin of their own actions, not a pawn manipulated by external forces (Deci 1995:27). These external forces, even seemingly attractive ones such as prizes or bonuses, may undermine the enjoyment inherent in the activity itself. Extensive empirical work by Deci and his colleagues seemed to show that learning is greater when intrinsically motivated rather than induced by external factors (Deci 1971; Vansteenkiste and Deci 2003; Vansteenkiste, Simons et al. 2004). People who were intrinsically motivated to complete a task worked harder, longer and more successfully at it than those who were extrinsically motivated by imposed goals, rewards or competition (Deci 1995:49).

However, not all extrinsic factors were found to lessen motivation. Some, in fact, were discovered to increase motivation. Deci's empirical work on extrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner et al. 2001) led him to hypothesize that there are different types of extrinsic motivation, that which is imposed by others, and that which is self-imposed, or internalized (Ryan and Connell 1989:760). Rewards, goals and competition that are chosen and implemented by individuals themselves were found to be as motivating as the intrinsic enjoyment found in the task itself. The difference was that the individuals selected their own goals and rewards which were self-determined. When individuals choose their own goals and rewards, and achieve these, they feel competent and in control of their own actions, thus performing extrinsically motivated behaviour autonomously. This is the fundamental human need to be "self-determining" (Deci 1975; Deci and Porac 1978; Deci and Ryan 2003): "people need to feel effective, to feel like they can bring about desired outcomes" (Deci and Porac 1978:151).

Deci and Ryan describe a continuum of autonomy which underlies all extrinsically motivated behaviour, from external regulation to introjection, to identification and finally integration (Deci and Ryan 2000:72). External regulation occurs when external motives are imposed by external contingencies, to achieve rewards or avoid punishment. Introjection is when these imposed goals are taken on board and personalized by the individual, often engendering feelings of guilt or need for social approval. When people identify with the external motives, they are beginning to behave more autonomously. The most autonomous behaviour is found when individuals integrate the external contingencies with their own values, and their own sense of self. The following figure shows the types of motivation, the loci of causality, and how motivated behaviour is regulated:



Perceived Locus of Causality	external	somewhat external	somewhat internal	internal	internal
Relevant Regulatory Processes	compliance, external rewards & punishments	self-control, ego-involvement, internal rewards & punishments	personal importance, conscious valuing	congruence, awareness, synthesis with self	interest, enjoyment, inherent satisfaction

Figure 3.1 Self-Determination Continuum, based on Ryan and Deci 2000:72

3.5.1 *Self-Determination Theory and instruction*

Applied to a classroom context, self-determination theory asks whether the learning environment provides students with information about their behaviour which helps them develop autonomously, or whether it is a controlling, even obstructive environment where individuals' attempts to act in accord with their own will are constantly thwarted. Learners can thus lose any sense of self-determination they may have cultivated, and not feel in control over their own actions once they enter the classroom.

Interest in the role of intrinsic motivation in foreign language learning has grown over the past decade, following the work of Deci and associates. Studies of intrinsically motivated language learners indicate it correlates with lower anxiety, more positive attitudes towards learning the target language, and increased feelings of self-efficacy in language learning. It has been also linked with behavioural variables such as persistence, language use, motivational intensity, and cognitive variables such as grammatical sensitivity, reading and writing proficiency, and teacher ratings of competence (Noels 2001:50). Ushioda (1996a) discusses engaging intrinsic motivational processes in the language learning process, drawing on Deci's work.

Noels (2001) examines the notion of orientations in language learning motivation, drawing on self-determination theory, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. She argues that it is reasonable to draw on Deci and Ryan's work and to merge this with Gardner's notion of orientations, for a better understanding of motivational propensities and the mechanisms by which motivation increases or decreases. Noels argues that a variety of people in the L2 learners' social world, as well as the learning context, will have an important impact on motivation (Noels 2001:55-59), particularly in influencing the learners' self-perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness.

3.6 *Goals and motivation*

The second part of this chapter examines the nature of goal-setting with respect to motivation, in particular how setting optimally challenging personal learning goals contributes to language learning. Goals play an important role in our everyday lives,

and across many fields of study human behaviour is understood to be purposive, in other words it is directed towards outcomes. We usually understand goals as aims or ambitions which we endeavour to achieve by directing our behaviour in a certain way. By aiming for goals, people are able to remain on track and assess whether they are making progress. Deci argues that people need to see a relationship between their behaviour and the desired outcomes; goals act as linkages which enable people to see this relationship (Deci 1995:59). Motivation and goals thus are interconnected; motivation is needed to both instigate and maintain behavioural patterns in order to achieve the goals selected. In turn, motivation would be redundant without goals, which provide shape and focus. Goal-setting is thus a means of energizing our potential motivation and giving it direction; as students learn, they compare where they are to where they want to be (Deci 1980:53).

Self-Determination Theory has important applications for how we understand purposive behaviour and goal-setting. Deci argues that autonomy is a basic human need, which can only be fulfilled if we act in accordance with our own will. In order to do so, we must make informed choices to decide our own behaviour. One contribution of Self-Determination Theory to the study of goal-setting is the notion of goal selection. Deci suggests that the most effective means of ensuring that goals remain motivating is to involve the concerned individuals – whether a group of workers or a class of students – in the decision-making processes (Deci, et al. 2001:342).

3.6.1 Self-efficacy theory

Bandura (1997) proposes that perceived self-efficacy, an individual's subjective view of their own skills or capabilities affects their performance and achievement, plays a major role in determining purposive behaviour and motivation. He defines perceived self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (1997:3). Like goal-orientation theory (Dweck 1986; Dweck 1999), how individuals view their own capabilities is a cornerstone of self-efficacy and motivation: "[i]t is people's affective self-reactions to their own performances that constitute the principal source of reward" (Bandura 1997:219). Studies (Locke and Latham 1990) show that explicit and challenging goals

enhance and sustain motivation. Bandura describes such goals as personal standards, which are governed by three types of influence. Firstly, goals are affected by either a self-satisfied or self-dissatisfied reaction to performance; secondly, individuals judge their own skills in attaining the goal, with differing levels of perceived self-efficacy; thirdly, individuals readjust personal goals based on an assessment of their own progress (Bandura 1997:28).

Research on the role of self-efficacy, goal-setting and learning show that students' levels of self-efficacy play an important role in determining which goals learners pursue, and that these goals influence course results (Vrugt, Oort et al. 2002:394). A further study of the relationship between self-efficacy and achievement found that high self-efficacy learners pursue optimally challenging personal goals which are just a little above their ability, and that such learners will spend much effort in order to realize these goals (Multon, Brown et al. 1991:387).

Goals do not automatically activate the process of self-assessment that affects performance. Bandura proposes that goal-setting can be explained by the human capacity to represent future consequences of actions in thought; in other words our ability to imagine future outcomes, and judge their benefit as well as how much effort might be required to achieve them.

> Anticipatory capacities enable humans to be motivated by prospective consequences. Past experiences create expectations that certain actions will bring valued benefits, that others will have no appreciable effects, and that still others will avert future trouble (Bandura 1977:18).

When learners anticipate future outcomes, whether being able to describe their hobbies or write a letter of complaint in the target language, and then see the disparity between their current proficiency and future anticipated proficiency, Bandura describes this discrepancy as "a motivational inducement for change" (ibid:161). Motivation does not arise from setting or working towards goals, but rather from the process of self-assessment when learners realize that certain skills must be mastered in order to help them achieve what they have anticipated as desirable learning outcomes.

> The motivational effects do not derive from the goals themselves, but rather from the fact that people respond evaluatively to their own behaviour. Goals specify the conditional requirements for positive self-evaluation. Once individuals have made self-satisfaction contingent upon goal attainment, they tend to persist in their efforts until their performances match what they are seeking to achieve (ibid 1977:161).

Bandura (1997:133) outlines three conditions for a virtuous circle of goal-setting and achievement: goal specificity, goal level and goal proximity. Firstly, the importance of goal specificity relates to how the goals are elaborated. Explicitly defined goals help regulate performance by designating what type of effort and the amount of effort required, whereas vague general intentions do not (1997:133). In the case of language learning, the goal of "speaking the target language more fluently" is not very helpful, whereas the goal of "knowing how to say I agree and disagree with someone politely" is a much more efficient way of structuring the learner's future efforts.

Secondly, the level of difficulty of the goal is also important in helping learners sustain motivation (1997:133). Setting goals which are too easy or too difficult will lead to boredom or disappointment. One worst case scenario for learners is when they have expended great effort, but experience repeated failure, which weakens their belief in their own abilities and reduces motivation. Goals need to be optimally challenging, set just a little beyond the current abilities of learners, but within their reach.

Thirdly, the proximity of goals also plays a role in how successfully they guide learning (1997:134). Setting goals far into the future is not very useful for encouraging immediate action. Such remote intentions should be mediated through the use of proximal subgoals which are attainable in shorter amounts of time. In such a way, students who want to be able to study at university through the target language would set subgoals concentrating on working on academic vocabulary and essay writing, skills which will be instrumental in helping them achieve their long-term aim but which will allow them to work towards goals attainable in the present.

3.7 Goals in the classroom

Goal-orientation theory is a body of research which adapts goal-setting theory to the specific context of the classroom, and examines the role of learning goals in classroom learning and performance. Dweck (Dweck and Elliott 1983; Dweck 1986; Elliott and Dweck 1988; Dweck 1999) has published extensively this subject, and describes how successful learners demonstrate what she calls mastery-oriented qualities, based on the way learners view their own intelligence. Some people believe that their intelligence is a stable unchanging quantity. This is called the entity theory of intelligence. Others believe that their intelligence is not fixed, but increases through learning, the incremental theory of intelligence. Those who hold an entity theory of intelligence and believe intelligence does not develop place importance on looking smart, and avoid challenging situations where they may look unintelligent. Those who hold an incremental theory of intelligence tend to seek new challenges and do not mind looking unintelligent sometimes if they are learning in the process. As Dweck puts it, performance-oriented learners want to look smart, whereas mastery-oriented learners want to become smarter (1985:291).

These two different types of personality orientations lead to two different types of goal-setting behaviour. Some learners concentrate on performance goals, easy tasks where they can succeed and not lose face. Other learners concentrate on learning goals, more difficult tasks where they might face problems, but have the opportunity to learn something new.

These two different types of goals – performance and learning – have been the subject of much research, and have been called by different names. Essentially the dichotomy between challenge-seeking and challenge-avoiding behaviour is present across the literature: task and ego orientation (Nicholls 1984), learning and performance orientation (Dweck and Legget 1988), mastery and performance goals (Ames 1992), and task and performance goals (Maehr and Midgley 1991).

Students who tend to choose learning goals aim to enhance their own skills and master new tasks. They don't mind if they don't achieve high marks or come top of the class as they enjoy difficult challenges and are more concerned with honing their

abilities than proving their intelligence to others. Learners who prefer performance goals try to maintain positive judgements of their own capabilities and avoid negative evaluations, because these may lead to negative conclusions about own skills and intelligence. They prefer easy challenges at which they can excel, show their skills and beat others. Performance-oriented students don't put in the effort so they can blame failure on lack of work not lack of intelligence, show a high fear of failure and a loss of ego when they don't succeed. Research on goal orientations suggests that pupils who work towards performance goals show avoidance strategies and face-saving techniques in class (Elliott and Dweck 1988:10).

Studies of goal orientation (Dweck and Elliott 1983; Dweck 1986; Elliott and Dweck 1988) showed that learners involved in the same task but with different orientations experienced different levels of task engagement and achievement. Performance oriented learners showed helpless patterns when faced with difficulty and deteriorated problem-solving skills. Learners with a mastery oriented approach remained focused and in control, maintaining effective problem-solving skills. Mastery oriented learners also worked harder at the task and achieved higher scores.

Research has also shown that mastery-oriented learners show higher levels of intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985b; Csikszentmihalyi 1992). Performance goals are often sought for extrinsic reasons, for example reward or praise. Learners often work towards mastery goals for the enjoyment of completing and succeeding at task, for curiosity, enjoyment, sense of accomplishment, personal satisfaction. Some literature (Ames and Archer 1988; Pintrich and Garcia 1991) also suggests that students with a mastery-oriented approach towards tasks tend to use deeper, more effective learning strategies and apply what they have learned more successfully (Dweck 1999:18).

3.8 Conclusion

To many teachers and learners, motivation is the secret ingredient for successful foreign language learning. From an empirical perspective, there is no single definition of motivation that researchers agree on, nor any one overarching theory to explain L2 motivation. Despite over forty years of research into motivation in foreign language

learning, Dörnyei describes our knowledge of the subject as "uneven and inconsistent" (2003a:1).

Human behaviour is purposive in nature, and we have an innate curiosity to learn new skills. We have an innate tendency to work towards goals, explained by the way our minds are able to imagine future outcomes and anticipate which goals are worth pursuing, and how much effort they will require. Not all goals are motivational. In order to encourage motivation, goals need to be specific and attainable, both in time-scale and level of difficulty. External goals or imposed goals are not necessarily detrimental to motivation, as long as the learner perceives himself or herself to be the locus of causality. The process of setting personally meaningful, optimally challenging learning goals seems to create a motivational virtuous circle for students. Learners who are motivated may be described as learners who want to learn, who know where they are going in their learning, and who know how to get there.

In Chapter 4, I present the design of an empirical investigation of motivation in language learners. This investigation focusses on the motivational role of regular goal-setting in the classroom, supported by use of the European Language Portfolio.

Chapter 4
Fieldwork design

4.1 Introduction

This study used an ethnographic methodology to determine the motivational impact of goal-setting through use of the European Language Portfolio. I investigated a group of adult immigrants learning English in Ireland. In the first half of this chapter I review the theory of ethnographic research, and in the second half I discuss how the methodology of this particular study was designed.

4.2 Ethnography

One of the principal methodologies employed in educational and applied linguistic research is ethnography. The origins of ethnography lie in cultural anthropology and sociology. It is a research design which seeks to describe and analyze the practices and beliefs of communities and cultures (Freebody 2003:75), "the art and science of describing a group or culture" (Fetterman 1998:1).

Chaudron (1988) identifies ethnography as one of the four major traditions in applied linguistic research, alongside psychometric studies, discourse analysis and interaction analysis. He describes ethnographic research as "a qualitative, process-oriented approach to the investigation of interaction" involving "considerable training, continuous record-keeping, extensive participatory involvement of the researcher in the classroom, and careful interpretation of the usually multi-faceted data" (Chaudron 1988:46).

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) emphasize that although educational ethnographies are widespread, it is not a well-defined field of investigation and there is no consensus about what should be the proper scope and method for ethnographic studies in educational settings. Nonetheless, ethnography has been employed to great effect,

> describing educational settings and contexts, to generate theory, and to evaluate educational programs. It has provided rich, descriptive data about the contexts, activities, and beliefs of participants in educational settings (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:8).

It is typically "inductive, generative and constructive" (ibid.), using participant observation as the preferred data collection technique, along with a range of supplementary methods.

An influential educational ethnographic study was carried out by Smith and Geoffrey in 1968 (Smith and Geoffrey 1968). The data collection method was very simple; the researcher Smith spent a term as a participant observer in the class of the teacher Geoffrey. They provide a database of extensive field notes, and interviews with the teacher and students. The result is a "rich descriptive and interpretive picture of the complexities of an urban classroom in the sixties" (Nunan 1992:55). In the field of language learning, Freeman (1992) also became a participant observer. He sat in on classes of French as a foreign language, and built up a database of lesson transcripts, field notes and interviews, again with both teacher and students. He then analyzed and interpreted his database. Willett (1995) "thickly described" the process of L2 socialization in first-graders in the USA, examining the participation of ESL children in a mainstream classroom over one year, using participant observation and recordings of student talk to reconstruct a "concrete sense of life" in the classroom for readers (ibid.:480).

Ethnography is both the *product* which tells the story of a group of people, and the *process* by which information is gathered to create the story (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:1). Ethnography uses qualitative research methods to collect a range of information which eventually enables the researcher to recreate in text an account of the group under investigation – their norms, their habits, their beliefs and their behaviour. The aim is to reproduce the experience of the ethnographer in textual form for the reader to experience in turn. In order to do this, the researcher needs to approach the group without any preconceptions or assumptions, even if the site of the fieldwork, for example the language classroom, is familiar ground. The challenge of the ethnographic process and product is to how to tell the story of the group in what Lofland (1971) calls "loving detail".

Ethnography approaches a phenomenon to be investigated from a naturalistic-ecological perspective, from which ethnographers assert that the context in which the phenomenon occurs has a significant influence on it. If we want to investigate something, we need to investigate it in its natural context (Nunan 1992:53). It studies the characteristics or the culture of a group in the real world rather than in a laboratory setting. The researcher does not isolate variables, but instead uses mainly observational data collection techniques to build up insights. Rather than framing hypotheses and testing them, the ethnographer may begin by collecting data before trying to construct hypotheses. Nunan (1992:56) mentions an over-simplified though helpful analysis of the two contrasting methods: psychometry is a hypothesis in search of data whereas ethnography is data in search of a hypothesis. Nonetheless, ethnographic research is empirical as it is an attempt to observe, record and assess phenomena which occur in the real world (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:31).

4.2.1 Weak and strong views of ethnography

Detractors of ethnography contend that it lacks rigour, and that it does not constitute "real" research (Nunan 1992:53). Its proponents however argue that it is as demanding and rigorous as psychometric research, and that well-planned and executed ethnographies are equally valid empirical studies.

Van Lier (1988) outlines a weak and a strong view of ethnography. The weak view is that is it essentially the poor cousin of psychometry. It is merely a series of unstructured, unsystematic observations. Its redeeming feature is that it may lead to questions or hypotheses which can later be tested using psychometric tests. The strong view of ethnography sees it as a valid research tradition in its own right. It is not just a preparation for testing, and it is an equally appropriate method of theory-building.

The ethnographic approach of data first, then theory, is controversial. "Grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss 1967) is used to describe the process of deriving theory from data. This is criticized by Long (1986), who argues that the reverse is more efficient and rational (Nunan 1992:57). This criticism echoes Van Lier's (1988) weak view of ethnography. Long, for example, believes that the primary purpose of

ethnography is to describe classroom processes so that they may be later tested by psychometric methods. However, Nunan (1992:57) argues that "ethnography is a valid tradition in its own right, and should not be considered simply as an hypothesis-generating device for experimental research".

One crucial problem with investigating something in context is the external validity of the research. Can the conclusions reached about a specific group of people or behaviour be generalized beyond the study? There are many interconnected variables, and it may be impossible to ascribe any causal relationships to outcomes.

4.2.2 Characteristics of ethnography

Ethnography is a loose and open term used to describe any number of different qualitative research designs, techniques and procedures. The next section outlines what ethnographic studies tend to have in common.

Nunan (1992:56) describes six main characteristics of ethnography. Firstly it is contextual; the research is conducted in the real-world context of the group, and the researcher tries to minimize the disruption to this context caused by his or her presence. Secondly, the researcher tries to make sure the methodology is unobtrusive, by avoiding manipulation of any variables. Thirdly, ethnography is a longitudinal methodology with fieldwork conducted regularly over a prolonged period of time (e.g. over at least one school term). Fourthly it is collaborative, involving the participation of people other than the researcher, such as teachers and students. Fifthly, it is an interpretive methodology which goes beyond description of events and patterns. Finally, ethnography is organic. There is an interaction between the research questions, the data collection and its interpretation. The researcher does not set out with pre-determined ideas, and may ultimately end up answering questions other than those he or she set out with at the beginning of the project.

Watson-Gegeo and Ulichny (1988) identify three key principles of ethnographic research which overlap with Nunan's analysis:

i) It uses a grounded approach to data (data first then theory)

ii) It employs "thick" explanation (takes into account all the factors which may have an effect)

iii) It goes beyond description to analysis, interpretation and explanation.

Watson-Gegeo and Ulichny (1988) also stress the importance of holism in research. There are two dimensions to holistic research: horizontal and vertical. The horizontal dimension is the description of events and behaviours as they evolve over time; the vertical dimension is the description of factors which influence behaviours and interactions at the time at which they occur.

LeCompte and Preissle (1993:3) outline four characteristics of ethnographic research. They note firstly that it uses strategies to elicit phenomenological data which represent the world view of the group. The constructs of the group are used to structure the research. Secondly, the research strategies are empirical and naturalistic. Observation is used to acquire firsthand experience of the group in a real-life setting without purposively manipulating variables. Thirdly, it is holistic research, in which the ethnographer tries to reconstruct events and experiences in context and to analyze the human behaviour and beliefs involved. Lastly, ethnography uses a variety of different strategies to collect data.

4.2.3 Is ethnographic research robust?

The ethnographic methodology is often a challenge for the researcher in terms of the project's reliability and validity. This stems from the nature of ethnographic fieldwork. Studies are usually based on detailed description and analysis of a particular context by a single researcher. Given the vast amount of data gathered, it is often impossible to include anything but a small amount of it in the published version (Nunan 1992:58). Other researchers may not be able to analyze the data for themselves nor replicate the study. Establishing the trustworthiness of such data is difficult. LeCompte and Goetz (1982) formulated new terms to address this problem. They drew up definitions of internal and external validity and reliability specifically for qualitative research such as ethnography separate from the accepted criteria for experimental research.

Ethnographers try to enhance the reliability of their work by gathering data from multiple sources and in different ways, and by triangulation. Its use in qualitative research was first proposed by Denzin (1970), and the analogy is that of orientation on a map by using two landmarks. Wiersma (1995:264) defines triangulation as "a search for convergence of the information on a common finding or concept". Lather (2003:191) calls for triangulation to be expanded beyond the usual psychometric definition of multiple measures to include multiple data sources, methods and theoretical schemes for establishing trustworthiness of data. She also proposes that the research design should seek counter patterns as well as convergences in the data.

Internal and external validity are a little less problematic, as ethnographers do not tend to draw causal relationships between variables, nor always generalize from their study site to the wider population (ibid.). However, diligent ethnographers do seek validity in terms of comparability and transferability, aiming to make the characteristics of the group studied as clear as possible for comparison with other groups. They also aim to make their research methods and constructs as transferable as possible by avoiding idiosyncrasies (LeCompte and Goetz 1982). There have been calls for a reinterpretation of how to evaluate qualitative research (Atkinson 1990; Denzin 1997), beyond the traditional criteria of reliability and validity, given the practical realities of research-in-context (Freebody 2003:79). But as in all research, clarity and rigorous explanation go a long way in strengthening both the process and product.

4.2.4 Ethics in educational research

Dörnyei (2003a:91) outlines some basic ethical principles of fieldwork. The main and overriding consideration is that no harm should come to the group because of their involvement in the study. Researchers must respect individuals' right to privacy. Individuals have the right to refuse to answer questions at any point during the study, and to decide to whom and under what conditions the information can be made available. This notion of informed consent is of utmost importance. Fundamentally the researcher must provide enough information about the project and its purposes for the individuals to make an informed decision about their participation in the study.

The close relationship developed between researcher and researched over the course of longitudinal fieldwork means that there are many ethical considerations to be addressed in relation to trust, openness and confidentiality (Burgess 1989b:60). Ethnographies involve spending extended periods of time with a group and participating in their activities. Friendships develop and confidences are shared.

Burgess also refers to the dilemma of research within research, referred to as a "Russian doll" by a headmaster of a school (1989b:71). The ethnographer may be obliged to share data with the school or teacher, but that process and feedback in turn may become part of fieldwork. Older guides to ethnography did not address the ethics of the process and product of ethnography in much detail at all (Cohen and Mannion 1985). Much of the discussion focused on the ethical considerations of participant observation, whether to conduct this covertly or overtly. Wider and deeper ethical issues were not addressed. LeCompte and Preissle refer to "the myth of investigator-as-amoral-altruist" (1993:87). However, the current approach to ethical research demands much more accountability from the ethnographer (as well as the statistician and the surveyor). Statements and codes about ethical research have been published by organizations such as the British Sociological Association, the British Educational Research Association and the American Anthropological Association (Burgess 1989a:7). Universities, academic associations and funding bodies publish detailed requirements to be fulfilled as a result of increasing pressure to achieve high ethical standards. Trinity College Dublin has published a guide to Good Research Practice (Trinity College Dublin 2002) with guidelines on ethics, integrity and retention of primary data.

Published codes and guidelines however do not always cover the many grey areas (Burgess 1989b:74) which researchers meet in their multiple roles. Ethnography will always involve negotiation and compromise, and the researcher must be constantly aware of the consequences of each day of fieldwork and the subsequent publication of data.

> While there are large-scale ethical considerations involved with gaining access to a classroom, confidentiality, anonymity and so forth, there are also small-scale moral and ethical decisions which have to be made on a daily decision by the ethnographic researcher (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:90).

4.2.5 *On-site research*

Once a group has been identified as a potential subject for investigation, the next hurdle is to gain access to their world. Punch (1986), cited in Burgess (1989b:60), believes that access and acceptance are "pivotal to the whole relationship between researcher and researched". In school situations, this frequently occurs by the permission of the head teacher, and perhaps the consent of the school board or district. The problem with gaining top-level entry is that the researcher may quickly be identified by the students as part of the administration or answerable to them. LeCompte and Preissle recommend that ethnographers assume the role of the novice, even if they have previous experience of the situation or have read widely. They propose that researchers present themselves as "sincere individuals who have a commitment to the group" (1993:112). Even if the ethnographer comes to the field with in-depth knowledge of the subject, they are still new to the site itself. It takes time to feel at home in any situation, and the ethnographer has to learn the ins and outs of the building, the human relationships and the general atmosphere of the place. No matter what their position is outside of the field, in the field their position is that of "acceptable incompetent" (Lofland 1971).

> It is only through watching, listening, asking questions, formulating hypotheses, and making blunders that the ethnographer can acquire some sense of the social structure of the setting and begin to understand the culture(s) of the participants (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:100).

On-site fieldwork is demanding work. The researcher is always 'on', "experiencing" and "enquiring", in the words of Wolcott (1999:46). The effort to maintain a bright and interested face in a strange and sometimes bewildering situation, whilst meeting new people and trying to figure out where everything fits into a research design, can result in stress and tiredness. However, these difficulties are generally seen as an advantage, as the researcher should not really feel at home during fieldwork (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:115), but instead try to maintain a critical distance.

The problem of access to the site at the beginning of fieldwork is sometimes matched by the problem of leaving the site at the end of fieldwork. Many researchers feel a sense of relief at being able to return to their office and computer, but some find it a

wrench to leave people who may have become intimate acquaintances. The insider/outsider balance is hard to achieve.

4.3 *Ethnography and data collection*

As we have already discussed, ethnography is both the narrative about a group of people, and the process of gathering information for this narrative. In this section, the two principal techniques of data collection used by ethnographers are discussed: participant observation and interviewing. Participant observation is a fairly ambiguous term which has been used to describe a range of fieldwork activities (Wolcott 1999:44), but essentially it can be described as a general strategy whereby the ethnographer is present in the everyday life of the group in two roles – honorary member and researcher. The extent to which the ethnographer is truly part of proceedings varies, as does the visibility of the research role.

One of the first choices made by ethnographers who employ participant observation is whether to do so overtly or covertly. Both have distinct advantages and disadvantages, depending on the accessibility of the group and the effect an outsider may have on what is being studied. Whether overt or covert, being a participant observer rather than an invisible fly-on-the-wall involves participating in "social activities with the subjects of the study over an extended period of time" (Whyte 2001:162). Platt gives a more elaborate account of the current understanding of participant observation:

> a non-quantitative method which claims to give privileged access to meanings through the researcher's empathetic sharing of experience in the worlds he or she studies; the fact of participation in those worlds is seen as crucially distinguishing this method from others (Platt 2001:144).

Wolcott (1999:46) suggests that the connotations of participant observation have become too unwieldy, and instead advises new ethnographers to understand it instead as "experiencing", a process of gaining firsthand experience.

There have been various attempts to map out the spectrum between observing and participating; perhaps most well-known is the continuum proposed by Gold (1958) with the totally detached observer at one end, the totally involved participant at the other, and in between the observer-as-participant, and the participant-as-observer.

Junker (1960) made similar distinctions. However, over the course of the fieldwork, the ethnographer moves back and forth between the roles of observer and participant, between researcher and honorary member. Powdermaker (1966) stresses the importance of such shifts between detachment and involvement. The participant observer finds herself constantly shifting from outsider to insider. Of course the balance between observing and participating changes on different occasions and according to people's awareness of being studied. Eventually the group may totally forget the researcher is studying them (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:94). The danger is when the researcher feels completely 'at home' in the group. The demands of fieldwork and the prospect of subsequent analysis require the researcher to maintain self-awareness and critical distance despite the familiarity that may develop (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:115). A major challenge in educational ethnographies is trying to develop observational skills in the classroom. It is a very familiar environment for many researchers, making it difficult to single out episodes and incidents (ibid.:103). The most common means of documenting this experience is by maintaining a logbook with even the seemingly mundane observations, whether written up overtly on-site or at home. These in turn are entered into a cumulative account of events, conversations and observations.

4.3.1 Interviews

Interviews are sometimes described as part of the process of participant observation. Whyte (2001:163) sees participant observation as a general set of methods, and interviews as a subset. However, like Wolcott (1999), I distinguish between interviewing and participant observation and treat them as separate methods of data collection. Wolcott (ibid.:46), in his attempt to free us from over-familiarity with the labels used to describe qualitative research, describes interviewing as a process of "enquiring". Denzin describes the ethnographic interview as part of the process of constructing a narrative: "interviews objectify individuals, turning lived experiences into narratives. The interview is the method by which the personal is made public" (Denzin 2003:86). Despite the familiarity of the ethnographic interview, and access to the personal domain, Denzin points out that there is no authenticity or 'real' private self to be laid bare. The researcher is simply a witness to the different faces of the group (ibid.).

Interviews within a context of longitudinal fieldwork and participant observation are very unlike the interviews that may take place in a survey context, or even in a short-term qualitative study. This difference lies in the type of relationship shared by the researcher and the subjects of the study. The familiarity and trust that tend to develop as the researcher shares everyday experiences with the group mean that interviews in an ethnographic setting resemble conversations. Although ethnographers may enter the interview setting with an idea of what they would like to ask, they do not tend to approach subjects with prepared questions in a strict order. They often try to create an atmosphere where talk flows in a more natural way, and tolerate, even welcome, digressions (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:152). Hammersley and Atkinson advise ethnographers to treat interviews as "social events" (ibid.:156).

Nonetheless, it is not a real social event, nor a natural conversation. There is still a tape recorder or notebook on the table, the interviewer is in control, and has a research agenda, however flexible. There are a number of different strategies used to maximize the potential of such semi-structured interviews. Putting people at their ease through the choice of location and set-up is stressed (Burgess 1988). Finding a suitable location is sometimes a challenge. Hammersley and Atkinson recommend that "interviewing [people] on their own territory and allowing them to organize the context the way they wish, is the best strategy" (1995:150). As in participant observation, the researcher wants to come across as committed and interested, yet without sending out the wrong signals by their choice of dress or choice of words. The first few minutes of the interview set the tone, with an explanation of its purpose, and perhaps some small talk and positive feedback (ibid.:143). As the interview proceeds, the researcher has to be an active listener, and may guide conversations towards specific areas of interest. Group interviews are another way of encouraging people to be more forthcoming, especially if they know each other well.

> Group discussions may provide considerable insight into participant culture: in other words what is lost in terms of information may be compensated for by the illumination that the accounts provide into the perspectives and discursive repertoires of those being interviewed (ibid.:147).

Most interviews tend to be audio interviews, although some researchers may be restricted to note taking, or may gain consent for a video recording. Conversation is then reconstructed into a transcript. There are some specific ethical issues to be considered when conducting interviews. As well as guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher may end up with data that is much more sensitive than anticipated. Conversation which starts off on a general topic may develop into something much more involved, especially if there is a close bond between the group, and between the group and the researcher. Such a possibility means that the onus is on the researcher to keep the recorded data safe, and to exercise care and discretion in subsequent accounts and analysis of the interview.

Kvale (1996:145) discusses quality criteria in interviews. The primary characteristic of a good interview is "the extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee" (ibid.). He also advises researchers to keep their questions short, and to allow long answers. The interviewer will also need to follow up and clarify responses, and to verify answers over the course of the interview.

4.3.2 Supplementing participant observation and interviewing

Ethnographers use a variety of techniques to supplement the data they collect from participant observation and interviewing. One way of supplementing these techniques is by asking in a different way, through questionnaires. Although questionnaires are relatively superficial and unlikely to yield the kind of "rich and sensitive descriptions" (Dörnyei 2003a:14) that participant observation and interviewing lead to, they can provide exploratory and foundational data that can be successfully combined with other procedures.

Questionnaires used in qualitative research are unlike questionnaires used in surveys or psychometric studies. The main difference lies in the "data first" approach discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The researcher will not come to the field with a set of questions at the ready, but instead experience in the field will most likely lead to developing a set of questions. A further difference lies in the purpose of the questions, and how they will be analyzed. Most questionnaires in qualitative research are designed to help the researcher discover more about issues which have already become apparent through observation, and which may be explored further through

interviews with the group. The data collated is used to triangulate other data such as field notes and interview transcripts. Questionnaire data is not "stand alone", and is rarely subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis, although patterns will be presented and discussed. Attitudinal questionnaires are often used in longitudinal studies to determine how the group's thoughts, opinions and beliefs change over time.

A further means of supplementing participant observation and interviewing is by archival research. Wolcott calls this "examining" (1999:46). The researcher aims to provide a vivid tapestry of description for the reader. Educational ethnographies might include extracts from learners' notebooks, photographs of tasks and activities, recordings of classroom talk and so forth. Other archival research includes background information about the group such as demographic details, attendance records and other accessible data about the group. Hodder (2000:703) describes this as "mute evidence", which can be separated in time and space from the person who created it or the subject of the text. Both types of evidence, which in a school context may include official attendance records and reports as well as extracts from class work, may be made available to the researcher. One advantage of such texts is that they add an extra layer of dialogue to the narrative of ethnography, for instance the often invisible perspective of the school's administration.

4.3.3 Field relationships

However, within a qualitative research project, none of these techniques will yield data if the researcher does not invest time and energy in building up close relationships with the subjects of the study. Wolcott (1999:43) calls the researcher "the primary research instrument" of ethnography. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:141) also draw attention to the effects of the researcher. Whyte (2001:174) says that the success of a study "depends less on the mastery of certain techniques than upon the ability to build a mutually supportive relationship with subjects". With this in mind, I examine how the personal characteristics of the researcher are of crucial importance for the process of data collection.

As in all human relationships, building up relationships in the field involves communication, trust and time. Although there are some circumstances in which

being transparent about the subject and purpose of the research may not be helpful, in most educational situations students and teachers will be more likely to open up to someone who comes across as a "normal", "decent" person (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:89). Making a good impression takes effort, and the researcher may have to tone down their desire to obtain answers to questions.

> The value of pure sociability should not be underestimated as a means of building trust. Indeed, the researcher must often try to find ways in which 'normal' social intercourse can be established. This requires finding some neutral ground with participants where mundane small-talk can take place (ibid.).

Being friendly and sociable are not the only elements of establishing good credentials in the field. Self-presentation is also important in attempting to become an "acceptable marginal member" (ibid.:87). A smart suit conveys a different message to casual clothes. Conversations and off-hand remarks will also be picked up by the group. How much a researcher chooses to share about herself is a further issue. Most people realize when their opposite number is being open and frank, and it is hard to expect honesty from the group if the researcher does not share personal details. On the other hand, too much self-disclosure may be harmful. Having extensive knowledge of an academic subject in a school setting may be threatening to both students and teachers, but showing that the researcher is familiar with the stresses of teaching and learning may be a way of building trust. There are so many different dilemmas in the field about what to say and do, what not to say and what not to do;

> fundamentally the researcher needs to have a high level of self-awareness, and to be conscious of the fact that the success of fieldwork depends on personal relationships. What people reveal is determined really by how they feel about the person asking the questions (Whyte 2001:174).

The bottom line of all ethnographic research is one person investigating a group of other people; "those who study humans are themselves human" (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:86). Human subjectivity is best recognized and explained rather than denied (Wolcott 1999:46). The human aspects of ethnography which make an excellent way of collecting rich data and privileged insights are the same aspects which make it a difficult way of collecting information, and a difficult methodology

to explain and justify. However, the process of ethnography and its product are both eminently worthwhile.

4.4 *Ethnographic methodology in practice: fieldwork at IILT*

In the next section of this chapter I discuss the empirical design of the fieldwork conducted at IILT. I begin by presenting the choice of learner group and location of the fieldwork, the significance of the learner group and the methodology selected. I then examine my role of participant observer in the classroom. I proceed to give an account of the audio interviews conducted in the field, and to consider the attitudinal questionnaires I designed. I discuss the other forms of data collection employed, from the teachers and from student records. Finally, I explain how ethical considerations were addressed in this study.

4.4.1 *The choice of ethnography in designing fieldwork*

Given the difficulties in locating factors and processes which may affect learner motivation, and the changes in motivation over time, an ethnographic study involving participant observation seemed the most appropriate methodology for this study. An ethnographic approach involving participant observation enables the researcher to track changes in learner motivation over time, and to locate factors which may have an impact on learners' participation and progress. However, a study investigating immigrant learners requires more than just time; a basic longitudinal study would not be sufficient. To obtain anything more than cursory information about the learning process of adult immigrants, the researcher needs to gain the trust of the learners. This requires the presence and participation of the researcher in the daily reality of the group.

4.4.2 *The sample*

This is a study of a specific population of language learners in Ireland: adult immigrants learning English. The subset of this population, students at Integrate Ireland Language and Training, was a selection rather than a sample. It was not a systematic or representative choice. This selection was made on grounds of access to the group. My PhD supervisor is the director of IILT, and he introduced me to the managers of the school. This personal contact was an important step in gaining access

to the field. The group of students was a "naturally bounded group" (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:62), all based at the same location in Dublin. To a certain extent, I made a "unique-case selection" (ibid.:75) as IILT is the only government-funded English language instruction provider for adult immigrants in Ireland. It is also unique in its systematic use of the ELP as the basis of its curriculum and assessment. IILT offers classes throughout the year, enabling me to conduct longitudinal fieldwork.

4.4.3 Significance of this fieldwork

The choice of adult immigrant learners at IILT as subjects of this study is significant in three ways. Firstly, this is an empirical investigation of the European Language Portfolio in context. Although there have been some small-scale empirical studies of the ELP (e.g. Ushioda and Ridley 2002), there have been very few longitudinal investigations of the ELP in use. There have been no empirical studies as yet of the impact of the ELP on learner motivation. At IILT, the Milestone version of the European Language Portfolio is used, designed specifically for host community language education. Very little research has been published on the use of the Milestone ELP by immigrant learners. IILT offers a valuable opportunity for research on the ELP. The ELP is the core of the school's provision of language education, for needs analysis, curriculum planning, and assessment.

Secondly, there have been calls for more qualitative, longitudinal studies of motivation in L2 learning (Dörnyei 1998), to investigate patterns of motivational thinking and changes in motivation over time. The reconceptualization of motivation over the past decade has led theoreticians to recognize the importance of the learning context. This shift in focus has moved researchers towards more qualitative studies of motivation (Ushioda 1996b; Ushioda 2001; Hufton and Elliott 2002; Järvelä and Salovaara 2004). This study responds to a need for situation-specific, process-oriented qualitative research on learner motivation.

Thirdly, to my knowledge there are as yet no empirical studies of adult immigrants learning English in Ireland. There is a pressing need for joined-up language provision for refugees and economic migrants. This study, by means of its ethnographic

methodology, provides a rare insight into the daily reality of adult immigrants in the English language classroom.

4.4.4 Overview of methodological design

Prior to commencing fieldwork, I spent three months familiarizing myself with the school and its organization, the staff and the student body. During weekly visits, I observed a variety of classes, and used the data to design the content of subsequent attitudinal questionnaires and interviews. I piloted versions of the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews.

Fieldwork at IILT was conducted over a twelve month period from May 2003 to April 2004, over three terms of study. Two terms were spent in the classes of teacher Susan, and one term was spent in the class of teacher Tim (pseudonyms). I attended class on a weekly basis for four hours either morning or afternoon depending on timetabling. During class I assumed the role of classroom assistant. I maintained a logbook of observations. I made these field notes available to both teachers who then added their own observations.

I administered a closed-format attitudinal questionnaire at four intervals during fieldwork. I conducted four semi-structured audio interviews with groups of two and three students. I conducted one audio interview with both teachers in the last month of fieldwork. I administered an open-format attitudinal questionnaire on leaving the field. These data-gathering techniques were supplemented by i) samples of class work and ii) student records of attendance, punctuality and progress.

The following diagram represents an overview of the techniques employed during fieldwork:

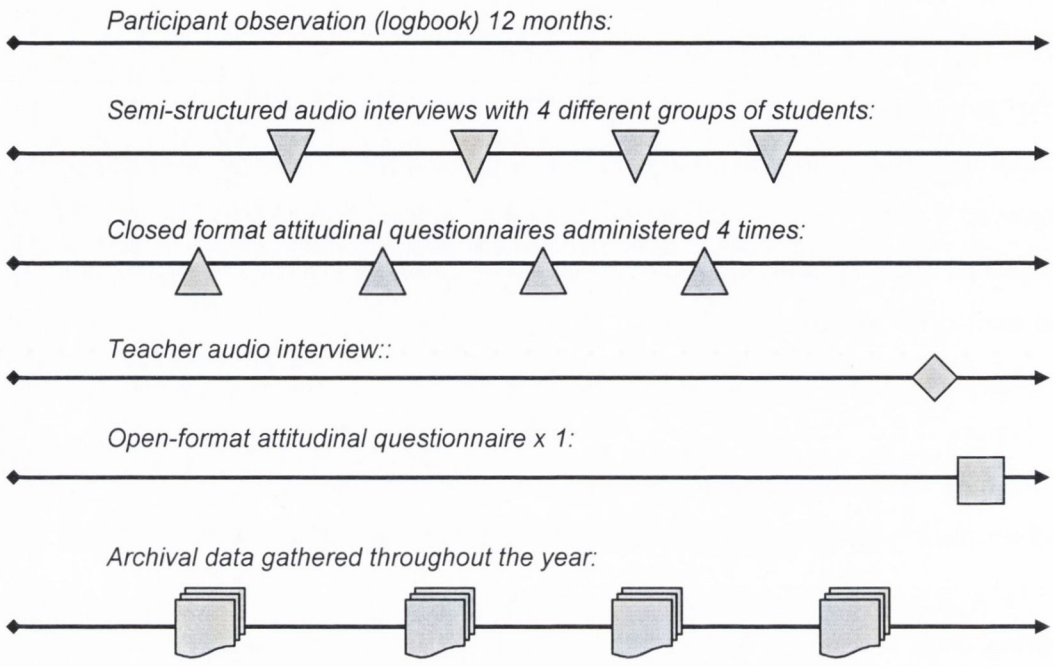


Figure 4.1 Overview of techniques employed during fieldwork

4.5 Data Collection at IILT

The three main techniques used to gather information at IILT were participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and attitudinal questionnaires. I now consider each of these in turn, discussing the aim of each technique, its design and implementation, and the limitations of each approach.

4.6 Participant observation

Participant observation was the cornerstone of the fieldwork conducted at IILT. Werner and Schoepfle (1987:257) call observation "the mainstay of the ethnographic enterprise" (cited in Angrosino and Mays de Pérez 2000:673). The aim of participant observation at IILT was to gather detailed information about the learners and their experiences, which would in turn enable me to construct a narrative about learning and motivation in context. Through the process of participating in their world of learning English, I sought to depict this world in the form of an ethnographic account. Building up close relationships with the group allowed me access to their personal stories as learners and immigrants. Observing learning in context was a primary

source of data collection in itself, but it was also an invaluable basis for the design of interviews and questionnaires.

Participant observation cannot be designed in the way a questionnaire or interview can be designed. It is an organic process dependent on the ongoing co-operation of other people. Conducting fieldwork as a participant observer in the classroom was not without its difficulties. Any ethnographic study of learning in context will encounter obstacles and challenges. In the next section, I describe the process of becoming a participant observer at IILT, and my role as it evolved over time.

As I have already mentioned, one of the first decisions made by a researcher considering participant observation is whether to conduct overt or covert research. From the outset I planned to conduct overt research, essentially because of the freedom it would give me to ask questions and make recordings. On the continuum of participation-observation, there seemed to be two possibilities. Complete observation was an option, sitting at the back of class making notes. A certain degree of participation was also possible, depending on the teacher's agreement.

For the three months prior to fieldwork, I observed a range of classes. One teacher, Susan, was particularly relaxed about having an observer in her classroom. The class she was due to teach at the beginning of my fieldwork period was the very lowest proficiency level, and it was decided I would begin my fieldwork with her class. We developed a rapport, and determined that she would be happy to use me as a classroom assistant rather than complete observer. In this role, I would help out with board work, work in small groups with students, and participate in class discussions and activities. Students attended class on a daily basis for four hours either morning or afternoon depending on timetabling. I attended one day per week. I sometimes attended class on Fridays, when the class completed a weekly review of activities, and set their targets for the week ahead. Other weeks I attended on a Wednesday instead, which enabled me to observe other teaching activities as well as the weekly review.

Thus I assumed the guise of a part-time volunteer classroom assistant, who was also writing about the school and language learning as part of her studies at the university. This role allowed me to ask as many questions as I wanted, but also to gain the trust

of students as I was not a figure of authority. Part of my role was as an insider in the group because of the prolonged amount of time I spent there, and the personal relationships that developed. However, I remained an outsider as an Irish native and student at the university doing a research project. The outsider effect was mitigated as students identified with the familiar roles of native and student. The timing of fieldwork also facilitated my role as group member. I commenced fieldwork at the same time as the students began their period of language study. I later discovered that some students thought all classes had a similar classroom assistant.

Students knew I was conducting a doctoral research project. The teacher informed them at the beginning of my stay. Some students had a greater understanding of what this entailed, others understood that I was writing a book about learning English. I conducted my fieldwork completely overtly, and answered any questions about myself and my work. I gave as many factual details about myself as required. I was constantly asked questions about my marital status, my family, my salary, my rent, and so forth.

4.6.1 Logbook and field notes

I kept a logbook of observations (see Appendix A, Vol. 2). I did not take many notes in class, only on some occasions when it was possible to write discreetly. Although students knew I was conducting research, I felt that note-taking in front of them would make them feel uncomfortable and self-conscious. Moreover, although my research was overt, as time progressed many students seemed to forget about my research role and focus more on my role as classroom assistant.

I typed up my field notes as soon as I arrived home after class. I formatted these into a tabular document with one column of my notes, and a blank column beside it. My notes were dated. I then asked the teachers, Susan in the first instance, then Tim, to read my notes and make their own annotations if they had comments or a different perspective to add. The habit of recording events in the logbook enabled me to maintain a certain critical distance from events in the classroom, as least once events were in the past. It was sometimes difficult to maintain such a critical distance in the classroom, especially if students experienced emotional moments or other upsets.

4.6.2 *Relationships with the group*

Participant observation involves constant interaction over a prolonged period, and requires dependency on the group for collaboration, and indeed the friendship and light-hearted moments that everyone needs over time. Spending prolonged periods of time within a community means that the usual ups and downs of the researcher's own daily life will affect data collection, and this project was no exception. It took time to adapt to a new environment, to understand the structure of the school and the social dynamics of the classroom and staff room. I felt constant pressure to remain objective, yet pressure to invest in relationships with the participants.

Ethnographers may ultimately identify so much with the group that their work turns into an advocacy study (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:96). Part of the process of getting to know a group involves identifying with their difficulties and concerns. For the researcher, it can be a challenge to maintain a dispassionate approach (ibid.:97) whilst still identifying with what matters most to the group. Power relationships may also be an issue, particularly when working with immigrants who often distrust or fear power and authority. In this case, the asymmetry of the researcher/researched relationship was somewhat attenuated by my age, similar to the average age of the students, and my social status as i) an unmarried woman with no children, and ii) a 'poor' PhD student. However, I was still much more affluent than the group, and I am the product of a selective educational system, studying at postgraduate level. I am a Christian operating from a belief system which advocates helping the less privileged. Lather (2003) attempts to reconceptualize the idea of valid research when it may be openly ideological. She argues that no research is interest-free, and we should instead substitute explicit interests for previously implicit ones.

> Once we recognize that just as there is no neutral education there is no neutral research, we no longer need to apologize for unabashedly ideological research and its open commitment to using research to criticize and change the status quo (ibid.:190).

This research project is not, and did not aim to be, explicitly ideological. Although I have explored Freire's (1996) notions of education and learning in Chapter 1, this is not a case of Freirian 'empowering' research. Nevertheless, it is difficult to conduct ethnographic fieldwork among a group of immigrants without wanting to help them

improve at least some aspects of their experience in Ireland, in the classroom and beyond. The use of the ELP in IILT means that learners' needs and goals automatically become the focus of the learning programme. Discussions about such needs can never be entirely objective.

As fieldwork developed, so did my range of roles within the group. Mutually dependent trust relationships develop as the researcher and group share experiences. The researcher may develop roles as friend, confidant or translator. This poses a dilemma when fieldwork draws to a close, and indeed many researchers find it difficult to leave the field. In my case, I stopped my fieldwork at the end of a term as the students moved up a class to different teachers, although ongoing visits to meet with the teachers meant that I was able to maintain some social contact with the participants after the end of my research. I remained in close contact with two students, Rose and Neda.

4.6.3 Weakness of participant observation

One problem with participant observation as a technique of data collection is the sheer size of the undertaking. It is an unwieldy way of gathering information, and at times seemed completely overwhelming. I counteracted this by imposing a routine of attending class and note-taking. Designing the questionnaires and audio interviews helped break up long periods of observation, when at times it seemed to me as if I was not doing enough "active" research.

Twelve months of participant observation demanded considerable energy and investment, and this resulted in close relationships with the group. Such involvement, however, might well at times have hampered my ability to act as critical, detached observer. This is a well-known danger of participant observation. Furthermore, as a language teacher, the classroom was a very familiar environment to me. Perhaps someone with less experience of the classroom would have viewed events differently. The ups and downs of everyday life also affect ongoing observation. Tiredness in the classroom was an issue I had to contend with on a number of occasions, sometimes because of the effort required to maintain an approachable, friendly demeanour whilst making mental notes of ongoing activities and discussions.

Language was a significant barrier to understanding at the beginning of my fieldwork. Initially the participants found great difficulty expressing themselves in English as they entered IILT at A0 and A1 proficiency level. As the students' proficiency developed, they were able to communicate more complex meanings. However, many of the students spoke French much better than they spoke English, and the fact that I am a French speaker helped initial communication in the first weeks of relationship-building.

4.7 Semi-structured audio interviews

The data gathered by participant observation and recorded in logbook form was supplemented by another source of data: semi-structured group interviews. The chief aim of this method of data collection was to record students' experiences in their own words. Rubin and Rubin (1995:2) propose that "understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their world in their own terms". Learning together leads to a shared culture being developed between students. The semi-structured interview can offer an insight into that group culture. By encouraging learners at IILT to talk about their learning process, I aimed to extend my understanding of their experience of the language classroom. I specifically sought to discover more about their enjoyment of class and learning, whether they felt in charge of the learning process, their views on the classroom organization and the use of the ELP, and the factors which may have aided or hampered them in learning English.

4.7.1 Designing and piloting audio interviews

Design of the interviews began during the months prior to fieldwork as I familiarized myself with the school, and continued during the first months of participant observation. Possible interview formats range from unstructured, free-flowing conversations to structured questioning. Three different interview formats were piloted before fieldwork started: unstructured, semi-structured and structured. The structured format produced only succinct responses, and the unstructured format veered quickly off-topic. The format deemed most appropriate for this study was the semi-structured, or focussed, interview. The researcher introduces the topics, and asks some specific questions, but allows conversation to follow the interviewees' responses (Rubin and Rubin 1995:6). Initial questions were prepared during my observation of

classes, weekly routines and issues faced by adult, immigrant learners. I piloted two versions of interviews, with and without a tape recorder. I decided to use a tape recorder as it did not seem to hamper the students' conversation. The interviews conducted were group interviews. Given the low proficiency level of the group, and the strong possibility of shyness, I believed group interviews would be less threatening and more productive than individual interviews.

4.7.2 Description of the audio interview

Group interviews were conducted with two or three students during class time in a location in school. The completed interviews each lasted between forty-five and sixty minutes. I prepared a written list of topics I wanted to discuss in each interview. These topics were: enjoyment of the learning process; thoughts on class organization, specifically the process of target-setting, and the weekly review on Fridays; how targets were selected, personal targets, targets and ambition beyond the classroom; perceptions of competence in language learning, 'good' language learning; self-awareness in the learning process, factors which helped or hindered learning English. I selected the participants in each group, attempting to maintain a balance in terms of extroverts and introverts. Interviews were recorded by cassette recorder, which was placed in the middle of a table. Students sat around the table. There were no observers, everybody spoke. Four group interviews were conducted during a three-week period in late November/early December 2003. The interviews were transcribed using a simplified version of Jefferson's Conversation Analysis conventions (Jefferson 1992) (see Appendix B).

4.7.3 Limitations of audio interviews

One weakness of audio interviews recorded on cassette is the quality of the sound. Unfortunately it was impossible to obtain any suitable digital recording equipment, so the school cassette recorders were the next best option. The sound quality was reasonable, but it required a good ear to ensure that some of the more softly spoken comments were included. This was exacerbated by the difficulty of transcribing group interviews where people are talking over one another, and with a variety of accents. Difficulties in transcription were mitigated by my intimate knowledge of the group

and their idiosyncratic pronunciation. I had no trouble identifying who was speaking at any one time.

The choice of group interview, although less intimidating than one-on-one interviews may have meant that the more confident group members dominated conversation. It is difficult to ascertain whether this was the case. The group format seemed however to create a relaxed interview environment. The presence of some strong personalities also led to the interview following their conversational direction. It was sometimes difficult to guide the group back on topic when individuals had a specific agenda to discuss. The aim of the interviews was to gain more understanding of the group's shared culture, in their own words. I allowed the dialogue to follow tangential topics if the group expressed a strong interest in doing so.

4.8 Questionnaires administered in IILT

As discussed earlier in Section 4.3.2, questionnaires may be used to supplement other data collection techniques in qualitative research (e.g. Sanders 1995). Although questionnaires are unlikely to lead to the type of detailed and rich data that participant observation and interviews may yield (Dörnyei 2003b:14), they do offer an efficient means of asking a group of people a range of questions. Their answers can lead the researcher to dig deeper using other methods. In longitudinal fieldwork, questionnaires enable the researcher to conduct time-sampling, by asking the same questions at different intervals.

The disadvantages of questionnaires are well documented (Nunan 1992:143-145; Dörnyei 2003b:10-14), and poorly constructed and administered questionnaires threaten the reliability and validity of research. Respondents do not tend to spend much time on filling in questionnaires and problems of comprehension cannot always be verified. Often people try to second-guess the answers to put themselves in a positive light, described as the "halo effect" (Dörnyei 2003b:13). Question wording is tricky. Questions should ask only one thing at a time in a neutral, culturally sensitive manner (Nunan 1992:143), and researchers must be particularly careful about leading questions.

When deciding which questions to ask in a questionnaire, it is important that the content is theory-driven. Dörnyei states that the initial design stage "should focus on clarifying the research problem and identifying what critical concepts need to be addressed by the questionnaire" (2003b:31). This might be enabled by prior qualitative research in the field, directing the researcher towards key areas. Fink (1995:18) calls for "purposeful questions" that are "logically related" to the objectives of the questionnaire.

In the following section I describe two types of questionnaires used during my fieldwork: a closed-format attitudinal questionnaire administered at four different intervals, and an open-format attitudinal questionnaire administered on leaving the field.

4.8.1 Description of the closed-format questionnaire

Given that the objective of my fieldwork was to investigate the motivational role of goal-setting in the language classroom, and to discover how the ELP might act as a support to learner motivation, the use of a closed-format questionnaire administered at different intervals throughout the academic year would enable me to examine the temporal dynamic of learners' motivational processes. I sought to discern whether the participants were enjoying learning English, whether they felt proficient, whether they believed that learning English was worth the effort, whether they were acting in accordance with their own wishes, and whether the process was useful for their future plans. I sought to investigate these variables by formulating four subscales: (i) interest/enjoyment (intrinsic motivation); (ii) perceived competence as learners of English; (iii) attitudes towards the process of goal-setting. The goal-setting subscale was subdivided into: (iiia) perceived usefulness of goal-setting activities, and (iiib) enjoyment (intrinsic motivation) of goal-setting activities.

As the participants of this project had a low level of proficiency in English and questionnaires would be completed during class time, designing a short and simple questionnaire was crucial. Moreover, by the time immigrants have been granted leave to remain in Ireland, they will have filled out inordinate amounts of paperwork. I did not want my questionnaires to remind them of red tape. An A4 sheet of paper seemed the maximum length they would want to deal with. Dörnyei believes that "producing

an attractive and professional design is half the battle in eliciting reliable and valid data" (Dörnyei 2003a:19). The questionnaires were printed on good quality, brightly coloured paper with the same friendly font (Comic Sans MS) as was used in their class handouts. Twenty short items with a Likert scale from 1-5 fitted on to one A4 side (see Appendix C). No instructions were printed on the questionnaire. I gave instructions orally in class. I informed students that the questionnaire was for the purpose of my research on language learning, that there were no right or wrong answers, and that no one else would see the responses but myself. Students signed a consent form, which guaranteed the confidentiality of all information.

4.8.2 Writing questionnaire items

The use of Likert scales involves writing statements which will engender varying levels of agreement and disagreement from respondents. It takes time and attention to create statements which are sufficiently strong without being overly controversial. Oppenheim remarks, "the writing of successful attitude statements demands careful pilot work, experience, intuition and a certain amount of flair" (1992:180). Dörnyei notes that it is not an entirely scientific endeavour, but one that also calls for "a certain amount of creativity and lots of common sense" (2003a:51).

Dörnyei sums up the major pitfalls of wording statements, and warns against ambiguous or loaded items, negative constructions, asking two questions in one statement, and questions which would prompt the same response from everybody. He also recommends including both positively and negatively worded items (Dörnyei 2003a:54-56). Fink reminds researchers to avoid slang, jargon and biased, emotive language (1995:24-26).

Oppenheim similarly lays down some basic ground rules for wording items (1992:128-130) and attitude statements (ibid.:179). He emphasizes that as well as being easy to understand and interpret, such statements should arouse the interest of respondents; they should be "meaningful and interesting" (ibid.). The questionnaire should start with non-threatening statements to help respondents become familiar with the style and answering procedure (ibid.:181). Dörnyei calls this creating a "pleasant first impression" (2003a:61).

Fink advises designers to adopt or adapt questions that have been used in established questionnaires (1995:25), and to have questions reviewed by individuals in a similar situation to the future respondents . This allows the researcher to ensure the language and content of the questionnaire are appropriate and comprehensible. Dörnyei echoes this advice in recommending two additional sources for designers to draw upon when writing statements: "qualitative, exploratory data" (2003a:52) gathered in the field, and published questionnaires. I drew on both these sources in devising items for the closed-format questionnaire. I started writing the items during the pilot phase of the project, which also helped me gauge the students' proficiency in English.

4.8.3 Multi-item scales

Asking the same question a number of times in different ways increases the accuracy and reliability of responses. Dörnyei (2003a:33) reports how changing the wording of a question from *forbid* to *not allow* dramatically changed the answers given. Using a cluster of questions focussing on one key notion helps "maximize the stable component that the items share and reduce[s] the extraneous influences unique to the individual items" (ibid.:34). The separate scores generated for the clusters of items can subsequently be added together to create a total scale score. I produced between three and six items for each subscale (see Figure 5.2, Chapter 5).

4.8.4 Rating scales

One advantage of closed-format questions is the ease of coding and scoring. Rating scales can be created for the responses. I employed a simplified Likert scale with five points instead of a seven-point scale. Likert scales are one of the most popular means of scaling (Oppenheim 1992:195). Fink (1995:53) states that a five-point scale is adequate. Likert scales consist of an attitude continuum (Oppenheim 1992:195). Respondents read a series of statements which correspond to various degrees of agreement (Dörnyei 2003a:37), for instance: *coming to school by public transport is troublesome*. Such scales are widely used in many walks of life, and almost everyone will have come across this mode of questionnaire at some point.

IILT learners are familiar with three-point Likert scales when they fill in their European Language Portfolios. The ELP asks whether they have completed a task

"with a lot of help", "with a little help", "with no help" (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4). I chose a pictorial response format instead of words to enhance the questionnaire's simplicity. I used the emoticons ☺ and ☹ to represent each end of the scale (*yes I agree/no I disagree*), with numerical ratings from one to five. When wording the statements, care has to be taken to create items that genuinely prompt a response, whether agreement or disagreement. The score of negatively worded questions is reversed before analysis. I included five negative statements.

Questionnaire designers may avoid odd-numbered scales with a middle category for undecided (*neither agree nor disagree*), which corresponds to the numerical rating of three in this questionnaire. However, for the purpose of this project I was unconcerned with the prospect of some undecided responses, particularly as the questionnaire would be administered on a number of different occasions. Any undecided responses might change over time.

4.8.5 Questionnaires consulted

I consulted a range of motivational questionnaires: Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (Gardner 1985b), Dörnyei's 1990 motivation questionnaire (2001:261), and Clément et al.'s 1994 motivation questionnaire (Dörnyei 2001:264). I also drew extensively upon two questionnaires from Self-Determination Theory: the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) and the Perceived Competence Scale (PCS) (Deci and Ryan 2005).

The IMI investigates the subjective experience of participants as they conduct experimental tasks. The questionnaire was developed to measure individuals' intrinsic motivation as they engaged in interesting tasks in controlled circumstances. The subscales of the IMI assess levels of interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, effort, value/usefulness, felt pressure and tension, and perceived choice. The PCS is a group of short questionnaires designed to assess individuals' perceptions of competence when completing tasks or in a wider domain of activity. Although designed for measuring individuals' post-experimental experiences, both questionnaires were also suitable for the type of attitudinal questionnaire I aimed to administer in class.

Investigating subjects' experiences of participating in a controlled task can be adapted to investigating their experience of tasks in a naturalistic setting.

4.8.6 Piloting the questionnaire

Dörnyei warns that attempts to shortcut piloting jeopardize the psychometric properties of questionnaires (2003a:65). Oppenheim points out that piloting saves time later in the project, and irons out administrative matters which otherwise might pose problems (1992:64). He also argues that far from being a tedious, pre-fieldwork task, pilot work is a rewarding challenge resulting in the satisfaction which comes from "seeing the emergence of a short, reliable scale from the mass of pilot data" (ibid.). This was my aim as I began piloting.

I designed my questionnaire during a three-month pilot period spent in IILT prior to my fieldwork. I attended class on a weekly basis and began making notes of the vocabulary used to describe learning, activities and goal-setting. The class was composed of complete beginners (A0), a similar proficiency level to the group I would eventually join as a participant observer. I examined the format of the weekly review completed on Fridays by all students. This input allowed me to adapt questions from consulted questionnaires, and to select relevant vocabulary. From my notes I created a pool of some fifty questions. I gradually halved the questions by deciding which were more suitable for later interviews or an open-format questionnaire. I devised a pilot questionnaire with the remaining questions and administered it to the class, as well as a second class of A2/B1 proficiency level. Students and teachers gave me feedback on choice of vocabulary, administration and scoring.

I made a number of adjustments after piloting the questionnaire amongst students and consulting their teachers. I changed the word *goal* to *target* to reflect the language used in their version of the ELP and their weekly review. I simplified some vocabulary; for instance, replacing *I worry when I speak English in front of everyone else in class* with *I worry when I speak English in front of the others in class.* Whilst I aimed to create as simple a questionnaire as possible, replacing or simplifying certain items did not seem feasible as it would alter the fundamental research questions. I took the decision to go through the questionnaire with the class during subsequent

administrations and verify that the respondents understood the items I knew might pose problems. For example, I explained the word *confident* as *not worried, strong, happy*, and made yawning gestures for *boring*.

Dörnyei recommends analyzing the range of scores during piloting as well as comprehension levels (2003a:68). This is to ensure that the statements do not generate the same responses from all students, and that there is a level of variation. Within the subscales there should be a certain homogeneity of responses, with a level of correlation between the separate items (ibid.:69). No specific tests for internal consistency reliability were carried out, however initial piloting seemed to indicate a satisfactory variety of responses from individuals as well as corresponding scores within the five subscales.

After analyzing the responses, I piloted a revised version of the questionnaire, and was satisfied with both the comprehension levels of students and the time it took to complete – between ten and fifteen minutes. I confirmed with teachers that the administration time would be acceptable, as I planned for students to complete the questionnaires in class time.

4.8.7 Limitations of the questionnaire

The major limitation of the questionnaire was comprehension. Proficiency levels of the students were low, particularly during the first two administrations in June and August. I considered translating questionnaires into the L1s of the students, but decided against this step, as it would have been too time-consuming to find translators for the range of languages. Instead I focussed on simplifying the questions as much as possible whilst still retaining the original meaning, and explaining vocabulary when required during administration. A longer questionnaire would have enhanced its reliability with an increased number of items, but I was conscious that students' attention span was quite limited, and I did not want to take up too much class time.

The attendance records and drop-out rate of students were also limiting factors, as well as the arrival of new students. No student was present for all four administrations; most students completed either two or three questionnaires (see Table 5.6 in Chapter

5). Not all students in the study completed questionnaires. Longitudinal studies often suffer from high attrition rates, and this is a particular problem in the domain of immigrant education where the turnover of students is considerable.

The questionnaire was not designed as an accurate instrument to measure motivation, but rather as a supplemental instrument to help track any changes in motivation during the year. The limited sample size with a changing profile of students would have posed a problem for other research designs, but in this case it was simply indicative of conditions in the field, and demonstrated the advantages of a multi-method approach to data gathering.

4.8.8 Open-format attitudinal questionnaire

An open-format attitudinal questionnaire was administered to students at the end of my twelve months of fieldwork. The aim of this questionnaire was to obtain further data on learning and motivation in the students' own words. Open-format attitudinal questionnaires are relatively easy to design; no possible responses are provided, and no rating scales are required. The difficulty however lies in analyzing the responses. They provide a means of obtaining rich data and extensive information, depending on how much space is provided for the responses. Such detailed and varied information can be hard to code. The spontaneity of answers in the own words of the group is a valuable resource, but there is also the risk that the answers simply reflect "just what happens to be uppermost in their minds at the time" (Oppenheim 1992:113).

The open-format questionnaire was designed during fieldwork. I started to compile a list of questions that had already been touched on in the closed-format questionnaire and the interviews. I also drew on Ushioda's (1996b) questioning of undergraduate students studying French. Given the students' improved proficiency in English, I was able to ask more complex questions than had been possible at the start of the year. Fourteen questions were compiled which focussed on motivational thinking, perceived control and target-setting. The questions were listed on one side of an A4 sheet (Appendix D). No space was given for responses. Students were given the questionnaire at the end of class, and asked to answer the questions on a separate sheet, at home.

One problem with using an open-format questionnaire is knowing when to stop asking. Inductive research may throw up more questions than answers, and I approached the questionnaire with a large pool of potential items. Language remained an issue. Although their level of English had improved, students completed the questionnaires in their own time and I was unable to check comprehension. A few responses indicated a lack of understanding.

4.9 Supplementary data

A number of further sources of data used to supplement the information gathered by the three main techniques described above. Ethnographic research aims to reassemble the reality of the group under investigation in narrative form. As discussed earlier in Section 4.2.3, multiple data sources help the researcher to construct a meticulous narrative and recreate their experience of the field.

The chief source of supplemental data collection was provided by the teachers, Susan and Tim. Teachers often have an intimate knowledge of their students, the difficulties they face as well as their strong points. Although this data may be skewed for very human reasons, the teacher's perspective cannot be ignored. To this end, I asked the teachers at the beginning of my fieldwork to provide me with written details about the students in the group under investigation. I gave no detailed or written instructions, but asked for their first impressions of the group as learners. I conducted a sixty-minute audio interview with both teachers at the end of fieldwork. I asked them again for their impressions of each student, their learning progress and motivation.

The second source of data was obtained by access to student records. The school management were most co-operative in allowing me access to their archives of student attendance, punctuality and reports, both the internal reports on student progress, and the reports given to students at the end of each term. I was permitted to make handwritten notes from these records, which I subsequently reconstructed in typed form (Appendix E).

Finally, throughout the year I compiled a collection of documents from class work (Appendices F, G, H). I took some photographs of board work and target-setting

posters. I kept a range of handouts, and three students were most co-operative in loaning me their European Language Portfolios.

4.10 Ethics and fieldwork at IILT

A fundamental aspect of the fieldwork conducted at IILT was attention to conducting ethical research. The importance of this is stressed by LeCompte and Preissle (1993:106). Recent years have seen a quantum leap forward in sensitivity about the political nature of ethnography and the responsibilities of the researcher towards the group under investigation. LeCompte and Preissle (ibid.) discuss the effects of fieldwork on individuals, and their vulnerability. I touch on these questions with reference to my own fieldwork.

The participants rarely choose to be investigated. The researcher therefore has the heavy responsibility to prevent their names being identified in any publications, and to protect them from any possible retribution or publicity. This is particularly vital in the case of immigrants who are extremely suspicious of any authority. The true details of how they arrived in Ireland might be at odds with their account on record. The financial struggles of immigrant workers mean that they may well purchase goods on the black market, or try to obtain more than their entitlements from the State.

When trust has been built up, it is difficult to stop people sharing details that may be extremely sensitive. In some cases, after a sustained period of fieldwork, the group forgets that there is a researcher present, or fail to understand that there will be a publication about them in the near future. A fundamental step to protecting subjects is a complete guarantee of confidentiality, including disguising the identities of the group in such as a way as to prevent their names being associated with the pseudonyms published, yet without confounding important variables. Anonymity is impossible to provide in the case of face-to-face fieldwork, as the researcher always knows who did and said what. Responsibility ultimately lies with the researcher to ensure that no harm comes to the group because of their participation in the study.

Some groups are more vulnerable than others due to their status in society, for instance because of their age or social history. In these cases even more care must be

taken by the ethnographer to protect their status and identities. Refugees are a very vulnerable social group, subject to much racism and abuse in the press. They may have psychological problems and health care issues. Their background, journeys to Ireland and demand for refugee status mean that they are unlike any other group of language students, and their need for confidentiality and sensitive treatment is much greater.

The students and teachers at IILT knew that I was conducting research on language learning, and that I was interested in the areas of motivation and goal-setting, and granted me permission to gather information. However, there is a difference between knowing someone is conducting research, and knowing what the finished product will resemble. Informed consent and confidentiality were matters of importance. I summarize how ethical matters were approached in this study.

A vast amount of data was gathered during my twelve months of fieldwork. As well as personal data, there was also some very sensitive data. I took steps to ensure that the data would be in my possession alone. I did not carry any accumulated data when at IILT. As soon as questionnaires, interviews or field notes were completed, I took all data home. All field notes were typed up on my personal home computer. Backup copies were stored in a locked cupboard in another location. Audio cassettes were played and transcribed at home. Pseudonyms were created for the students and the teachers. Although I disguised their identities, I did want to maintain some coherence in the narrative, so names from their respective ethnicities were used and gender remained unchanged.

I provided a detailed ethical guarantee for IILT. I undertook to cite all data anonymously, and to use it for research purposes only. I guaranteed that I would obtain written permission from the students and teachers to use the data elicited from them anonymously, and for research purposes only, and to provide a copy of this written permission for IILT. I undertook to include a disclaimer in my thesis and any other work proceeding from my fieldwork to the effect that my work does not necessarily represent the views of Integrate Ireland Language and Training. I agreed to obtain written approval from IILT for all descriptions of its aims, purposes and activities included in my thesis and any other publications or presentations.

I provided students with a signed guarantee that the questionnaires, interviews and research conducted in class was for the purposes of my thesis alone, and that their identities would not be revealed. Students signed a consent form giving me their permission to use the confidential data for the purposes of my study:

> I give Lorna Carson my permission to use the information she has about me learning English in IILT (questionnaires, interviews, folder work), as long as she promises to use this information anonymously (without using my name), and only for her research at Trinity College, Dublin.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed ethnographic research in theory, and the empirical design of this ethnographic study in practice. I discussed the general characteristics of ethnography as an inductive research conducted in naturalistic settings, drawing on multiple data sources. I mentioned the limitations and challenges of this approach. I then proceeded to examine the empirical design of fieldwork conducted at Integrate Ireland Language and Training amongst a group of adult immigrant learners of English. I explored the aims of the fieldwork, and the techniques I used to gather data about motivation, goal-setting and the European Language Portfolio.

Chapter 5 describes the empirical study in practice. I outline the characteristics of the site of fieldwork and the language learners who became involved in my investigation. I give a short account of the different types of data gathered, and summarize the results from each data collection instrument.

Chapter 5
Fieldwork description

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a description of Integrate Ireland Language and Training, the site where fieldwork was conducted. I outline its structure, summarize its core functions, and describe the General English classes available for adult refugees. I give a description of the various premises used by IILT during the course of my fieldwork. I then give an account of how a group of students from IILT were selected as subjects for the purposes of this study. I proceed to describe some general characteristics of these students: age, gender, nationality, family situation and educational background. The remainder of the chapter looks at the specific type of data collected with learners at IILT.

5.2 Integrate Ireland Language and Training

Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT) is the government-designated body responsible for co-ordinating English as a Second Language provision for adult refugees in Ireland. Adult learners of different nationalities with refugee status or leave to remain are entitled to attend English classes at one of IILT's centres throughout Ireland. All individuals eligible to take English courses with Integrate Ireland Language and Training have been granted 'Stamp 4' on their Garda National Immigration Bureau card (Chapter 2, Section 2.9.1).

In 1996, the Refugee Agency commissioned the Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) in Trinity College, Dublin, to produce a report investigating the language needs of refugees (Little and Lazenby-Simpson 1996). Following recommendations made in the report, the Refugee Language Support Unit was established by the Department of Education and Science in 1998 as a two-year pilot project, under the auspices of the CLCS. In 2001, the RLSU was re-established as a campus company of Trinity College, and was renamed Integrate Ireland Language and Training.

5.2.1 *The location and organization*

IILT has developed from a small Dublin-based pilot project into a large organization operating on a national level. Its Dublin headquarters house the administrative and research operations, as well as providing General English classes. IILT is run by a Board of Directors with representatives from Trinity College, Dublin; FÁS, the Irish training and employment authority; and the Department of Education and Science. It is administered by two Directors and two Managers, and currently employs approximately twenty English language teachers.

The mission statement of IILT is "through education and training, to empower people of other cultures and languages to achieve a place in Irish society" (IILT 2006). Its core functions are providing English training for adult refugees, and supporting teachers of English as a Second Language in primary and post-primary schools. These core functions are implemented through a range of activities. English language teaching is provided through General English courses, as well as pre-vocational English classes delivered in collaboration with FÁS.

5.2.2 *Profile of learners*

All adult refugees and individuals granted leave to remain in Ireland are eligible for English language training at IILT. In 2004, 529 learners were enrolled in General English classes. Of these, 59% were male and 41% female. Learners attending classes run by IILT tend to reflect the top countries of origin of refugees described in Chapter 2, Table 2.1. In 2004, the six principal nationalities of learners were Congolese (15%), Angolan (7%), Romanian (6%), Ukrainian (6%) and Russian (4%), with sixty-eight other nationalities represented. In 2003, the six principal nationalities represented were Congolese (13%), Romanian (9%), Iraqi (7%), Angolan (7%), Moldovan (6%), and Ukrainian (5%). Fifty-two other nationalities were represented. The student body represents a diversity of nationalities, ethnicities and languages (IILT 2005:5).

5.2.3 *General English classes*

General English classes are organized on a full-time basis for twenty classroom contact hours each week, in addition to ten hours of self-access study and homework. There are two sessions of classes held daily, morning and afternoon, with fifteen students per class. Courses are ongoing throughout the year, with three terms of sixteen to seventeen weeks. All levels of proficiency in English are provided for, from learners who have no or very low literacy skills in their L1 to those who have prior academic or professional qualifications and wish either to register as a professional in Ireland, or to enter third-level education. General English classes are offered across the first four of the six Common Reference Levels (A1 – B2) of the Council of Europe, with some learners entering at A0 level.

In 2004, 715 learners attended IILT's General English classes at eight different centres across Ireland (IILT 2005:5) Through General English classes appropriate to the needs of refugees, IILT aims to help those who arrive in Ireland from non-English speaking countries to integrate into Irish society. As well as providing language knowledge and skills to facilitate integration into the host society, the main focus of the General English course is to help learners identify and prepare for potential future employment opportunities.

An integral part of IILT's approach to English as a Second Language provision for refugees is the use of the European Language Portfolio in all classes and for all proficiency levels, encouraging students to take responsibility for their individual learning. Learners are assisted in developing individual learning agendas which respond to their personal needs, and are introduced to the notion of goal-setting in the classroom. IILT aims to help learners become autonomous, and teachers systematically encourage students to assume responsibility for the content and the modalities of the course, as well as encouraging ongoing self-evaluation and reflection on the learning process.

5.2.4 *Fieldwork at IILT*

As I have already mentioned, IILT was established relatively recently, and has undergone rapid growth in its activities and student numbers. As its teaching and administrative operations have expanded, IILT has moved premises several times in Dublin. During fieldwork, there were two moves, from the premises it had been using since 2001 at Grand Canal Quay, Dublin 2, to a larger building on Pembroke Road, Dublin 4, via temporary premises for one month.

5.2.5 *School premises*

The first months of fieldwork were conducted at Grand Canal Quay. These premises were rather small and ill-suited for the needs of an expanding organization. The building had previously been part of a warehouse complex and had been converted for use by IILT. From the entrance hall and reception area at street level, stairs led down to a corridor and six partitioned classrooms. Facilities were rather basic. There was a whiteboard and small folding wooden desks with chairs in each classroom. Posters with the class contracts, vocabulary and weekly targets were displayed on the walls. There were no windows on this level, and heating was provided by movable electric radiators. There was a small student kitchen and a prayer room. A short flight of stairs out of the reception area led up to a staff room with shared computers for teachers, desks and bookshelves of resources around the outside of the room. Two round tables occupied the centre of the room, used for coffee and lunch breaks. Further offices for the administrators led off the staff room.

The move to larger premises occurred in two stages in the autumn of 2003, during the second term of my participant observation. The first move was to temporary premises within walking distance of Grand Canal Quay, in the Trinity Enterprise Centre on Pearse Street. Again, these were business premises. Classrooms were set up in various rooms, with one large office space divided by shoulder-high partitions into three separate classes. Classes were conducted at these premises for about one month before the move to a building on Pembroke Road.

The building on Pembroke Road had previously housed part of UCD's veterinary college. IILT moved into part of the ground floor and first floor of these premises. The ground floor housed the reception and a large entrance hall with sofas. Photographs of the staff were on the walls, as well as various awards won by the school. To the right, a corridor led to the administrative offices of the managers and support staff. A wide staircase led upstairs to the classrooms, teachers' offices, staff and student kitchens and prayer room. There was also a student computer and resource room at the end of the corridor of classrooms. Large noticeboards outside each classroom showed examples of classwork, classroom doors had photographs of students and teachers stuck on them. As in the previous premises, the classrooms contained whiteboards, folding wooden desks and chairs. Again the walls were covered with posters of the class contract, weekly target-setting and vocabulary. Apart from the increase in space available for offices and classrooms, these premises were immediately more appealing due to the amount of natural light and central heating throughout.

5.3 Description of subjects

In the next section, I give an account of how subjects were selected during fieldwork. I then explain how a group of thirteen students emerged as participants through their regular attendance and progression to the same proficiency level at the end of the first and second terms. Some ethnographers may reject the use of terms such as *subject, participant* and *respondent* when writing up ethnographic research. Whereas I recognize that to some, these terms may appear clinical, I believe that they are appropriate for this thesis, not least for the sake of variety. I also refer to the individuals as *students*, *learners*, and by their pseudonyms.

5.3.1 Selection of subjects

As mentioned in Chapter 4, this is a study of a specific group of language learners, and the choice of IILT was a "unique-case selection" (LeCompte and Preissle 1993:62). Thus the choice of site and learner group were both selections rather than samples. Within IILT, the learners whom I selected to participate in data collection were not a representative sample of IILT. When choosing students, I sought individuals who were happy to

participate in the project, and who gave me permission to use the data. Attrition amongst learners meant that that some individuals dropped out along the way.

Longitudinal studies almost always suffer from an attrition rate amongst participants. This is particularly the case in non-compulsory language learning for adults. In 2004, 12.5% of students enrolled at IILT left after three months' study and before completing twelve months of training, for unknown reasons. A further 6% voluntarily took a leave of absence from classes, with the option to return to complete their training at a later date. 10.5% of students enrolled left during the year for personal reasons, such as family responsibilities and childcare needs. Others leave for employment or training opportunities. There is a high turnover rate of students in such a training centre (IILT 2005:7).

This study gathered data over a twelve-month period about thirteen learners at IILT. The subjects of this study were not pre-selected or chosen in the first instance, but gradually emerged as a core group. There was considerable movement in classrooms where I was observing, due to students dropping out or moving up proficiency levels at the end of term, so it would have been impossible to select a class and conduct participant observation alongside the same stable group of learners for a prolonged period. I commenced fieldwork with the lowest proficiency level of learners in the hope that some would remain at IILT for twelve months.

5.3.2 Gradual composition of the group

Fieldwork took place between May 2003 and April 2004, over three terms of four months each. As described in the previous chapter (Section 4.4.4), I spent the first two terms in Susan's A0 and A1 classes, and the third term in Tim's A2 class. At the end of the first and second terms, I made the decision to remain with the largest group of students to ensure continuity.

The first group of students to participate in the study were all learners enrolled in Susan's A0, May – August 2003 class. At the end of the first term, five of these students (Eduardo, Tomasz, Alina, Neda and Pin) moved up together into Susan's A1, September –

December 2003 class. Two students from the first term moved up to a different higher proficiency level (Tatjana and Mina, A2). The participation of these seven students in the project was determined by their regular attendance on the days of my visits. Although Tatjana and Mina moved up a level and were not present for any further participant observation, they were keen to continue completing questionnaires and to participate in an audio interview. New students joined Susan's A1 September – December 2003 class: Vladimir, Rose, Adrian, Samira, Ivan and Nicolae. These students became participants in this study. At the start of the third term, a group of students again remained together: Eduardo, Vladimir, Tomasz, Alina, Adrian, Neda, Pin, Ivan and Nicolae. They all moved up a proficiency level to Tim's A2, January – April 2004 class. Neda left shortly after the start of the new term; Samira moved up to a higher proficiency level along with Rose (B1).

Other students were present in each of the three classes where I conducted participant observation, but were not involved in extensive data collection. These other students are mentioned in fieldnotes, and some completed questionnaires in class, but they do not form part of the core group of thirteen students either because of their early departure from IILT, or lack of regular attendance on the days when I conducted participant observation and other data gathering. The following table illustrates the enrolment and length of study of the thirteen students tracked in this project. Their presence during participant observation is indicated by a bold dash **—** . Students who moved up a level into a class where I did not conduct participant observation, but who continued to participate in other forms of data collection, are indicated by a triangle pointing upwards ▲. Students who left IILT during the four month term are indicated by triangle pointing to the right ►.

Students	May –Aug 2003 A0 level	Sept – Dec 2003 A1 level	Jan – April 2004 A2 level
Adrian		—	—
Alina	—	—	—
Eduardo	—	—	—
Ivan		—	—
Mina	—	▲	
Neda	—	—	▶
Nicolae		—	—
Pin	—	—	—
Rose		—	▲
Samira		—	▲
Tatjana	—	▲	
Tomasz	—	—	—
Vladimir		—	—

Table 5.1: students involved in data collection

Of the thirteen students who participated in extensive data collection, I conducted participant observation for twelve months alongside four of the learners: Eduardo, Tomasz, Alina and Pin. I observed five of the learners for eight months: Vladimir, Adrian, Neda, Ivan and Nicolae. Four of the learners were present for three months of participant observation: Rose, Tatjana, Mina and Samira.

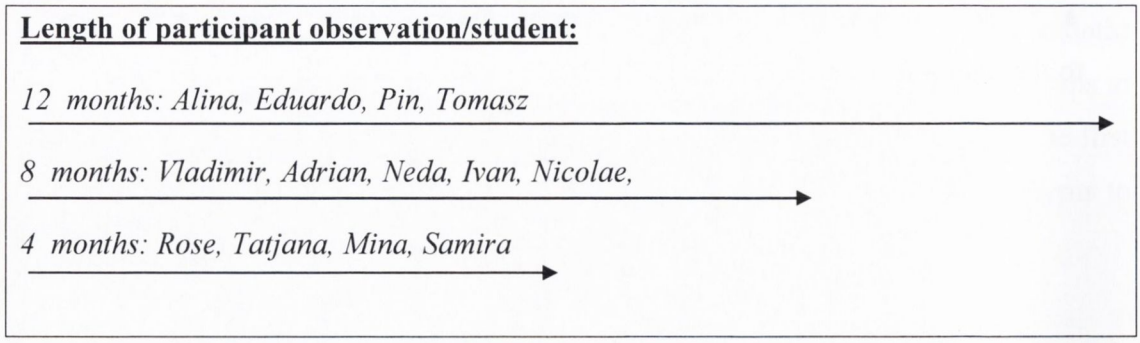


Figure 5.1: length of participation/student in fieldwork

5.4 Characteristics of participants

In this section, I present some characteristics of the thirteen students. While there was no attempt made to obtain a representative sample of learners, the group does in fact reflect most of the patterns of enrolment at IILT in terms of gender, age and nationality.

5.4.1 Gender, age, nationality and family situation

Starting first with gender, the group was made up of seven men and six women. This reflects the gender profile of the General English courses at IILT, where in 2004, 58% of students were male and 42% were female (IILT 2005:5). In terms of age, all of the group were within the 25-50 years age range. In 2004, 81% of students taking the General English course were aged between 25 and 50 years, with 19% aged either under 25 or over 50 (ibid.).

The nationalities of the group were heterogeneous. There were two African students, from Angola and D.R. Congo; one Asian student from Vietnam; three Middle Eastern students, two from Iraq and one from Afghanistan. The remainder of the group were from Eastern Europe: Romania (three students), Moldova (two students), Poland (one student) and Bosnia (one student). As mentioned previously in this chapter, the principal nationalities represented in IILT in 2003 and 2004 were Congolese, Angolan, Iraqi, Romanian, Ukrainian, Moldovan and Russian.

All of the group apart from Samira were married. Four students out of thirteen had no children: Samira, Mina, Neda and Pin. Tatjana was pregnant when I started participant observation and she left IILT before the birth of the baby. Eduardo's third child was born at the time of fieldwork. Mina and Neda were hoping to have children in the near future.

Student	Gender	Date of Birth	Age during fieldwork in 2004	Nationality	Secondary Education	Third-level Education	Children at time of fieldwork
Adrian	M	1973	31	Romanian	Y	N	2
Alina	F	1974	30	Romanian	Y	N	1
Eduardo	M	1960	44	Angolan	Y	Y	3
Ivan	M	1976	28	Moldovan	Y	Y	2
Mina	F	1971	33	Iraqi Kurd	Y	N	0
Neda	F	1974	30	Iraqi	Y	N	0
Nicolae	M	1973	31	Moldovan	Y	Y	1
Pin	M	1963	41	Vietnamese	Y	N	0
Rose	F	1970	34	Congolese	Y	N	1
Samira	F	1977	27	Afghan	Y	N	0
Tatjana	F	1979	25	Bosnian	Y	N	pregnant
Tomasz	M	1978	26	Polish	Y	N	2
Vladimir	M	1968	36	Romanian	Y	N	2

Table 5.2: breakdown of student characteristics

5.4.2 *Educational background*

The educational background of the students was rather similar, as all had secondary level education in their home countries. This is not always the case at IILT where some students may have only completed primary education. Three of the group had continued with further education, two at vocational college level and one at university level. Both Ivan and Nicolae had three years of vocational training in mechanics and construction engineering respectively, and Eduardo had qualified as an architect.

5.4.3 *Previous language learning*

Most of the group had some previous experience of formal language learning, and had at least a basic knowledge of another language in addition to their L1. The following details are an amalgam of information given by students on enrolling at IILT, and information collected during fieldwork. Some L2s spoken by students were second languages, such as Portuguese and French for the African students, and Dari for the Afghan student. The

Moldovan students were taught through Russian at school. Other students had some experience of foreign language learning at secondary level, such as French or German. Most of them had some experience of learning English at secondary level, apart from Tatjana and Alina who were absolute beginners. For seven students, learning English also involved learning the Roman alphabet. Although it is difficult to determine the extent of proficiency and experience of formal learning in second and foreign languages, the following table indicates students' L1s, their L1 writing systems and any knowledge of second or foreign languages.

Students	L1	L1 Writing system	Second/foreign Languages
Adrian	Romanian	Roman alphabet	French
Alina	Romanian	Roman alphabet	Russian
Eduardo	Kikongo	Roman alphabet	Portuguese, French, Lingala
Ivan	Moldovan (Romanian)	Cyrillic alphabet	Russian
Mina	Kurdish	Arabic alphabet	Arabic
Neda	Arabic	Arabic alphabet	
Nicolae	Moldovan (Romanian)	Cyrillic alphabet	Russian, French
Pin	Vietnamese	Non-alphabetic system	French
Rose	Kingwana	Roman alphabet	French, Lingala
Samira	Pashto	Arabic alphabet	Dari, Arabic
Tatjana	Bosnian	Cyrillic alphabet	Russian
Tomasz	Polish	Roman alphabet	Russian, German
Vladimir	Romanian	Roman alphabet	French

Table 5.3: students' L1s, L1 writing systems and second/foreign languages

The diversity of this group of students is obvious in terms of nationality, L1 and L1 writing systems. However, these thirteen adult learners shared some common characteristics. All had attended secondary school, and most had learned a little English there and spoke at least one other second or foreign language to some extent. Almost all the students were married with children, and most were in the same age bracket, in their late twenties and early thirties.

Having explained how a core group of students gradually emerged as participants, and having presented some of the key characteristics of this group, I provide a brief description of the setting where data collection occurred before describing the data gathered there.

5.5 *Overview of data collected*

The next section provides a brief overview of the type of data collected, its format, and source. Thirteen students participated in this project, but not all students were involved throughout the duration of the project, and some were absent during different data-gathering exercises.

5.5.1 *Participant observation*

The data collected through participant observation can be classified in two ways: factual data recording activities, participants, and events, and impressionistic data noting my own perspective on what I believed was taking place on the classroom – struggles, challenges, breakthroughs. These impressions are corroborated and completed by other data, chiefly the audio interviews with both learners and teachers which frequently offer accounts of the same situations. The data from participant observation forms a logbook which provides a chronological account of classroom events, conversations and tasks over twelve months. This is the tangible data resulting from my presence in the classroom. The intangible data resulting from participant observation is the familiarity with the individual learners gained by the researcher. It is impossible to record this data, but spending extended periods of time with individuals must surely add a further dimension to the narrative of their learning experience. Supplementary data was also obtained during observation. This included: photographs of posters with lists of weekly targets (for an example, see Appendix H), photographs of board-work, class handouts (Appendix G), and three European Language Portfolios loaned by Neda, Alina and Tomasz. Further supplementary data triangulating personal observations entered into the logbook was provided by both teachers. Susan annotated the logbook with her comments on specific incidents and students, Tim provided a list of written impressions detailing his first

impressions of students as they moved up to his class, and his thoughts on the nature and level of their learning motivation.

5.5.2 *Audio interviews*

Four semi-structured group interviews were conducted with students. The format of the interview is described in Chapter Four (Section 4.7.2). Interviews were conducted over the period of five weeks, from 1st November to 4th December 2003. The table below specifies the participants in each interview, its date and duration. All students in the group participated in interviews apart from Pin and Vladimir who were absent.

Interview **Date**	**Interview 1** **5/11/2003**	**Interview 2** **11/11/2003**	**Interview 3** **18/11/2003**	**Interview 4** **4/12/2003**
Duration of interview	60 minutes	60 minutes	55 minutes	45 minutes
Interviewees	Alina Ivan Tomasz	Neda Nicolae Rose	Adrian Eduardo Samira	Mina Tatjana

Table 5.4: student participation in audio interviews

The aim of the interview was to cast the spotlight on areas which I believed warranted further attention, beyond the information I was able to glean from classroom observations. I sought students' subjective views on a range of topics in their own words. I prepared a list of questions for each interview, but allowed the conversation to flow as long as students had something to say about the topic. Digressions to topics introduced by students formed part of each interview.

The topics systematically introduced by myself in each interview were: impressions of the new premises (icebreaker question); whether students were enjoying learning English, the classroom environment, learning activities; whether they felt they were making progress; the targets for that week, use of the ELP, the Friday review; future plans and ambitions; the characteristics of successful learners of English. The remaining topics were introduced by the interviewees, and included: watching films and television in English; children, pregnancy, childcare; multiculturalism, new friends, other languages, previous

experiences of learning English; Ireland, freedom, integration, Social Welfare; home countries; specific difficulties faced by adult refugees. The table below lays out the issues discussed in chronological order.

	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4
Topics discussed (chronological order)	• Impressions of new building • Enjoyment of learning English • Making progress in English • Difficulties in learning English • Future ambitions • Coming to school as an adult • Atmosphere in school • Targets for the week • 'Good' students • Experiences of Ireland • Children • Watching TV, films • Travelling to home country • Childcare in Ireland • Christmas plans	• Impressions of new building • Making progress in English • Difficulties in learning English • Watching films, comprehension • Learning French and English, comparison • Learning computer skills • Spelling tests, learning new vocabulary • Why learn English, just for a job or more • Depending on Social Welfare • Integration and learning English • Speaking fluent English • Personal targets, future ambitions • 'Good' students • Problems faced by refugee learners	• Enjoyment of learning English • Classwork • Speaking only English in class • Multicultural classroom, new friends • Making progress in English • Not wanting to change classes • Making progress and age • Targets, ELP • Future ambitions • Angola, orphans • Romania, orphans • Corruption, dictatorships • Experiences of authority in Ireland • Racism • Future plans, need for more English	• Impressions of new building • Getting to school • Pregnancy, maternity hospitals • Miscarriages • Future plans to learn English • Work ambitions • Making progress, coping in daily life • ELP, targets, review • Motivation • Difficulties in learning English • Health problems • Classmates and their English • Atmosphere in school • 'Good' students • Tiredness and learning

Table 5.5: topics discussed in audio interviews

5.5.3 *Closed-format attitudinal questionnaire*

The general design, piloting and administration of the closed-format questionnaire are described in Chapter Four (Section 4.8.1). The aim of the questionnaire was to supplement the other data sources; it was not conceived as a stand-alone instrument. As it was administered four times, at regular intervals, it was hoped than it would help pinpoint any changes in the motivational climate of the classroom. The results provided four sets of 'vertical' data in addition to the 'horizontal', chronological data collected over twelve months during participant observation. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

The questionnaire was composed of three subscales: intrinsic motivation in learning English, that is, the interest and enjoyment experienced by learners; learners' perceived competence as students of English; and attitudes to the process of goal-setting. The goal-setting subscale was further subdivided into learners' opinions of the perceived usefulness of the target-setting activities in class, and their enjoyment (intrinsic motivation) of goal-setting activities. Negative items which were reversed for scoring are indicated as follows: **(R)**.

The *intrinsic motivation in learning English – interest/enjoyment* subscale was measured by six items: (i) 'I like speaking English in class'; (ii) 'Sometimes I think in English in my head'; (iii) 'I like learning English in class'; (iv) 'Learning English often makes me feel happy'; (v) 'Learning English is easy for me'; (vi) 'I just learn English to get a job'**(R)**.

The subscale *learners' perceived competence as students of English* was measured by six items: (i) 'I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class'; (ii) 'I like studying new things in class'; (iii) 'My English is better since coming to class'; (iv) 'I like when we do easy things in class'**(R)**; (v) 'I am confident when I speak English in class'; (vi) 'I like things in class when I think a lot'.

The *interest/enjoyment when setting goals* was measured by five items: (i) 'I like the weekly review on Friday'; (ii) 'I think choosing targets is difficult'**(R)**; (iii) 'I like

working on my targets'; (iv) 'The weekly review on Friday is boring'**(R)**; (v) 'I think setting targets is boring'**(R)**. Learners' *perceived usefulness of goal-setting* was measured by three items: (i) 'It is a good idea to have targets in English class'; (ii) 'I study better when I have targets'; (iii) 'The weekly review on Friday is a good idea'.

The questionnaires were administered four times during fieldwork, at approximately three month intervals. Nine students out of the core group of thirteen students completed questionnaires. Three students completed three questionnaires: Eduardo, Tatjana and Mina. Four students completed two questionnaires: Tomasz, Alina, Adrian and Neda. Two students completed one questionnaire: Vladimir and Nicolae.

Student	Q 1 25 June 2003	Q 2 27 Aug 2003	Q 3 4 Nov 2003	Q 4 4 March 2004
Adrian		•		•
Alina		•		•
Eduardo	•	•		•
Ivan				
Mina	•	•	•	
Neda	•		•	
Nicolae				•
Pin				
Rose				
Samira				
Tatjana	•	•	•	
Tomasz		•		•
Vladimir				•

Table 5.6: questionnaires completed by students

5.5.4 *Questionnaire data*

In the next section, I briefly describe the data gathered by the closed-format questionnaire at four intervals during the year of fieldwork. The global results from each of the four questionnaires are presented in tabular format; scores are represented in simple percentage form and have been rounded up or down to the decimal point. No statistical analysis was carried out. There was a maximum score of five in the response scales, with twenty questions giving a total possible score of 100. The scores of five negative questions have been reversed. The questionnaire comprised four subscales: (1) intrinsic motivation in learning English (interest/enjoyment); (2) learners' perceived competence;

(3a) enjoyment (intrinsic motivation) of goal-setting; (3b) perceived usefulness of goal-setting activities. The subscales are outlined in Figure 5.2 below.

Questionnaire Subscales:

(1) *Intrinsic motivation in learning English* (six items: 1, 3, 16, 18, 19, 20)
(2) *Perceived competence as a learner* (six items: 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17)
(3) *Intrinsic motivation in goal-setting* (five items: 2, 4, 9, 12, 15)
(3b) *Perceived usefulness of goal-setting* (three items: 5, 7, 8)

Figure 5.2 attitudinal questionnaire subscales

5.5.5 *Questionnaire 1*

The first attitudinal questionnaire was administered on June 25th 2003. Students had been studying English in Reception 1 Lower class for almost two months. Four learners from the group of subjects completed the first questionnaire: Eduardo, Mina, Neda and Tatjana.

Qu. no.	Subscale	Statement	Eduardo	Mina	Neda	Tatjana
1	1	I like speaking English in class	5	5	5	5
2	3a	I like the weekly review on Friday	5	5	5	5
3	1	Sometimes I think in English in my head	4	5	3	4
4	3a	*I think choosing targets is difficult (R)*	1	1	2	1
5	3b	It is a good idea to have targets in English class	5	5	5	5
6	2	I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class	5	5	5	5
7	3b	I study better when I have targets	5	5	5	5
8	3b	The weekly review on Friday is a good idea	5	5	5	5
9	3a	I like working on my targets	5	5	4	5
10	2	I like studying new things in class	5	5	5	5
11	2	My English is better since coming to class	3	5	5	3
12	3a	*The weekly review on Friday is boring (R)*	5	5	5	5
13	2	*I like when we do easy things in class (R)*	1	5	1	1
14	2	I am confident when I speak English in class	5	5	3	5
15	3a	*I think setting targets is boring (R)*	5	5	5	5
16	1	I like learning English in class	5	5	5	5
17	2	I like things in class when I think a lot	5	5	5	5
18	1	Learning English often makes me feel happy	5	5	5	5
19	1	Learning English is easy for me	5	3	3	5
20	1	*I just learn English to get a job (R)*	1	5	5	1
		Total score	**85%**	**94%**	**86%**	**87%**

Table 5.7 Results from Questionnaire 1, June 2003

When the responses were totalled, Mina scored 94%; Neda scored 86%; Tatjana scored 87%; Eduardo scored 85%. Six other students completed the questionnaire in addition to

these four students. The lowest score of the ten respondents was 71%, and the highest score 94% (Mina). The mean total score of the ten respondents was 83%. The mean total score of the four subjects of this study was 88%. There was unanimous agreement amongst the four students for twelve statements, where each learner gave the maximum score of five (negative scores were reversed). All other items had mixed responses. The following statements elicited unanimous agreement:

- (1) *I like speaking English in class*
- (2) *I like the weekly review on Friday,*
- (5) *It is a good idea to have targets in English class*
- (6) *I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class*
- (7) *I study better when I have targets*
- (8) *The weekly review on Friday is a good idea*
- (10) *I like studying new things in class*
- (12) *The weekly review on Friday is [not] boring* (reversed)
- (15) *I think setting targets is [not] boring* (reversed)
- (16) *I like learning English in class*
- (17) *I like things in class when I think a lot*
- (18) *Learning English often makes me feel happy*

Some statements prompted mixed responses. Eduardo and Mina both found choosing targets difficult (statement 4), whereas Neda found it quite difficult and Tatjana's response was in the middle of the scale. Only Mina disagreed with the statement *I like it when we do easy things in class* (statement 13). The others agreed entirely. Eduardo and Tatjana thought learning English was easy for them (statement 19). Mina and Neda both agreed that it was neither easy nor difficult. Both Eduardo and Tatjana said they were just learning English to get a job (statement 20).

The scores across the four subscales are quite homogeneous with relatively high scores in each subscale for each student (Table 5.8). Mina stands out from the other three students with the highest perceived competence rating (100%). All four students gave the maximum rating of five in the three statements about the usefulness of the target-setting activities in class. The learners all agreed that targets were a good idea for English class, targets helped them study better, and that the weekly review on Friday was a good idea.

		Eduardo	Mina	Neda	Tatjana
(1)	Intrinsic motivation (interest/enjoyment)	83%	93%	87%	83%
(2)	Perceived competence	80%	100%	80%	80%
(3a)	Enjoyment of goal-setting	84%	84%	84%	92%
(3b)	Perceived usefulness of goal-setting	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5.8 Questionnaire 1, subscale scores

5.5.6 Questionnaire 2

The second questionnaire was administered on August 27th 2003. Students had been learning English in Reception 1 Lower for four months. Their term was almost at an end. The questionnaire was administered on Wednesday; Thursday was a class excursion, and Friday was the last day of term. Six learners completed the questionnaire, and all were part of my group of thirteen subjects. Looking at overall scores, Mina scored 93%, Tatjana scored 92%, Adrian scored 88%, and Eduardo scored 88%. Tomasz and Alina scored the lowest percentages, 74% and 73% respectively.

Qu. no.	Subscale	Statement	Adrian	Alina	Eduardo	Mina	Tatjana	Tomasz
1	1	I like speaking English in class	5	5	5	5	5	5
2	3a	I like the weekly review on Friday	5	5	5	5	5	4
3	1	Sometimes I think in English in my head	2	1	5	1	5	4
4	3a	*I think choosing targets is difficult (R)*	3	3	3	5	3	2
5	3b	It is a good idea to have targets in English class	5	5	5	5	5	4
6	2	I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class	3	3	5	5	5	5
7	3b	I study better when I have targets	5	3	5	5	5	3
8	3b	The weekly review on Friday is a good idea	5	5	5	5	5	4
9	3a	I like working on my targets	5	5	5	5	5	4
10	2	I like studying new things in class	5	5	5	5	5	5
11	2	My English is better since coming to class	5	5	5	5	5	5
12	3a	*The weekly review on Friday is boring (R)*	5	1	3	5	5	2
13	2	*I like when we do easy things in class (R)*	5	1	5	5	1	1
14	2	I am confident when I speak English in class	2	1	1	5	5	2
15	3a	*I think setting targets is boring (R)*	5	4	3	5	5	3
16	1	I like learning English in class	5	5	5	5	5	5
17	2	I like things in class when I think a lot	5	3	5	3	5	3
18	1	Learning English often makes me feel happy	5	5	5	5	5	4
19	1	Learning English is easy for me	3	3	3	4	3	4
20	1	*I just learn English to get a job (R)*	5	5	5	5	5	5
		Total score	**88%**	**73%**	**88%**	**93%**	**92%**	**74%**

Table 5.9 results from Questionnaire 2, August 2003

In terms of agreeing or disagreeing with individual statements, there was unanimous maximum agreement (five points) for five statements (1) *I like speaking English in class*, (10) *I like studying new things in class*, (11) *My English is better since coming to class*,

(16) *I like learning English in class*, and the reversed statement (20) *I just learn English to get a job* (reversed negative item: all respondents disagreed with this statement).

Four other statements were given almost unanimous agreement by students apart from Tomasz who gave a value of four on the response scale where the others gave a value of five. The statements with almost unanimous agreement were: (2) *I like the weekly review on Friday*; (5) *It is a good idea to have targets in English class*; (8) *The weekly review on Friday is a good idea*; (9) *I like working on my targets*; (18) *Learning English often makes me feel happy.*

When we turn to the four subscales, Mina's score for intrinsic motivation in learning English is lower than the other respondents, at 83%; Eduardo, Tatjana and Tomasz give a higher rating (93%, 93% and 90% respectively). Mina gives the highest score in the subscale measuring perceived competence (93%) in addition to the highest rating (100%) for enjoyment of goal-setting.. Tomasz's results reveal a wider range of scores than the other learners, his enjoyment of goal-setting score is the lowest in the group at 60%, whereas his highest score, intrinsic motivation in learning English, is in the top three scores for this subscale. Four out of the six students give the maximum possible score of 100% for the perceived usefulness of goal-setting, whereas Alina and Tomasz give lower scores for this subscale, 87% and 73% respectively.

		Adrian	Alina	Eduardo	Mina	Tatjana	Tomasz
(1)	Intrinsic motivation (interest/enjoyment)	83%	80%	93%	83%	93%	90%
(2)	Perceived competence	83%	60%	87%	93%	87%	70%
(3a)	Enjoyment of goal-setting	92%	72%	76%	100%	92%	60%
(3b)	Perceived usefulness of goal-setting	100%	87%	100%	100%	100%	73%

Table 5.10 Questionnaire 2, subscale scores

5.5.7 Questionnaire 3

The third questionnaire was completed on November 4th 2003. Three students from my group of participants completed this questionnaire: Mina, Neda and Tatjana. By November, Neda had progressed to the next proficiency level and was in Reception 1 Middle with Susan as teacher; Mina and Tatjana had moved up two proficiency levels

from Reception 1 Lower, skipping Reception 1 Middle and going straight to Reception 1 Transition. Students were approximately halfway through the term.

Qu. no.	Subscale	Statement	Mina	Neda	Tatjana
1	1	I like speaking English in class	5	5	5
2	3a	I like the weekly review on Friday	3	5	5
3	1	Sometimes I think in English in my head	4	2	5
4	3a	*I think choosing targets is difficult (R)*	5	5	3
5	3b	It is a good idea to have targets in English class	5	5	5
6	2	I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class	5	5	5
7	3b	I study better when I have targets	5	5	5
8	3b	The weekly review on Friday is a good idea	5	5	5
9	3a	I like working on my targets	5	5	5
10	2	I like studying new things in class	5	5	5
11	2	My English is better since coming to class	5	5	5
12	3a	*The weekly review on Friday is boring (R)*	5	1	5
13	2	*I like when we do easy things in class (R)*	5	5	1
14	2	I am confident when I speak English in class	5	2	5
15	3a	*I think setting targets is boring (R)*	5	1	5
16	1	I like learning English in class	5	5	5
17	2	I like things in class when I think a lot	5	5	5
18	1	Learning English often makes me feel happy	5	5	5
19	1	Learning English is easy for me	4	4	3
20	1	*I just learn English to get a job (R)*	3	5	5
		Total score	**94**	**85**	**92**

Table 5.11 results from Questionnaire 3, November 2003

The overall scores were: Mina, 94%; Tatjana, 92%; Neda, 85%. Four other students who were not in my group of participants completed questionnaires. The lowest overall score of all seven questionnaires was 74% and the highest score was 94% (Mina). The mean total score of all completed questionnaires was 85%. The mean total score of the respondents participating in this study was 90%. All three students gave a maximum score of five in agreement with eleven statements, the remaining statements elicited mixed responses. The statements given a unanimous, maximum score were:

- (1) *I like speaking English in class*
- (5) *It is a good idea to have targets in English class*
- (6) *I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class*
- (7) *I study better when I have targets*
- (8) *The weekly review on Friday is a good idea*
- (9) *I like working on my targets*
- (10) *I like studying new things in class*
- (11) *My English is better since coming to class*
- (16) *I like learning English in class*
- (17) *I like things in class when I think a lot*

Individual differences in responses included Neda's rating of the weekly review as boring (statement 12), and her rating of setting targets as boring. Both Mina and Tatjana gave responses at the other end of the scale. Tatjana agrees that she *likes easy things in class* (statement 13) which gave her a reversed score of one point for this item. Neda and Mina disagree and gave opposite responses to Tatjana. Turning to the four subscales, Mina once again stands out with the highest, and maximum, score for perceived competence (100%) as a learner of English. Although the scores are generally homogeneous, Neda's lower overall score can be accounted for by her lower scores in the enjoyment of goal-setting subscale (68%) whereas both Mina and Tatjana rate this higher at 92%. All three students give the maximum score for perceived usefulness of goal-setting.

Subscale		Mina	Neda	Tatjana
(1)	Intrinsic motivation (interest/enjoyment)	87%	87%	93%
(2)	Perceived competence	100%	90%	87%
(3a)	Enjoyment of goal-setting	92%	68%	92%
(3b)	Perceived usefulness of goal-setting	100%	100%	100%

Table 5.12 Questionnaire 3, subscale scores

5.5.8 Questionnaire 4

The fourth questionnaire was administered on March 4th, 2004. Six students completed this questionnaire and all were respondents in this study: Adrian, Alina, Eduardo, Nicolae, Tomasz and Vladimir. All were in Reception 1 Transition with Tim as their teacher, having moved up one proficiency level from Reception 1 Middle, and were just over halfway through the term. The overall scores were: Eduardo, 87%; Adrian, 86%; Vladimir 83%; Nicolae 81%; Alina, 74%; Tomasz, 74%.

There was unanimous agreement giving a maximum score of five for the following two statements: (5) *It is a good idea to have targets in English class* and (9) *I like working on my targets*. There was almost unanimous agreement with a maximum score for statement (1) *I like speaking English in class*, with only Adrian rating this at four rather than five, and statement (7) *I study better when I have targets*, only Maria rated this item at four rather than five.

Qu. no.	Subscale	Statement	Adrian	Alina	Eduardo	Nicolae	Tomasz	Vladimir
1	1	I like speaking English in class	4	5	5	5	5	5
2	3a	I like the weekly review on Friday	5	3	5	5	2	5
3	1	Sometimes I think in English in my head	4	5	5	5	3	4
4	3a	*I think choosing targets is difficult (R)*	3	3	1	2	3	3
5	3b	It is a good idea to have targets in English class	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	2	I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class	4	3	5	4	4	4
7	3b	I study better when I have targets	5	4	5	5	5	5
8	3b	The weekly review on Friday is a good idea	5	3	5	4	2	5
9	3a	I like working on my targets	5	5	5	5	5	5
10	2	I like studying new things in class	5	4	5	5	5	4
11	2	My English is better since coming to class	2	5	4	3	5	5
12	3a	*The weekly review on Friday is boring (R)*	5	2	5	3	1	5
13	2	*I like when we do easy things in class (R)*	4	1	1	5	2	2
14	2	I am confident when I speak English in class	5	3	5	5	4	4
15	3a	*I think setting targets is boring (R)*	4	4	5	3	5	2
16	1	I like learning English in class	5	5	5	3	5	5
17	2	I like things in class when I think a lot	4	4	5	4	4	5
18	1	Learning English often makes me feel happy	5	5	5	4	4	4
19	1	Learning English is easy for me	3	4	4	3	4	3
20	1	*I just learn English to get a job (R)*	4	1	2	3	1	3
		Total score	**86**	**74**	**87**	**81**	**74**	**83**

Table 5.13 results from Questionnaire 4, March 2004

There is a mixed response for all other items. Eduardo finds setting targets difficult (statement 4). Only Adrian disagrees that his English is better since coming to class (statement 11). Alina and Tomasz both find the weekly review on Friday boring (statement 12). Both Alina and Tomasz agree fully with the statement (20) *I just learn English to get a job*, Eduardo also agrees with this statement to a lesser extent.

		Adrian	Alina	Eduardo	Nicolae	Tomasz	Vladimir
(1)	Intrinsic motivation (interest/enjoyment)	83%	83%	87%	77%	73%	80%
(2)	Perceived competence	80%	66%	83%	87%	80%	80%
(3a)	Enjoyment of goal-setting	88%	68%	84%	72%	64%	80%
(3b)	Perceived usefulness of goal-setting	100%	80%	100%	93%	80%	100%

Table 5.14 Questionnaire 4, subscale scores

When we examine the scores across the different subscales, Eduardo scores highest on the intrinsic motivation subscale at 87%, and Tomasz gives the lowest score at 73%. All students apart from Alina give similar scores of perceived competence (80-87%); Alina's score is lower at 66%. Alina and Tomasz give the lowest scores for enjoyment of goal-setting at 68% and 64% respectively. Other scores range from 72% (Nicolae) to 88% (Adrian). There are high scores for the perceived usefulness of goal-setting. Three students, Adrian, Eduardo and Vladimir give the highest rating of 100%, Nicolae scores 93%. Alina and Tomasz give the lowest ratings at 80% each.

5.5.9 *Open-format attitudinal questionnaire*

The open-format attitudinal questionnaire was designed to gain further insight into students' attitudes to the learning process. Questions focussed on students' motivation and setting targets. This questionnaire was administered once at the end of the period of fieldwork, and students were given the option of taking it home to complete. Six questionnaires were completed from the core group of thirteen learners. The following students returned open-format questionnaires: Eduardo, Ivan, Nicolae, Pin, Tomasz and Vladimir (Appendix D).

5.5.10 *Teacher interview and student records*

An audio interview was recorded with the two teachers, Susan and Tim, in whose classes I conducted participant observation. The interview was recorded at the end of the period of fieldwork in May 2004, and both teachers were interviewed at the same time. The interview consisted mainly of a discussion of each student students involved in the project, and approximately lasted sixty minutes (Appendix B).

IILT granted me access to the school records of students involved in this project. The following information was available: dates of registration and departure; class progression by term; attendance and punctuality for each term; end-of-term teacher's report sent to the student; end-of-term progress report; warning letters sent if warranted by irregular attendance; deferrals. Background information was also included: date of birth, previous educational background, other languages spoken, marital status, long-term goals. I obtained student records for all thirteen students, although records for some students were more comprehensive than others (Appendix E).

5.5.11 *Summary of data collected and data analysis*

Having described the type of data gathered during fieldwork, on the next page I provide a brief summary of each data collection instrument and the subjects who participated. As explained earlier in the chapter (Section 5.3.3), the group of students who became the subjects of this study was composed gradually due to rates of attrition. Although

absenteeism was not a serious issue in the classroom, as high attendance levels were required for continuing registration, minor absenteeism due to ill health, childcare issues, and transport problems affected data collection. As all research was conducted in class time, with the consent of both class teachers, I felt unable to repeat questionnaire administration or audio interviews on days when some students in the group were absent. Thus, the gradual composition of the group of subjects, and occasional absences, meant that the nature and amount of data gathered from each learner is not uniform. Table 5.15 below provides an overview of the types of data collected, and the learners involved.

Questionnaire scores were calculated in simple percentage form and collated in tables above. Open-format questionnaires and student records were typed up (Appendix D and E). I analyzed the data from the interview transcripts and logbook (Appendix A and B) by using generic theorizing processes. I scanned the data, noted patterns, searched for counter patterns, and began to create categories for further analysis. I used three main approaches: a chronological analysis, an analysis by student, and a thematic analysis by emerging categories and patterns. Questions which guided this analysis were: controlling behavioural factors (loci of causality), factors supporting or hindering motivation, imposed or internalized goals, changes in behaviour and attitudes over time. Tables were created listing the thematic content of the data source (cf. Table 5.5 above), and these were re-organized into different subcategories in my search for patterns and counter-patterns.

	Q1	Q 2	Q3	Q 4	Open-ended Q	Logbook	Student records	Audio interview	Ts' audio interview
Eduardo	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Ivan					•	•	•	•	•
Rose						•	•	•	•
Tomasz		•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Alina		•		•		•	•	•	•
Adrian		•		•		•	•	•	•
Tatjana	•	•	•			•	•	•	
Mina	•	•	•			•	•	•	
Samira						•	•	•	
Neda	•		•			•	•	•	•
Pin					•	•	•		•
Vladimir				•	•	•	•		•
Nicolae				•	•	•	•	•	•

Table 5.15 Data gathered according learner and instrument

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter described the location of the empirical study and the thirteen participants. The characteristics of the students were outlined: their gender, age and family background, and their past experience of formal instruction and language learning. The data collected at IILT is summarized. This data included: logs from participant observation; recordings from audio interviews with students; a closed-format attitudinal questionnaire administered at four intervals over twelve months; an open-format questionnaire administered at the end of the period of fieldwork; a recording from an audio interview with the two teachers; various supplemental documents including student progress records, attendance records, and class handouts. Data from the closed-format questionnaires were analyzed by simple percentage calculations. Qualitative data from the interviews, open-format questionnaires, logbook and supplementary sources were scanned and categorized according to patterns and chronological developments.

Chapter 6 draws on this data to reconstruct the year of fieldwork spent at IILT. By means of a narrative organized around four time sections in the year, the data is woven into an account of learning English in the classroom. I triangulate the data by using sources which offer different perspectives on the same episodes.

Chapter 6
Data presentation

6.1 *Introduction*

In this chapter I present the data collected at Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT) in four cross-sections. The first describes activities and episodes which occurred in June 2003, half-way through the first term in Reception 1 Lower. The second cross-section focusses on the end of the first term in Reception 1 Lower in August 2003. The third cross-section takes place in November at the midpoint of the second term in Reception 1 Middle. The fourth and final cross-section examines the midpoint of the third term in Reception 1 Transition in March 2004.

6.2 *Using the data*

Arial font is used to differentiate between data cited from fieldwork and the narrative of this chapter. Data is labelled according to its source. Line numbers refer to exact locations within the logbook and audio interviews; transcripts of the data are in the Appendices in Volume 2. The following figure explains the abbreviations used.

LB = logbook
LB:145 = logbook, line 145
(Appendix A)
A1, A2, A3, A4 = audio interviews 1- 4
A1:341 = audio interview 1, line 341
TI = teacher interview
(Appendix B)
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 = closed-format questionnaires 1- 4
(Appendix C)
OQ = open-format questionnaire
(Appendix D)
PR = progress report
(Appendix E)

Figure 6.1: abbreviations used to indicate data source

6.3 *Entering Reception 1 Lower*

Fieldwork began in May 2003 at IILT's Grand Canal Quay premises (see Chapter 5, Section 5.3 for a description), in Reception 1 Lower (R1 Lower), an AO-level proficiency class taught by Susan. Learners at A0 level are complete beginners who have minimum or no prior knowledge of the target language. There were fifteen adult students enrolled in the class from a wide range of countries. All had scored 0 in IILT's entrance test. Class was held in the afternoon from 1.15pm to 5.15pm with a twenty-minute coffee break in the middle of the session. Students started to arrive about five to ten minutes before the start of class. They greeted each other with handshakes and prolonged, simple greetings in English along the lines of "How are you?", "Fine, fine", "Nice day" and so forth. Once the teacher, Susan, entered the classroom, they sat down at their desks, and set out blue ringbinders and pencil cases. Students tended to sit in the same places in the classroom throughout the term, and talked to the same students, often from their home country or similar background. The date and a list of the day's learning activities were written on the whiteboard. Beside the whiteboard was a large, A1 poster listing the week's targets. On the walls there was another A1 size poster of the class contract (see Section 6.3.1 below), as well as a map of the world, a map of Dublin, the Roman alphabet, and examples of class-work.

The class usually started in a plenary session with a short discussion led by the teacher asking for news. The remainder of the class-time was devoted to the activities of the day. Students tended to work in small groups which varied in size according to the task, or in pairs (called "face-to-face" work), moving their desks together. Students often chose their own group, but sometimes the teacher changed the composition of the groups, placing more proficient learners alongside less proficient learners, or breaking up groups of students with a shared L1. At the end of class, there was another plenary session when Susan answered any questions about the day's activities and homework. The class finished with a few minutes of small-talk, for example, about plans for the evening ahead. The mood in the class varied from day to day. Generally learners applied themselves to the tasks and participated in all activities. Sometimes there was a very quiet, studious atmosphere, whereas on other days students seemed less co-operative, talked loudly to their neighbours, and spoke in

their L1. Students had more energy in the first half of the class. After the break they were often quite lethargic and their attention span seemed to dwindle. Often students tried to make jokes in English and share these with the class. Susan was liked by the students, they appreciated her sense of humour, her calm demeanour and patience.

6.3.1 Cornerstones of classroom life at IILT

In this section, I describe the four cornerstones of classroom life at IILT, in R1 Lower and R1 Transition: (i) creating a class contract, (ii) target-setting, (iii) the Friday review, and (iv) using authentic materials, worksheets and the European Language Portfolio. The **class contract** was one of the first activities undertaken by the class. At the beginning of each new term, students in each class at IILT are asked to formulate and to negotiate collectively a set of rules, guidelines and objectives for the term ahead. These are written on a large poster which each student signs, and the poster is displayed in the classroom. The class contract for R1 Lower 1 in the May-August 2003 term included: only speak in English, learn new words every week, have spelling tests, don't speak on phone in class, be kind, do homework. The rationale behind the class contract was to demonstrate to students that their needs were the basis for what was learned in the classroom, that they could help determine what was learned and how it was learned, and that they each had a responsibility to work towards the objectives they set and the terms they agreed upon.

The first instance of **target-setting** thus occurs when drawing up the class contract. Target-setting is central to curriculum planning, methodology and assessment at IILT through the use of the ELP (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4). Learners are introduced to the cycle of target-setting, on a small scale and on a weekly basis, as they learn to articulate goals, to work towards these in class and at home, and to determine to what extent they achieve their goals. Students gradually learn to articulate and select personal learning targets by starting with group targets chosen by majority vote. Target-setting was a group activity in R1 Lower, learners were encouraged to choose together a small number of shared topics or activities which were relevant and interesting to the class as a whole. By R1 Transition, learners were encouraged to work on a range of personal targets chosen individually.

In the **Friday review**, which lasted for the entire Friday session, students reviewed their week's work and set new goals for the following week. Learners reviewed their learning through activities such as spelling tests and compiling lists of new vocabulary, reflecting on the difficulty level of the week's work, and assessing to what extent they felt they had achieved their targets. They were supported in this task by descriptors and checklists from the ELP. New goals were selected, usually resulting from issues arising from the previous week's work. Generally, between five and seven targets were chosen by the class with a vote taken if necessary. The regular Friday review meant that students were continuously involved in a cycle of reflecting on what they needed to learn, selecting specific targets, working towards these, and deciding to what extent their targets had been achieved.

Following on from the Friday review, the teacher prepared **materials** based on the targets selected by the class. These materials were based on authentic texts and worksheets, incorporating descriptors and checklists from the ELP. Authentic texts used in class included for example bus timetables, public notices, maps and official forms. Worksheets responding to the needs of adult immigrants were developed by staff at IILT, and the school later published resource books of such materials (*Anseo: English for Living in Ireland*, IILT 2003; *Féach: Looking at Language and Literacy*, IILT 2004). Learners stored their worksheets and other class work in blue ringbinders that also contained their Portfolio. For instance, weekly lists of new vocabulary were stored in the Dossier section. No textbooks were used, and the blue folders became the learners' chief means of organizing their learning materials.

6.4 *Cross-section 1 – June 2003*

The first term began at the beginning of May 2003 with a class of fifteen students in Reception 1 Lower. Seven students from this class became participants in my research: Alina, Eduardo, Mina, Neda, Pin, Tatjana and Tomasz. The initial weeks of term were spent introducing learners to the four cornerstones of learning English at IILT described above. It took a few weeks for the class to get to know each other, to settle in, and to grasp the way the classroom was organized. Their teacher noted from the outset that they seemed a more serious, hardworking and motivated group than her previous class (LB:4). The average age was younger than previous classes, and unlike

some of their peers at IILT, all students had attended secondary school in their home countries. Learners soon adapted to working in small groups and pairs, learning how to set class targets, and reviewing their own progress.

6.4.1 *Learner profiles*

I compiled profiles of the seven learners who became part of my group of subjects (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.4). Alina was from Romania, in her late twenties. She was painfully shy, but soon became well-liked by the rest of the class. She was a very meticulous student who quickly understood what to do, and was always ready to help others. Mina, a Kurdish woman also in her late twenties who had studied at university, was extremely keen to please the teacher, and needed much praise and affirmation. Neda was from Iraq. She was very outgoing and did not hesitate to add her voice in plenary sessions, often making jokes. She seemed to thrive on the social dynamic in class, and particularly enjoyed the plenary sessions. Eduardo, an architect in his mid-forties from Angola, was much more reticent and took time to participate in group activities although very concentrated on his individual work. Pin was from Vietnam, in his mid-forties. He tended to sit with a group of very quiet Asian students and preferred writing to oral work. He seemed heavily dependent on the teacher for direction and communication; "He would hardly ever look somebody in the eye and speak to them, he'd speak through you [the teacher] to the person" (Susan, TI:487). Tatjana was a very organized learner, and the life and soul of the classroom. From Bosnia, in her mid-twenties, she would often offer ways of remembering new words to the rest of the class. For example, on how to remember the pronunciation of *occasionally*, "you say OK, then –sionally", and for the difference between *sensible* and *sensitive*, "sensitive it means don't touch me today" (LB:129). Tomasz was a young man in his mid-twenties from Poland. Initially, he did not appear to enjoy any of the learning activities, and would often emit loud sighs. However, before and after class, and at break-time, he was very talkative and had no problems conveying his ideas in English.

6.4.2 *Class routine in R1 Lower*

A routine involving decision-making, self-assessment and self-management was instigated in the classroom. Many of the activities were specifically tailored to the

learners in the class, and materials were selected and adapted according to the class targets the learners themselves set. One activity focussed on the simple past, and revising names of occupations. The worksheet had the names of the learners, their previous occupations and their current status in Ireland, e.g., He _ an architect in Angola and now he _ an English student in Ireland. I wrote:

> The group I was working with (the girls) were excited to see their own names on the document and proceeded to guess who was who. Tatjana and Mina took charge of writing the answers, and the rest of the group all leaned or stood around them calling out the answers. (LB:360)

Topics selected by the class in May and June included: the alphabet, time, days and months, the house, buses and trains, daily routines, shopping and directions.

6.4.3 Friday review

I attended some Friday reviews at the start of June (see Appendix F for examples of review worksheets). The initial review session for the Reception 1 class involved four steps:

> (i) checking personal attendance records and calculating percentages for the past week and the term;
> (ii) compiling lists of new words by reviewing the worksheets from the week, and creating spelling tests for a partner;
> (iii) review of the week's activities, students are asked to give their verdict on the week (enjoyment, difficulty) and list new sentences or new concepts they have learned;
> (iv) target-setting with the help of descriptors and checklists from the ELP.

One session I attended at the beginning of June was the students' first introduction to setting targets. The three previous steps had been introduced in earlier weeks. Susan used a worksheet asking students to differentiate between **I can** and **I do**, followed by a group discussion of abilities. They then turned to an **I can** statement in their ELPs: **I can understand bus and train timetables**. Although it appeared from the worksheet and discussion about the differences between I can and I do, Susan commented a few

weeks later that some students were still having difficulties with this, as she discovered when talking about hobbies and leisure activities.

Assessing progress was demonstrated on the whiteboard by a comparison of **not easy, ok, easy** and **I can do this with a lot of help, with a little help, with no help**. The notion of achieving personal targets was illustrated by a timeline of steps undertaken by a man who wanted to pass his driving licence, from the point of being unable to drive yet, wanting to, through to passing his test. Susan then used an illustration of a target from archery to explain where the word target comes from. Susan commented that the use of this image "is better this course/last time the metaphor didn't work at all and even in weeks 15/16 I was still explaining it to some" (LB:184).

The final step in the session was to choose group targets for the next week. Students were asked for their ideas. Four targets were suggested by individuals, and agreed upon by the class: learn new words, do face-to-face work, do some reading and learn about shopping. The first three targets were rather similar to the wider aims of the class contract. The fourth target specified the topic of shopping for the week ahead. Susan noted that this was "Excellent for first time – ok, 'I want English' was the main [target], but fine at this stage" (LB:191).

I noted in my logbook (June 20th) that there had been an "almost bored" attitude to Fridays in the previous class where I had conducted most of my piloting (R1 Lower, January – April 2003), "this class however seem to be much more adept at it, and so, happier". The data from the first closed-format attitudinal questionnaire suggested the students viewed these activities as useful for learning English.

6.4.4 Data from Questionnaire 1

The four students who completed the attitudinal questionnaire in June (Eduardo, Mina, Neda and Tatjana) all gave the maximum ratings for the perceived usefulness of the goal-setting activities described above (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.5). They all agreed with, and gave a maximum rating for, the following three statements: It is a good idea to have targets in English class, I study better when I have targets, the weekly review on Friday is a good idea. The perceived usefulness subscale is related to extrinsic motivation. While learners may not particularly enjoy completing a task, they may

recognize that it may be useful or helpful for other reasons, in other words the extrinsic value of the task.

The scale measuring their intrinsic motivation in goal-setting demonstrated their enjoyment/interest in these activities. All four learners liked the weekly review and working on their targets, they found neither the weekly review nor setting targets boring. However, they did find choosing targets difficult.

The attitudinal questionnaire (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.5 & Appendix C) suggests that at least as far as the four students who completed it were concerned, they enjoyed learning English in class, it often made them feel happy, they were happy and confident to speak out in class, and to work towards new challenges (I like studying new things in class, I like things in class when I think a lot). Each student gave the maximum score agreeing with the above statements. Only Mina liked the challenge of learning difficult things in class; Eduardo, Neda and Tatjana all preferred easy things (Appendix C, item 13). Three learners were very confident when they spoke English in class (Eduardo, Mina and Tatjana), Neda was undecided (item 14).

Mina stood out as the student with the highest perceived competence as a learner of English, she rated herself at 100% on the perceived competence subscale. The other three students all rated themselves at 80%. Competence is one of three basic psychological needs, along with autonomy and relatedness, within self-determination theory (Chapter 3, Section 3.4). Deci defines the need for competence as the need to feel effective in one's environment. Learners feel competent when they meet optimal challenges. This is closely related to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, in which the individual's subjective appraisal of her own skills affects achievement, enhancing and sustaining motivation (Bandura 1997). Mina perceived herself to be a fully competent language learner. This suggests that her intrinsic motivation in the classroom would be fuelled by this self-belief, her high perceived competence.

The link between why students want to learn a language, and their enjoyment of learning, has been the subject of much research. Gardner (1985) hypothesized that an instrumental orientation, for example learning a language to get a job, did not generate sufficient long-term motivation to succeed in language learning. However, Gardner's

dichotomy between instrumental and integrative orientations has been criticized as an oversimplified view of motivation. Proponents of self-determination theory (Deci 1995, Deci et al. 2001) argue that intrinsic motivation was the key to understanding students' enjoyment and success in the language classroom. Intrinsically motivated activities are those undertaken for "the reward which is inherent in the activity itself" (Deci 1995:21). The last item in the closed-format questionnaire, "I just learn English to get a job" is indicative of this. Eduardo and Tatjana agreed strongly that they were only learning English to get a job, Mina and Neda disagreed strongly. Both Mina and Neda (93% and 87% respectively) had higher scores on the intrinsic motivation subscale than Eduardo and Tatjana (both 83%).

Although intrinsic motivation is seen as an important indicator of how hard individuals will work at a task, such as learning English, as well as their dedication and ultimate level of success, extrinsic motivation is not necessarily the poor cousin of intrinsic motivation. When exterior motives are self-imposed, the individual appears to exert just as much effort as individuals who are involved in the activity out of sheer interest and enjoyment. Conversely, a degree of intrinsic motivation alone may not be sufficient to sustain the type of effort required by the task of learning English, as Neda's story illustrates.

Although Neda's score on the intrinsic motivation subscale in Questionnaire 1 was high, she did not take learning English very seriously, and had no apparent extrinsic reason to learn. Coming to class seemed to be a social activity for her, and although she participated in activities, particularly when seated next to more serious students such as Eduardo or Alina, she often did the bare minimum required by the task.

> Susan: School was like a coffee morning ((laughter)). She used to come in for an hour in the afternoon ((laughter)) she'd pop in. (TI:32)

Her husband spoke fluent English, and she relied on him to communicate for her. She did not really want a job, and was trying to become pregnant for the first time. There was some pressure from her family in Iraq to have a baby as she had been married for a few years, and she had been undergoing fertility tests in Ireland. Her interests were shopping and cooking; learning English lent a further dimension to these hobbies as

she learned new vocabulary to describe her pastimes. She would have been quite happy to sit and chat about recipes all day, you know, or what you do at the weekend (Susan, TI:43). I will return to the issues of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in Cross-sections 2 and 3, where I will revisit Eduardo, Tatjana and Neda's accounts and experiences.

6.4.5 *Struggles, June 2003: Tomasz, Alina*

Although in general a smooth routine was established in class, the dynamic of enjoyment and participation in activities was constantly in flux, and some stresses and strains were visible. Tomasz continued to have difficulties engaging with activities, and appeared bored in class. Susan discussed Tomasz's attitude in an audio interview. Reflecting back on his first weeks in class, she comments, "he was so bored for a long time" (TI:88). Tomasz was able to communicate orally, but struggled with reading and writing, and the strategies required to improve his spelling (TI:80):

> He was in a very nasty place [...] able to communicate perfectly well, but reading, writing, hasn't a clue [...]. I suppose you are always surprised when someone doesn't have the tools to do homework or to know what to do in class like checking their own spelling [...] If the person doesn't know the way you check it is to take the correct words and check it against your test, you know I think you run into problems.

Susan saw his apparent boredom and lack of learning skills as a handicap to his motivation in class (TI:98):

> How can you be motivated when you don't know what motivation is? When you don't know that sitting and huffing and puffing and not really opening a book is not an outward image of motivation? [...] So your teacher thinks you are bored senseless. And you get into a sort of spiral, because actually you are not bored, you're finding it very difficult, or too easy, or whatever.

IILT expected an average of 85% attendance at school unless accounted for by medical certificates or other justifiable reasons. Tomasz's attendance dropped below this level, and he was sent a warning letter about his attendance by the school in mid-July (PR, Appendix E:12).

What seemed like a minor incident in class led the Romanian student Alina to burst into tears on one occasion. I wrote in my logbook (June 18th):

> Alina was sitting in her usual corner, and on either side of her were Musa and Sergei. We were going round the class asking how to get to a place and giving the directions. Susan asked Alina a very simple question and she seemed to get a bit flustered, and then Musa and Sergei repeated (I think) what Susan had asked her in Russian. Alina speaks a bit of Russian, but those two were on either side both talking to her whilst Susan asked her the question again, and then said, we really have to speak English in this classroom. Alina then burst into tears, and Susan felt so awkward. The class could all see what was going on as we were sitting in a semi-circle with all the desks pushed beside each other. Alina went bright red, very very embarrassed. I think Susan didn't want to stop the class as she would have drawn even more attention to Alina, who is so shy.

Susan recounted the same incident in an audio interview. She was aware that although Alina knew what had to be done in class, two distracting voices speaking in another foreign language were a pressure she could not cope with. "Naturally she knew she should be speaking English in English class, she didn't need to be told that" (Susan, audio interview). Alina continued to be a subject of concern, in terms of setting targets and self-evaluation. Susan wrote, "Alina, who is actually quite proficient, still isn't very forthcoming – a concern?" (LB:201).

However, at about the same stage in the term, a breakthrough was imminent for Tomasz. Although he made "a very very slow start" (Susan, TI:110), "once he got going he was absolutely fine" (Susan, TI:97). Confidential progress reports for the school administration were written by teachers about each student at the end of term with a frank appraisal of the student's progress. Tomasz's progress report for the first term was:

> Brilliant. Suddenly one day in Week 5 Tomasz started speaking English! He's fascinating. His writing has improved and he has much more confidence speaking. Joins in with everything and enjoys his time. Attendance 91%, punctuality excellent. (Appendix E:12)

6.4.6 *Summary: cross-section 1*

The first two months of term in R1 Lower were a period of adaptation and settling in. Students were asked to select targets that would generate the content of the week's classes, and initially these targets were quite vague and abstract. The cycle of target-setting and the Friday review gave a tangible structure to the notion of setting goals and working towards these. Some learners had come to class with a solely extrinsic goal of learning English to obtain employment. The data from the closed-format questionnaire suggested they recognized the extrinsic value of the goal-setting activities. Although the data suggested some intrinsic enjoyment in learning English, its extrinsic value seemed higher. Neda however seemed to attend for social contact, and seemed to have no extrinsic goals. Mina stood out as a student with very high perceived competence as a learner. One moment of encouragement for the teacher was when Tomasz laid aside his air of boredom and started to engage with activities. A discouraging moment was when Alina became upset in class because of perceived pressure.

6.5 *Cross-section 2 – August 2003*

By the end of August, students were winding down their activities in Reception 1 Lower. They had been studying English for four months in a new environment which was based on a continuous cycle of target-setting, self-assessment and reflection. The dynamic and atmosphere in class changed over the months, and the data suggested that enjoyment of learning English for some learners increased.

6.5.1 *Attitudes to learning: Eduardo, Tatjana*

Eduardo was an architect and saw mastery of English as crucial for any future possibility of re-qualifying in Ireland. However, as the months went by, he seemed to move from a hazy idea of generally improving his English to a more concrete target of improving his accuracy, and in particular, his spelling skills:

> EDUARDO: Have big problem. My problem for, ((hesitates)) I like spelling very good, is my thing, because my job is, when you not spelling very good, it's not good for my job. (A3:669)

Tatjana had been a hairdresser in Bosnia and was keen to take any kind of paid employment (A4:169):

TATJANA:	I like take any job, you know? Same cash?
	[...]
TATJANA:	but I don't like university, you know? ((laughs))
LORNA:	what kind of job would [you
TATJANA:	[I like, uh, work on the shop, you know? Clothes, and the till

Tatjana was proud of the progress she had made since coming to Ireland in September 2002, and starting English class as an absolute beginner in May 2003: "I came September last year. I thinks my English is not bad with one year, yeah?" (A4:183); "When I came in Susan's class, I didn't know anything" (A4:191).

In the first questionnaire administered in June (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.5), both Eduardo and Tatjana had agreed strongly with the statement I just learn English to get a job. In the second questionnaire administered in August (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.6), Tatjana and Eduardo reversed their scores, and disagreed strongly with the same statement. This suggests they discovered that learning English offered them more than just a means to employment. This is corroborated by an increase in their scores in the subscale measuring intrinsic motivation in learning English, both Eduardo and Tatjana increased from their ratings in this subscale from 83% in Questionnaire 1 to 93% in Questionnaire 2. Their enjoyment of learning English seemed to increase as the term progressed. In Cross-section 1, I commented that Gardner's hypothesis of instrumental orientation and Deci's notion of intrinsic motivation were relevant to these results. As Eduardo and Tatjana shifted away from away a purely utilitarian goal, they seemed to discover more interest in learning English, perhaps because of sheer enjoyment in the activities themselves, or perhaps because they discovered that English was useful for other purposes as well as employment.

6.5.2 Questionnaire 2: Alina and Tomasz

As described in Cross-section 1, both Tomasz and Alina had a difficult start in R1 Lower. Tomasz's apparent boredom and Alina's reticence seemed to be barriers which prevented them from enjoying learning. Their responses to the second

questionnaire (c.f. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.6) administered at the end of August suggested differences between their attitudes to learning English, and the attitudes of the other four respondents (Adrian, Eduardo, Mina and Tatjana). Adrian was a Romanian student who arrived at the end of term as a place was freed by the departure of another learner (see Section 6.6.1 below). Tomasz and Alina achieved the lowest overall scores in Questionnaire 2, 74% and 73% respectively. The mean overall score was 85%, individual overall scores were: Mina, 93%; Tatjana, 92%; Adrian, 88%; Eduardo 88%. Tomasz's scores in the subscales were mixed; his enjoyment of goal-setting score was the lowest in the group at 60%, whereas his highest individual score in a subscale, intrinsic motivation in learning English, was in the top three scores. The other four students gave the maximum possible score of 100% for the perceived usefulness of goal-setting, whereas Alina and Tomasz both gave lower scores for this subscale, 87% and 73% respectively.

6.5.3 Perceived competence: Alina

After the incident that had led her to cry in class, Alina seemed to settle back into the routine of class. These were my written impressions of her in my logbook in August:

> Alina is the dark horse of the class. She is an excellent student, and all the others recognize this in her. She is very modest, very quiet and shy, but her writing skills, her spelling, her lexical knowledge, ability to put complex phrases together, is really great. That bad day when Musa and Sergei were muttering into her ears seems a long time ago now. I think she is possibly one of the most motivated students in the class. Why is this so? She is a very determined person, and doesn't seem to let setbacks get in her way, even though sometimes she can be upset. She is also very focussed and concentrated. Her work is extremely neat, she always does all of her homework. She is usually very poised. (LB:437)

But a further incident seemed to affect her greatly. A timetable change at the end of August meant that Susan would be teaching the next proficiency level in the September – December 2003 term. Most students who were moving up one proficiency level, to Reception 1 Middle (A1 level) and were continuing to attend an afternoon class would have Susan as their teacher for a second term in a row. Some

students were delighted with this situation, but it seemed to be problematic for Alina. Susan commented later on the transition from R1 Lower to R1 Middle (TI:665):

> Alina took a real big knock when she didn't leave my class and stayed with me for a second one, and although I was moving up a level, that was kind of academic [...] I don't think she actually believed me, you know, because we were staying in the same group, same classroom, and I think her motivation dropped a little bit [...] I think she'd thought she'd been left behind [...] I think Alina definitely went back a couple of steps there in her own feelings.

Alina seemed to give many external signals of a motivated student, yet was visibly shaken by these two incidents (perceived criticism from the teacher, and the impression that she had been held back a level). She participated in all class activities and supplemented these by activities devised by herself, such as grammar exercises or reading in English. Her classmates regarded her as a model learner, yet she herself did not seem to share their opinion. Alina did not appear to believe she was capable of learning English, and this might have been an obstacle to greater progress. Data from the second closed-format questionnaire showed that Alina found the Friday review boring. All the other students rated the Friday review more interesting. Alina, along with Tatjana and Tomasz, said she liked it when they did easy things in class. Alina had the least confidence in speaking English in class, along with Eduardo (both rated it 1 out of 5). Alina did not view the goal-setting activities as usefully as the other students.

Alina's score on the perceived competence subscale (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.6) was the lowest in the group of six students at 60% (average score 80%). This score of 60% on the perceived competence score was in fact the lowest score on this subscale across all four questionnaires. Alina did not seem to believe she was as capable of meeting the challenge of learning English as the other students. In Cross-section 1, I discussed Mina's high score on the perceived competence subscale. Mina's score in the second questionnaire on the same subscale was 93%, lower than Questionnaire 1, but still the highest score of the six students. As I have argued, this notion of perceived competence seems to be related to motivation, particularly through the individual's subjective view of whether they are capable of meeting the challenge demanded of

them. Alina's fragile perception of herself, revealed by her sensitivity in class and worry about not moving into a different class, seemed to affect her enjoyment of learning English.

6.5.4 Personal setback: Mina

At the end of August, Mina and Tatjana moved to Reception 1 Transition, progressing two proficiency levels (from A0 to A2). Tatjana was pregnant and planning to leave the school in December 2003. Both Mina and Tatjana demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm, attention to detail and initiative in the previous four months.

Mina described in a later interview how she enjoyed learning English: "I like it, my, this work, I get very happy because I eager you know for learning. I don't feel sleepy or boring in the class" (A4:286). The responses to the attitudinal questionnaires administered in June and in August reveal Mina's perception of herself as a competent student. Throughout the first term, Mina was extremely keen to please the teacher. Susan noted, "Mina loves to please me/teacher – desperate to hear how good she is...is that motivation or institutionalism?" (LB:312). She had already obtained university degrees in engineering and in teaching.

My notes mentioning Mina throughout the first term include the following comments: "diligent", "very serious about her work", "anxious to get things right", "keeps a detailed vocabulary notebook", "uses the dictionary of her own accord", "frequently asks questions in class". I wrote in June, "one problem is that she appears to need lots of praise, and if she doesn't get it, may perhaps get a little depressed" (LB:486).

Mina's enthusiasm for learning English seemed to diminish as she left Susan's class at the end of August. Two warning letters were sent in September informing her that her attendance was unsatisfactory. Her attendance fell from 90% in the first term to 80% by the end of the second term. Her classmate in R1 Transition, Tatjana, noticed this difference, "She now is, is very quiet, I don't know why. Before asked every time, what is this, what is this?" (A4:413). Mina herself said the way she approached her learning had changed, "first time when I was with Susan's class, I bring up all my the page to home, and everything review at home, but now, I can't" (A4:419). In a subsequent interview (November 2003), Mina told Tatjana and myself that it wasn't the change in

class at the end of August which had affected her, but rather fatigue resulting from a miscarriage. "I'm tired, my body's tired and my health is not good", "I lost many energy". The account of the miscarriage was traumatic to hear. Mina had been running to the bathroom when she fell down the stairs, she lost consciousness for some time, and was only able to telephone her husband two hours later. Although this had happened a year previously, she was still tired and in pain as a result. Tatjana told us both that she too had suffered a miscarriage earlier in the year, and how it had also affected her moods and her desire to attend class, "You feel, I don't know how you feel. Sad? You don't want go tomorrow, you know?" (A4:444).

These personal tragedies largely went unnoticed in the classroom, but both Mina and Tatjana's physical and emotional health, and performance, were affected. The fact that two female students in this class have suffered miscarriages during their registration at IILT prompts the question how many other women students suffered similar crises, and indeed how many individuals were affected by other predicaments at home.

6.5.5 Summary: cross-section 2

The second half of the students' first term showed increase in intrinsic motivation in Tatjana and Eduardo, and a move away from the extrinsic goal of learning English for employment. There was also a shift from an abstract to a concrete learning goal for Eduardo. Alina's motivation, despite external signs to the contrary, seemed to be affected by her low perceived competence. Tomasz, despite participating in class and showing external signs of enjoyment, still continued to indicate some levels of boredom in class. Mina continued to show high perceived competence, but her health and energy were affected by a miscarriage. Tatjana had also suffered a miscarriage in recent months.

6.6 Cross-section 3: November 2003

By November 2003, the seven students from R1 Lower had split into two groups. Mina and Tatjana had left to attend the R1 Transition group. The remaining five students stayed with Susan in R1 Middle. New students joined the class, and six of

these learners became participants in my research: Adrian, Ivan, Nicolae, Rose, Samira and Vladimir.

6.6.1 Learner profiles

Adrian had been a professional footballer in Romania prior to arriving in Ireland. Despite having lived in Ireland for approximately four years before attending class at IILT, his English was very rudimentary. He arrived before the end of the previous term. However, he compensated for his lack of proficiency by his exuberance, highly developed social skills and sense of humour.

Ivan was a twenty-eight-year-old lorry driver from Moldova. Married with a young family, he was a very reticent student in the first months of class with very poor writing and spelling, and few study skills. He struggled to make himself understood. Susan commented, "when he first came in, definitely, he would have been one of the weakest ones in the group [...] but kind of just held on" (TI:392).

In his early thirties and also from Moldova, Nicolae had worked in construction in his home country and in France before arriving in Ireland. He spoke fluent French and Russian as well as Romanian. Although he seemed a little uncomfortable in his first weeks, he appeared to have the study skills and drive to acquire quickly a working knowledge of English. His end-of-term progress report (Appendix E:7) from his teacher for the school administration noted, "started course reserved and a bit moody".

Rose, a thirty-four-year-old woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo, moved to Dublin from Dundalk in order to study English at IILT. Confident and outspoken, she was a keen student who had a clear idea from the outset of how to manage her own learning. She was one of the more proficient students in the class, particularly in terms of her spoken skills, "far too good really for the level, but her reading and writing needed a bit of work so in a way we still had something to offer" (Susan, TI: 535).

From Afghanistan, in her late twenties, Samira had come to Ireland with her family after fleeing to Pakistan. One of the youngest in a family of proficient English speakers with professional qualifications, she found it difficult to settle in the first few

weeks of class. She was convinced that she should be in a higher class, despite having considerable problems writing and spelling. She was the baby of the class, very sensitive and prone to tears on some occasions. Rose mothered her, and they quickly became firm friends. Samira was keen to improve her English in order to attend university in Ireland.

Vladimir was a bricklayer in his forties from Romania. A well-built man, he looked out of place at a small wooden desk. My first impression of him was that he would quickly drop out of the course, he appeared ill-at-ease in a school setting. However, as Tim, who taught Vladimir later after he moved up from Susan's class, commented, "if there is anything to do with appearances being deceptive" (TI:271), it certainly applied to Vladimir. Despite leaving school at the age of sixteen, he seemed to possess a natural inclination for study.

6.6.2 Classroom routine, R1 Middle

The classroom routine in R1 Middle continued in a similar vein to the previous term. Classes started and finished with a plenary session, filled with small-talk and questions. Adrian participated regularly in these sessions with a series of queries about vocabulary and grammar points, on several occasions these were incorporated into the planned activities for the day outlined on the whiteboard. Tasks were undertaken in small groups or in pairwork, using worksheets, the ELP and the ringbinders to organize these.

The Friday review became more complex. The Milestone version of the ELP was introduced (Chapter 2, Section 2.10). The cycle of target-setting was maintained in essentially the same format, however it became more complex with the introduction of individual targets for learners. Students in this class were encouraged to set personal targets as well as group targets for whole class. This involved students choosing one individual goal on Fridays from the "Can do" statements in their ELP.

The spelling test asked students for thirty new words arising from their individual work throughout the week rather than 15. Tomasz looked back on his progress in this respect (A1:120):

TOMASZ: [...] Susan make the spelling tests for me. Maybe not very hard, from 30 I make 10 wrong –70%, 60%

LORNA: Do you like this idea of 30 new words, is it difficult to find 30 new words?

TOMASZ: No. Now, I think no [...] Before, when we start [...] before when we start, oh my God, 30 words! ((laughs)) how you find them, 30 words? ((all laugh)) Before we had 15 in first class, yeah? Now it's 30.

In another interview, Samira and Adrian described how this spelling test worked (A3:246):

ADRIAN: We do these new words, thirty new words, dictionary, she [Samira] maybe no know word, Eduardo doesn't know and is better for all. Maybe I have a word, and you have a spelling test, and you say it

SAMIRA: Yes

ADRIAN: Enjoy, and Samira say, what is this enjoy and Susan, and we explain and she learn, enjoy

SAMIRA: Yeah it's a good idea one person write thirty words, what she knows and something in my idea I write thirty words and then Eduardo doesn't know what is this word [...]

SAMIRA: And he writes thirty words and I also, I don't know what is the meaning of this word. Is very important conversation too and one person and another person write it's very good for and for writing and spelling how we spell and em I like it and I have a lot of problem with writing.

The description of this weekly exercise indicates a learning task which is based on social interaction and mediation. In sociocultural theory, it is argued that learning takes place on an interactional, interpersonal plane before it can occur on an individual, intrapersonal plane (Vygotsky 1978:27). The mediation which takes place in the spelling test described above is based on a discussion of new words, and the knowledge gap between partners. Exchanging individual word lists created from each student's folder was a form of social interaction that supported vocabulary acquisition. Students asked their partner or teacher for a definition of words they did not know.

Vygotsky believed that the social functions of language preceded its individual functions. The type of learning that occurred in this exercise led to students remembering and sharing words beyond their A1 proficiency level. Neda's list of words in her ELP from the week of October 13th included: ruthless, high rise, sunset, sunrise, invite, Lent, impressive, believe, protest, certainly. The word 'ruthless' reappeared in the audio interviews. Rose said (A2:304),

> When Susan talks about spelling tests, it's nice because I think, now if I can write or read, it is for that. You know? Because I can say 'Ruthless, Ruthless? Yeah Ruthless. But if someone say to me, can you write Ruthless ((group laughter)) I can't! Shame, you know ((laughter))!

6.6.3 *Perceived progress*

By November, both the students who had arrived in September and those who had been at IILT since May were aware of the progress they had been making. I asked each student whether they thought they had made progress in learning English in the audio interviews. Adrian's response to the question was, "Who, me? Me, yeah. Unbelievable! Yes" (A3:139). Adrian believed their progress was because they were enjoying themselves: "when you like something, you progress. When you don't like, you don't progress. And myself, I think, this is true" (A3: 154).

The nature and direction of the relationship between motivation and achievement have understandably been the crux of much research. Adrian's response above highlights what seemed to him to be common sense – enjoyment leads to progress. Deci's investigation into intrinsic motivation led him to conclude that people who were intrinsically motivated to complete a task, in other words, people who enjoyed completing the task, worked harder, longer and more successfully at it than people who were extrinsically motivated by imposed rewards or goals (1995:49). By November 2003, some of the learners who participated in this project were aware of their own progress. Whether this progress was initiated by motivation in the first instance is unclear. However, the pride and contentment at being able to communicate in English seemed to instigate a sense of optimism and competence in the learners, even when their progress was difficult to measure quantitatively. Some students were

more circumspect in their self-appraisal, Eduardo replied he thought his progress was "fifty fifty" (A3:140), and later said, "Now I have many things to learn" (A3:719).

Tomasz said, "For me, maybe, I see a difference every day. Maybe other people don't see the difference" (A1:36). For Tomasz, the difference seemed partly to lie in how much he understood in class, "when we were in the first class, I got, uh, 80%, now I got 90%" (A1:61). In addition to increased comprehension, Tomasz's attendance records had also improved from 78% in term one ('unsatisfactory', required by IILT to be 85% or above) to 91% in term two. He also found that the seven months in class had passed by very quickly: "they go like that, ((makes noise of air passing))" (A1:53). Tomasz was positive about his future prospects (A1:140, 143):

> In one year, it's not possible to learn? Uh, I think maybe 70%, 80% learn, maybe 70% [...] maybe when we leave this school, maybe we speak very well, very well. One year I think we speak very good.

As well as learners' own accounts of their progress, Rose and Tatjana talked in separate interviews about what their friends thought of their improved English. Tatjana recounted,

> One time my husband's friends ask me about English, he said you now have very good English! You know before when I ask you about something you didn't know anything [...]. (A4:654)

Rose made a similar comment in a different interview:

> [...] I think I've improved my English now, more for writing, and uh, for speaking, because I have one old friend, he is Irish, he saw me the first day when I came in Ireland, and uh, sometimes we talk each other, that's last week, when he speak with me by phone he say, oh Rose, you speak English now! ((laughs)) he says oh, that school is fine for you! I think now is ok, I can explain something, if I'm angry I can scream in English, because before, I was angry, I speak in French. (A2:116)

Tatjana explained a similar experience:

> When I came in Ruth's class, I didn't know anything [...] maybe a little, what is your name or hello, hi, help, you know ((laughter)). But you listen on the TV, you know, words, but now is good. I go on the hospital sometimes alone, I don't need translation, yeah? [...] Yeah, I know when midwife asks me about blood (press), (presh) [...] pressure, yeah, and urine and something, headache, backache or something, swollen head, you know. Many things. (A4:191)

Ivan also saw how his progress in English had impacted on his life outside the classroom:

> because now I not need the translation, all the time take, translation. Myself translating. I go to Social Welfare, wherever. A little idea correct, I have idea correct spelling. Little little, no one hundred percent, I think myself. Before all the time, come on please, reading, what is this, reading English paper, now no problem, anything understand. (A1:107)

Alina was conscious of the difference her progress in English had made to her life:

> sometimes I speak in the shop, customer service, maybe problem, and uh, speak at the doctors, speak maybe about my daughter, because before, nothing speaking! ((laughs)) Now I speak little and more confident, little little. (A1:366)

Susan's concerns for Alina in the first term seemed to be somewhat allayed by the second term. Although reticent, Alina became more comfortable in class and made notable progress in her learning. Her attendance improved from 84% in the first term to 91% in the second term. Alina's progress report at the end of the second term read:

> Great. I would like to see her take more risks but she's come a long way. Her writing is so meticulous, very careful. Her spoken production is lovely but interaction still needs a lot of work. Attendance 91%; punctuality excellent. (Appendix E:2)

6.6.4 *Personal goals and sense of relatedness: Rose*

Some students adapted rapidly to the routine and activities of R1 Middle. Rose was one of the newcomers who settled in very quickly. She thrived in the classroom

environment, and knew which strategies could help her progress outside the classroom:

> some books, newspapers, watching TV, is very important, in English, and sometimes, you know the, the movies like, Eastenders or Coronation Street, yeah, is nice because you can put the, the [...] yeah, text, this is good at the same time, you can read. (A2:148)

Rose articulated precise goals for her life in Ireland, and these were dependent on attaining a high level of oral fluency. Some students gave rather flimsy or vague long-term goals in their entrance interview. Rose had specified that her long-term goal was to find work as "a receptionist in a hotel or something similar" (Appendix E:9), and this had not changed by the time of our interview in November:

> my first target is I want to learn very very well, I want to speak very very well English. I want to speak English like an English woman. Then, looking for a job, like receptionist, or call centre [...] maybe I can learn another language too, maybe Dutch. (A2:460)

Her drive to achieve these goals is evident in Susan's response to my question about Rose's experience of learning English. Susan replied, "Is she president of Ireland yet?" (TI:534). Susan also described her as "very focussed" (TI:548) , "all set up, knew what she had to do" (TI:560). Her end-of-term progress report (Appendix E:9) read:

> Gets involved with every theme, activity, discussion. So full of energy and opinion. As a result she has progressed at such speed. I hardly recognize her these days. Fully committed to her learning.

Rose was very aware that learning English was a necessary step towards integration, and also, that by integrating, she could in turn improve her English. She was confident and outspoken, and would share her views in class when she felt that other students were being overly critical:

> If anyone would criticize Ireland, like the weather or the traffic or the smoking on the buses, she'd be straight to the "you're a guest in this country, this is a good life, let's make the most of it". (TI:570)

She was conscious of the criticisms levelled at immigrants, and agreed with some of the criticisms. She thought that some learners only attended class because they did not want to seek employment, and that the Department of Social Welfare encouraged them to register at IILT rather than to continue signing on for benefits:

> people come here only because, you know, social say, oh go looking for a job, and they say, oh no, I want to go to school, I want stay. Some people, I'm not sure, but some people say I'm only here because social give me money. (A2:331)

Rose argued with Nicolae in our interview in November that simply taking classes because they were available, or even learning just enough English to cope, was unacceptable to her. Part of her debate with Nicolae was about a hypothetical person who didn't speak English and was employed as a driver. She pointed out that the low income jobs favoured by immigrants that do not require much English were not adequate if the worker falls sick, "maybe he lose his leg" (A2:369). Nicolae's response was that he would be taken care of by Social Welfare, "if he lose his leg, it's for social pay!" (A2:372). Rose was adamant that this was the wrong attitude, and that even in the case of an accident, the worker would still have to know some English to be able to cope: "If today he go to hospital [...] he have to speak [...] and this and this and that, and my wife, you know?" (A2:375). Later in the interview, conversation again turned to the importance of speaking the language of the host country in order to integrate fully. Nicolae continued to contest this point. Rose stressed, "if you are driver you have to speak English, because you are a driver here. Maybe you have some problem, if Garda came, you can say, I'm driver!" (A2:425).

Rose's motivation to learn English was mainly driven by her desire not only to obtain employment but to connect with the society around her. She wanted to "speak English like an English woman" (A2:461), and defended life in Ireland against criticism from other immigrants. She believed that mastery of the English language was a necessary step to integration. Rose is a good example of a learner whose need for *relatedness*

(one of the three requirements for well-being in self-determination theory) was satisfied. Her need to connect, or integrate a sense of self with the world around her (Deci 1995:82) was satisfied by learning English in an environment where her own goals were not only aligned with the goals of the classroom, but indeed became the goals of the classroom. Deci argues that individuals do not develop in isolation, but in interaction with their social world. This assertion is also fundamental to sociocultural theory; learning is a socially mediated and a socially situated activity (Vygotsky 1981:163). Learners who engage with the social world of the target language are more likely to become proficient speakers than those who remain isolated. For Rose, the linkages between the classroom and her personal goals and her sense of relatedness with her host community seemed to be important factors in her enjoyment of learning English and her progress.

6.6.5 Extrinsic motivation and lack of relatedness: Nicolae

Rose's concerted effort to integrate, and her sense of relatedness, can be contrasted with Nicolae's attitude to learning English and living in Ireland. Nicolae's experience of Ireland was jaundiced from the outset; he was arrested at Dublin airport. He told the class about this experience in December. His first days in R1 Middle were also rather inauspicious. As mentioned earlier, Susan wrote in his progress report, "started course reserved and a bit moody" (Appendix E:7). He was sent a warning letter about his attendance in the first week of term.

However, as the term progressed Nicolae began to relax and engage with the class, Susan wrote that he "got into the mood and started joining in more" (Appendix E:7). By November, he thought he had made some progress, "in some new words, now I speak a great deal" (A2:661). Susan believed he had the potential to climb quickly through the proficiency levels at IILT:

> I thought six months in the system and out there working. I would have thought at the beginning, ok, he's a linguist, he speaks what five languages, he just needs a bit of orientation, or a bit of a breathing space as he sorts out his other stuff, and he'll be out of here in six months. (TI:320)

He appeared to be equipped to learn English, and outwardly gave the impression of a motivated student: "he just seems...he's highly motivated, he came in, he seemed to be halfway on the road already" (TI:333).

Although Nicolae participated in the goal-setting activities in class, he had no defined personal goals beyond learning English. When I asked him about his plans after IILT, he replied, "I don't know, I can't now, I don't know the future" (A2:469) and "For now I don't think about the future" (A2:471). His goal of proficiency in English was lower than Rose's goal of near-native speaker fluency, and he did not believe that he would ever speak English fluently. English was only part of his linguistic profile; a Moldovan speaker of Romanian, he also spoke fluent Russian and French. Although he said he felt motivated, he was not completely committed (A2:402):

NICOLAE: Yes, I want, for me, I want to learn, uh, 80%
ROSE: 100%!
((laughter))
NICOLAE: No, because 100%. Because I don't speak Romanian 100%. Some words I don't understand in Romanian. Is my mother language and I don't understand. In this school, I speak Russian, you know, and at home I speak Romanian [...]. For me, nobody speak very good Russian 100%. Romanian, some words, Alina speak I ask Alina, you know, about bad words, because you know, I don't (pratique) this. I don't think I will speak English 100% in Ireland. Maybe my my my children will speak, no me.

Yet he also thought that in a year's time, his English would have greatly improved: "I think in one year times, will be very good for me, many more English, good" (A2:182) and "for me I want to learning very good. If I want, *si je peux*". (A2:397)

As outlined in the previous discussion of Rose and her sense of relatedness, Nicolae argued that speaking just enough English to cope was sufficient, and that the safety net of Social Welfare would catch anyone who was unemployed. His attitudes to learning English were mixed, and he gave the impression he was attending class by default:

> don't like, coming to school, for learning. For learning. If you don't want to stay in home and can't no work, then is good. (A2:386)

He did not like learning English, but acknowledged that it was important for anyone living in Ireland (A2:77):

> NICOLAE: don't like English because it is hard, you know, but is very important for the (.) this is first language in the world, very important. If you come, living here, what's the word?
> LORNA: obligatory?
> NICOLAE: yeah obligatory

Nicolae did not seem to enjoy life in Ireland nor want to integrate into Irish society (A2:433), "for some people, Irish people is difficult, for me is very difficult". He had no firm plans either to complete his language study or to remain in Ireland. He said if he found a good job he would leave class, and also that,

> maybe I want to, you know, change jobs, I don't know. I don't like too much this country, you know, cold, I prefer to live in France. Very good country, for me, because I know the (language) (A2:473)

Nicolae seemed to be learning English because he had no choice, he had not found a job and he preferred to attend class than remain at home. Deci (1978) argues that there are two types of extrinsic motivation, that which is imposed by others, and that which is self-imposed. Nicolae's motivation to learn English was imposed by the situation he found himself in. Extrinsic motivation that is *self*-selected, and internalized, leads to enjoyment similar to that of intrinsic motivation, the learner feels competent and in control. The factors controlling Nicolae's motivation to learn English did not appear to progress from external, imposed goals to self-selected, internalized goals. This may have been hampered by Nicolae's attitudes to living in Ireland. He knew that learning the language of the host community was important, yet his sense of relatedness, or integration, was marred by a dislike for Ireland.

6.6.6 *Intrinsic motivation: Neda*

In Cross-section 1, I discussed Neda's participation in class, and how, unlike her classmates, she seemed to view coming to class as a social event or hobby. I argued that a degree of intrinsic motivation alone may not be sufficient to sustain the type of commitment required by the task of language learning. Neda's enjoyment of English was not impervious to low points.

The period of term two which coincided with the move to new premises via a temporary building in October saw Neda at an uncharacteristic low point:

> I don't know if it was just that month, or the fact that we were in the temporary space, but that whole month was a disaster zone. It was a very low point, she was very tired, she just wasn't very interested. I don't know what was going on personally, I don't know if things were hard at home, but that was a very very hard month. And then when we moved to this school, she started getting interested again. That was very low, she wasn't really interested in anything, finding everything just a little too difficult, although it wasn't, she was well able for it. Maybe it was just Ramadan, maybe she was just hungry and tired. (Susan, TI:53)

This setback seemed to be temporary, and by November, Neda again threw herself back into the social aspects of learning English as well as learning tasks and homework. In her own words,

> For me, start difficult, different, and now (no) for me is easier. No everything easy, or grammar now I think good for me, or just new words. Sometimes the big words, I can't speak the words. (A2:211)

Her end-of-term report (Appendix E:6) in December by the teacher echoed her own appraisal: "She's come a long long way. She actually makes sense when she speaks English now. Her writing needs some more attention and spelling too". Neda completed a second questionnaire in November (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.7). Her score on the intrinsic motivation subscale remained exactly the same at 87%. Her perception of the usefulness of goal-setting activities remained the same, she agreed fully with these statements. Her score on the perceived competence subscale increased from 80% to

90%, whereas her enjoyment of goal-setting activities decreased from 84% to 68%. This was one of the lowest scores on this subscale across all questionnaires administered. Neda rated the weekly review and target-setting as boring. Although in general Neda gave a high score for intrinsic motivation in both Questionnaires 1 and 2, she said that previously, she did not like the English language: "I don't like English" (A2:69), although it was unclear whether she had since grown to like it. For Neda, there seemed to be a difference between liking the English language, and enjoying English class.

Although Neda made some progress, her attendance for the term was not deemed satisfactory by the school, and she received warning letters as her attendance dipped under the requisite 85% average. Her report in December (Appendix E:6) contained the following warning from the school administration: 76% attendance not good enough, class will be suspended unless drastic improvement. I return to Neda's story in Cross-section 4.

6.6.7 Relatedness and integration

The four audio interviews conducted in November shed light on one issue that had been implicit throughout the course but had never been discussed overtly in class, that of the process of integrating into the host community. I have already defined this idea of relatedness when discussing Rose's personal goal of integration.

Relatedness, the idea of integrating a sense of self with that of the surrounding community, takes on particular importance in the context of refugee learners. Satisfying the inherent human need for relatedness, or the need to make connections with others, is a vital ingredient for fulfilment and well-being. Obstacles which hinder this sense of belonging may in turn hamper the learner's intrinsic motivation in learning English and hamper progress. Not only do immigrants learning English have to learn to relate to the community of the target language, this community is also their new host community.

Integrating into a new host community as an immigrant means running the gauntlet of racism. This issue emerged during the four audio interviews, and it became apparent

that it was a major obstacle that prevented learners from connecting with the world around them, leading some to harbour mistrust, suspicion and fear. There were various reports of racism from students, usually connected with incidents they experienced in the areas of Dublin where they lived: "here it happens, to my children, to my wife and my friends, in park. Say go back in your country"; "Here it's very bad. Really very bad" (Adrian, A3:581, 620).

ADRIAN: They put fire on Nigerian man's house or car, and they put a fire, you don't know, I have friends live in a bad area, they, they broken, or, what you call it ((gestures filling a bottle and throwing it))

LORNA: Petrol bomb?

ADRIAN: In the house. This happens, in Blanchardstown. (A3:609)

Most of the students had children, and witnessed their process of connecting with a new environment:

ADRIAN: [I mean, in the school is not happen, because the teacher say to parents, speak with her, what I know in my experience. Teacher speak with the parents, speak with the other children, and no very big problem. But first when my little girl, oh yes, problem. No play with her, ok. (A3:591)

Samira shared a similar experience that had affected a child in her family:

SAMIRA: and also, in the kindergarten, and one girl from Irish say, I don't want to play with you because you is black. She cry, she cry. She come home [...] she's six years old [...] She cry, and uh, last night, she cried, one of my friends, she's really bad, she come and say for all the children, do not play with this girl because she is from the foreign country. (A3:583)

Students seemed to have a measured approach to these problems, and accepted that a small proportion of people in any country would have negative attitudes, "is normal, normal. Every country have this problem" (Eduardo, A3:604), "like every country. Bad people and nice people" (Adrian, A3:532), "I think in every place it's like that" (Samira,

A3:622). Adrian however expressed a mistrustful attitude to anybody in a position of power, or in a government job, and thought that such people, including the Irish, were often hypocritical:

> because you are in front, they say yes, ok, very nice, but after that, in the back, they don't do nothing for you, but when they speak with you, very nice. Oh, very nice children, very nice, how old are you, I'm ok, can you help me? Yes, yes, I can help you. No no. (A3:508)

Negative experiences were coupled with positive reports of a friendly welcome: "I think, in my idea, all the people that live in, the Irish people, they are very kind" (Samira, A3:527), "for me no racist [...] is very good people" (Eduardo, A3:507), "Irish? Very nice" (Ivan, A1:374).

However, even relatively minor incidents and misunderstandings shook self-confidence, as Samira's account of an unsuccessful telephone conversation illustrates:

> I am very nervous, I can't see why I'm not secure, why not understand me? Last night I speak on the telephone with one person that have a house, and they are looking for a house, and I say for them, I am looking your house, what is your address. He doesn't understand me! Say, what you say, I cannot understand, sorry. And put the phone. I was so sadness. I speak clear! [...] I was so nervous, I thought, am I lazy? I can't speak! (A3:794)

Sometimes racism was not to blame for problems connected with the host community, but rather isolation. Some students had little contact with anyone outside their own family, and had few opportunities to speak English, "In this school, I speak Russian, you know, and at home I speak Romanian". (Nicolae A2:407).

> LORNA: [...] So will you be sad to leave school?
> TATJANA: Yeah because I'm scared about English, home I speak Bosnian. I don't know, I would. I want more Irish friends. My husband yes, but. Sometimes his friends come at home, but no same. (A4:105).

Experiences or fear of racism in Ireland sometimes obscured the baggage that had accumulated as a result of past trauma. The teachers acknowledged that there was "a certain amount of trauma" in some learners (Tim, TI:708).

> This school is for refugee people, it is very important for the teacher to to be kind. Because we have another problem, you know [...] some people is very tired. (Nicolae, A2:589)

Nicolae had told the class in December about his unpleasant experience of being arrested and searched at Dublin airport. Samira recounted in an audio interview how her family had been the target of abuse in Pakistan after fleeing from Afghanistan:

> Because before we were living here we were living in Pakistan. Because the fighting in Afghanistan, and every time we are here, and they put stone in, uh, newspaper, and they put it our gar, garage, in the door, with the stone. And go in your country, why you are staying in our country, what you are doing here, and it was very, uh um, hard for us. (A3:622)

Susan recounted how through a small incident she had gained a level of insight into these issues:

> The other day, one of the students in the class had a bit of a problem with his bus ticket on Monday, there was a bit of a shenanigans about bus tickets on Monday and he basically said that you know, he hates getting on the bus and using the ticket, and if it doesn't work on the last day, because then you have to get your money out and you hold up the whole queue. And even when he was explaining this, I was starting to get a bit sweaty myself, oh my god, my bus ticket is not working now do I have money and is it one twenty or one thirty oh the bus driver is waiting for me oh somebody is shouting at me. That kind of panic, that feeling of fear that you, you just assume that everybody brings their rucksack and their apple for break and they go home and do their homework diligently. It's just not the case, it's just not the case with our learners. (TI:714)

These interviews revealed some of the experiences that immigrant learners faced outside the classroom and their attitudes to these experiences. It is unlikely that their attitudes to English remained unaffected. If satisfying the fundamental human need to

relate and connect is linked to intrinsic motivation, then these stories may somehow have impacted the learners' enjoyment of learning English.

6.6.8 Summary: cross-section 3

By November 2003, seven of the learners had been studying at IILT for seven months. Six others had been enrolled since September. Despite disruption from two moves of premises, October and November were the most productive periods I had observed. Firm friendships had developed. There was a very relaxed atmosphere in class of friendliness and openness, and perhaps even a touch of complacency that accompanied increased comprehension and proficiency. Students had become very familiar with Susan, were accustomed to her manner of working, and were in a very comfortable routine. This openness led to some frank discussions in the audio interviews. There was some fear about changing classes after Christmas, and a desire to stay together with the same teacher.

Learners had progressed from choosing group targets to selecting one individual learning target each week in addition to the usual majority-vote selection of topics for the week ahead. The students believed their English had improved. Rose articulated well-defined personal targets and a desire to integrate. Nicolae demonstrated a lack of relatedness, and an extrinsic motivation to study English imposed by his situation. Neda's enjoyment of the social aspects of class was perhaps not sustainable in the long run.

6.7 Cross-section 4: March 2004

After two terms with Susan in R1 Lower and R1 Middle, the next step for most of the students was R1 Transition (A2 CEF) with Tim. Eight learners from the previous term moved to this class in January 2004: Adrian, Alina, Eduardo, Neda, Nicolae, Pin, Tomasz and Vladimir. The transition was challenging at the beginning, but it seemed to help some learners develop personal goals for the future.

Rose moved up two levels to R2 Lower, along with Samira. Unexpectedly, and with no explanation, Samira did not take her place in the R2 Lower at the start of the new term. By March 2004, Rose's drive to succeed was evident in her progress through the

proficiency levels at IILT. In January, she had moved up two classes to R2 Lower (B1/B2 CEF) instead of R1 Transition (A2 CEF). Rose then left IILT to attend a FÁS training course.

> She jumped two levels didn't she? To R2 Lower and then to ((name of teacher)), so she went through the system in three courses, four months, four months, four months then Jervis Street or FÁS. Fast-track basically. (Susan, TI:563)

Although Rose's desire for integration and her self-imposed extrinsic motivation fuelled her progress, she received letters warning her about poor attendance on four occasions in 2004 (Appendix E:9).

6.7.1 Entering R1 Transition

Tim's classroom operated according to the same four cornerstones as Susan's class: the class contract, the target-setting cycle, Friday review, and use of authentic materials and worksheets organized in the ELP. The classroom set-up was very similar to the previous room, with posters of weekly targets, useful phrases and classwork displayed on the walls, although in this room there were no desks apart from the teacher's, rather chairs with attached folding tables as found in university lecture theatres.

Tim recorded his first impressions of the group of students as they moved up from Susan's class:

> I was first of all struck with the ease of communication within the group and the sense of class unity. The group also showed a high degree of self-motivation when working on set tasks. As a general comment the group's strategy was to first of all rely on the information they had to solve the set task rather than to look to the teacher for cues or solutions. There was good class discipline but with some (perhaps unavoidable) use of languages other than English. Overall the class dynamic was excellent: businesslike but relaxed with a feeling of a happy and productive working environment. (LB:770)

There were some differences in the way the classroom and activities were organized, as well as in the challenge these presented to the class. Tim noted, "R1 Transition is

quite a leap compared to what happens beforehand" (TI:387). Much less time was spent on small-talk at the beginning of class, Tim moved more quickly into the afternoon's activities. More individual initiative was expected from learners during the target-setting cycle. Students had to choose and reflect on a range of their own personal weekly targets directly from the "Can do" statements in their ELP rather than copying one single personal target onto their Friday Review worksheet, as they had been accustomed to doing in R1 Middle: "[students] are having to do more of the finding and reading descriptors and deciding themselves" (LB:309). Activities based on these descriptors became more difficult. Students continued to choose the content of the course. Examples of weekly themes in the first months of term were work, housing and computers. Targets about work for a two week period in February were (LB:826):

- Filling in application forms
- Having an interview
- Doing a CV
- Finding a job
- Understanding job ads
- Career guidance, choosing a job, which jobs pay well
- Tax system
- Eventually, information about starting your own business
- Grammar – would.

The first few weeks of the third term seemed difficult for some learners. I noted in my logbook that although students were happy with the challenge, some (Adrian, Alina, Neda) found it tiring and needed more time to reflect on what they were doing, and had difficulty keeping up with the pace of work. Students told me the class was "hard", "too quiet", with "a lot of writing" to do (LB:767, Alina, Neda, Tomasz). Tomasz indicated in the open-ended questionnaire that he found R1 Transition more difficult than other classes, and that he found the Friday review boring. For most of the class, this was simply a hurdle to be cleared. However, for Ivan, these hurdles seemed to have more serious consequences for his learning. One day he became very angry in class, he didn't seem to understand the task instructions given by Tim and he got very upset and self-conscious. Tim later commented:

> It was tough, it was a jump up in the levels [...] He had a bad day, and that was indicative. After that, he was very, very resistant to, uh, being told anything after

> that, or being helped. I had to basically help Nicolae, who he worked quite closely with him after that, and uh, so that he would see what you are doing. (TI:371)

My logbook offers my perspective on the same situation, and contains the following entry:

> How very emotional it can get when learners feel out of their depth – Ivan appears to be having a difficult time adjusting to new pace of this class, was very frustrated and upset today. Said that everything was going too fast for him, that he didn't understand, that reading was very difficult for him and that the girls he was working with spoke English too quickly for him to understand (Neda & new student in Tim's class). He was almost in tears. He was then apologetic, said he was sorry, but that it was just so difficult for him to read in English. (LB:793)

6.7.2 *Perceived competence, performance-oriented: Ivan*

By later in the term, Ivan seemed to be coping a little better. He told me that he was finding it very "heavy" but that he was happy. He found the pace too fast; although the others seemed to understand the work, for him it went in one ear and out the other. This is echoed in his response to the last question in the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix D:2), How is this class different to other language classes you have had? Ivan replied, "For me is heavy, is easy for peoples who understand English". However, Ivan's attendance improved from 91% in term two to 94% in term three, despite his initial struggles (Appendix E:4). He believed he was making progress, but that it would take him longer than his classmates: "I learning some percentages I want to learn more long time for me to understand English" (Appendix D:2). A further factor which may have contributed to Ivan's difficulties in the classroom was his lack of integration in Irish society.

> He goes back and forth to Moldova quite a lot, doesn't he? I mean, he'd take trips and drive back to Moldova, sort of two or three weeks. Perhaps he's not quite fully committed to Ireland, and you know, maybe he thinks he'll be going back". (Susan, TI:400)

In the previous section, I discussed the cases of Rose, whose sense of relatedness and desire for integration seemed to contribute to increased proficiency, and Nicolae, whose lack of desire for integration was an obstacle to learning English.

Ivan's struggles in R1 Transition seemed to stem from the jump in difficulty level, and his perceived inability to cope with the new material. His intrinsic motivation is threatened by his lack of comprehension and low perceived competence: "I don't felt motivated in class"; When I was motivated, I left my problems; "When I'm unhappy, I told my teacher I don't understand, please repeat" (Appendix D:2). His enjoyment was contingent upon understanding; when asked "What things make you feel better (happy, more comfortable) in class?", he replied "when I understand maybe 50-80% English" (Appendix D:2). Ivan did not regard himself as a proficient learner, but believed he was at the bottom of the class. Previously, in R1 Middle, there had been another learner whose English was so rudimentary that it was very clear Ivan was not the least proficient student. Susan believed that this had been important for Ivan's sense of self-worth, "psychologically sometimes it's quite nice to have somebody who is clearly [...] a lot worse than you" (TI:420). Susan and Tim pointed out how criticism from fellow students sometimes affected learners' self-confidence:

> Susan: [...] Some of the students here are much harsher than students I've ever been in classes with, about saying someone is crap, and, I don't understand you
>
> Tim: Yeah yeah, you don't speak English. I've heard that a few times, you don't speak English. I mean that's fairly damning, you know? (TI:436)

Ivan did not want to be seen as unintelligent or incapable of learning English. Tim wrote:

> Ivan is a slower learner, who takes a running jump at new information and grasps as much of it as he can in midair, and then uses what he lands with. I think he sees any lack of knowledge in front of the class as losing face. I think that he feels discouraged if he doesn't grasp new information initially. (LB:887)

This led to sometimes volatile situations in class.

> There was a kind of edge of frustration there though, you know? If it didn't work out initially, he could get frustrated, there was a danger with him out of all the

> people in that group, he'd be the one you had to watch because there would be a kind of, I'm going to throw my hat at this now, you know? (Tim, TI:413).

Ivan seemed to be learning English by default, not as a means of obtaining employment but rather because he had not managed to find a job. Once in the classroom, he did not develop any self-imposed extrinsic goals beyond that of qualifying as a driver, nor much intrinsic motivation. Perhaps the main reason for this was his fear of failure, and a need to maintain face in front of his fellow students and teacher. The transition from Susan's class to Tim's class moved Ivan out of a comfort zone. Studies of goal-orientation have repeatedly reported two types of personality orientation, concomitant with two types of goal behaviour. Performance goals are easy tasks where learners can succeed and not lose face, learning goals are difficult tasks where learners might face a challenge, but learn something new (Chapter 3, Section 3.8). Ivan was an example of a performance oriented learner, he struggled to show he was competent in order not to lose face in front of others. His lack of self-confidence meant that he did not want to take risks in class, and he preferred to work with the same partner to avoid any clashes or comprehension problems.

6.7.3 Tomasz and Alina

The fourth questionnaire, administered in March (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.8), continued to confirm patterns of low intrinsic motivation and low perceived competence evident in earlier questionnaires completed by Tomasz and Alina. In Questionnaire 4, both learners again gave the lowest overall scores at 74% each. The mean overall score was 81%. The other four respondents' scores were: Eduardo, 87%; Adrian, 86%; Vladimir 83%; Nicolae 81%.

Tomasz's ratings of items in the intrinsic motivation subscale gave him the lowest score of the six students (73%, highest score 87%). Tomasz agreed that the Friday review was boring. This was echoed by his response in the open-format questionnaire indicating that he found the Friday review boring.

Agreeing with Tomasz in the closed-format questionnaire, Alina also found the Friday review boring. The other four students disagreed. Both Alina and Tomasz agreed fully with the statement I learn English just to get a job. Five out of the six students gave

similar scores assessing their perceived competence as learners (range 80-87%), Alina's score was lower than the others at 66%. Alina and Tomasz gave the lowest scores for enjoyment of goal-setting activities at 68% and 64% respectively. Whereas three students gave the maximum rating of 100% for the perceived usefulness of goal-setting activities, and one student rated this at 93%, both Alina and Tomasz gave the lowest ratings at 80% each.

The data from the questionnaires suggests that Alina did not see herself as a competent learner, she did not enjoy the goal-setting activities as much as the other students, nor did she view them as useful as the students did. In the two closed-format questionnaires, Alina's scores were amongst the lowest. However, Tim's impression of Alina was of a highly motivated learner:

> Alina is another quiet, highly motivated student. She studies hard at home and I am sure that her husband teaches her at home. Even though she is having childcare problems at the moment, she attends class diligently. She is a shy person and so her spoken production lags slightly behind her writing and comprehension. She is determined to maximize her time learning English so that she can go to FÁS, start work and build a life here. Alina will stick at a task until completed but will ask questions if she has any difficulty. (LB: 819)

My own written impressions of Alina back in August were very similar.

> I think she is possibly one of the most motivated students in the class. Why is this so? She is a very determined person, and doesn't seem to let setbacks get in her way, even though sometimes she can be upset. She is also very focussed and concentrated. (LB:440)

Alina equipped herself with library books, worked hard at home, and was regarded by both teachers as very motivated although her timidity held her back from participating fully in class activities such as target-setting, which she found boring. Her progress report (Appendix E:2) for the third term read:

> Alina is a very strong, self-motivated student. She does extra homework regularly. Her only area for improvement is her spoken production – practice will improve her fluency.

Alina left IILT shortly after this. Her husband was given a place on a FÁS training course, and because of lack of available childcare, she gave up her place to look after her pre-school daughter. Alina was the second student to leave the classes I observed at IILT because of childcare problems. An African student had left Susan's R1 Lower class because her husband had started a new job.

At the start of the new term in January, Tim wrote that Tomasz's motivation was lower than that of other students:

> Tomasz isn't as motivated as the other students but I see him as a credit to Susan's teaching and course-planning skills. He does what he is presented with, using, I'm assuming, the skills he has learned in the last two terms in Susan's class. Tomasz is happy to work with any class member and is a pretty easygoing personality. He will ask questions to make sure that he can complete tasks. His attitude to spelling and grammatical accuracy is also easy going. (LB:865)

However, as in the first weeks of R1 Lower, Tomasz seemed to have another breakthrough in terms of his personal goals. Looking back at Tomasz's time in R1 Transition, Tim saw a change in his behaviour, and a new sense of initiative:

> But then, once he learned about the greater context of where his education is going, then that's where the motivation comes. Researching that, and he saw what could be done, the range of possibilities. Em, he was, I gave him all the VEC booklets, and [...] he said he wanted to do something, and then I asked him what he wanted to do. I met him in the corridor and he had more information than I had given him on it, you know, so he must have had a look at that, subsequently. He was quite bored in the weeks of the reading and writing class, it wasn't his level, it wasn't hard enough for him. He enjoyed being challenged, you know, and he wanted to communicate, you know. (TI:67)

Tomasz made good progress after R1 Transition,

> Jumped two classes, you know. He was in the reading and writing group, but, yeah, he didn't last there. That wasn't the place for him, so eh, Tomasz was motivated to work in class, and then, he would really punch in whatever you put in front of him he would learn. (Tim, TI:64)

In Cross-section 3 above, and in Chapter 3, Section 3.7, I discussed the notion of two different personality types and two types of goal-oriented behaviour, performance-oriented learners, and learning, or mastery-oriented behaviour. Mastery-oriented learners prefer challenges, and prefer learning new skills rather than completing easily accomplished tasks. Tomasz's various manifestations of boredom throughout the three terms may have been due to lack of challenges. His writing ability seriously lagged behind his spoken production and interaction, preventing him from engaging with more challenging tasks or moving to a higher level class as some of his classmates had done. Unlike Ivan, Tomasz did not worry about losing face in class, and the challenging transition between R1 Middle and R1 Transition seemed to provide him with a welcome impetus to learn more, and to make specific future plans.

6.7.4 Perceived competence: Pin

Although Pin did not complete any questionnaires, other data confirmed that he, like Alina, had very low perceived competence as a learner of English. This had a notable impact on his general well-being, "no self-worth or self-confidence" (Susan, TI:480). Although his reading and writing skills were beyond the A2 level of R1 Transition, his speaking skills were rudimentary and he struggled with the phonology of English. Tim believed this difficulty was linked to his perceived competence:

> I think pronunciation is such a big thing for students because instantly, that's how you get feedback from people, that's your reinforcement, that's how your self-identity is produced, so Pin would have had a very negative perception of himself. (TI:472)

Pin, however, does not make the connection between his lack of oral skills and low motivation. He linked his lack of motivation to comprehension problems and forgetfulness: "I sometime unhappy in class because I don't understand and always forget words" (Appendix D:4). Outside the classroom, he often borrowed books from

the public library, and completed more homework than was required (Susan, TI:519). His progress through IILT was slow (Appendix E:8). He repeated R1 Lower, Susan's class was his second term at that level. Each of his progress reports attested to his hard work, hampered by reticence and problems with pronunciation. This continued throughout R1 Transition. He repeated R1 Transition in the term following my fieldwork By the end of his fifth term at IILT, he seemed to have gained a little more confidence as his pronunciation improved: "Pin has become more confident with his improvement in pronunciation" (Appendix E:8). Pin's chief obstacle to learning English was low confidence in his pronunciation, he did not perceive himself as capable of speaking English. This affected his motivation to learn; when his pronunciation improved, his confidence grew.

6.7.5 Autonomy

Pin's low perceived competence was not the only barrier to his motivation and progress. He also struggled to take responsibility for his own learning. I have now discussed the two of the three basic needs, which, in self-determination theory, are central to creating and sustaining intrinsic motivation, namely competence and relatedness. The third need is for autonomy. Deci describes autonomous behaviour as self-governing (1995:2). Ushioda argues that autonomous learners are, by definition, motivated learners (1996a:2). It was evident from the outset that Pin was extremely dependent on the teacher. He was very shy, and found talking to other learners difficult. He preferred to speak to, and through, the teacher:

> He would hardly ever look somebody in the eye and speak to them, he'd speak through you to the person. If they were in groups or whatever, he'd try and get you as close to him as possible because he knew that the person wouldn't actually get what he was saying. (Susan, TI:487)

Pin's responses in the open-format questionnaire indicated his dependence on the teacher, and preference for a teacher-controlled classroom. When asked if he felt in control of his learning, he replied, "I think program derive from teacher". In response to a question about personal targets after leaving school, he responded, "I don't know, everything dependent on teacher". In the same questionnaire, Pin stated that "I don't feel motivated in class" (Appendix D:4).

At 41, Pin was one of the oldest learners in the class. He was Vietnamese, and accustomed to a strictly teacher-centred classroom where learners had no opportunity to show initiative. It is perhaps unsurprising that he struggled with autonomy. However, he seemed to be one of the few students to struggle with autonomy and to continue to prefer a teacher-centred classroom. Most of the other students accepted and adjusted to the focus on learner responsibility, decision-making and self-assessment. "We are free to do whatever we want. That is very very important" (Rose, A2:237). When I asked Rose, Neda and Nicolae (A2:230) what they thought about how their class was organized, Rose replied:

> Susan give us that right to choose what we need, that is very important. You know, sometimes she can say, what do you want to do now? You know? She can't say, oh now is only grammar. No, she say to you, what do you want? Do you want grammar? (A2:232)

Neda echoed this by saying "chooses". One of the "set phrases" of the class which was heard over and over again throughout each term was "you choose". This choice was evident in almost all decisions made in the classroom during my observations. Sometimes it was a choice between whether to work in groups, in pairs or alone; a choice of what reading material to take for homework; a choice of which order to approach the activities for the day, and the targets for the week; a choice of where to go for class outings.

NICOLAE:	Somebody want grammar, somebody want revision
	[...]
ROSE:	she makes everything, maybe you want grammar, I want only spelling test, and she make three or five things with different persons.
NEDA:	yeah
ROSE:	it's great (A2:239)

In two different interviews, I asked who chooses the targets. Tomasz replied "everybody" (A1:227). Another day, I asked Adrian who chose a grammar target (A3:223):

LORNA: Who chose the grammar target?
ADRIAN: Oh, together
SAMIRA: Yeah
ADRIAN: It's ok, it's a good idea, yes
SAMIRA: Always
ADRIAN: Spelling also. We chose yesterday, no?

Choice is an important part of autonomy, because choosing is a way of controlling. Holec defined autonomy in the classroom as taking charge of one's own learning (1981:3). In the classes I observed, the teachers demonstrated how students could take charge of their own learning by offering them continual choices, from easy, "low stake" choices such as which handout to complete first, or which book to read next, to difficult "high stake" choices, which topics to study next, in which order, using which documents, and how. This process of learning to take control was also evident in the gradual process of selecting personal targets, from group, majority-vote selection and discussion to individual target-setting and reflection.

6.7.6 Nicolae: new targets

In Cross-section 3, I discussed how Nicolae seemed to demonstrate a lack of relatedness in his attitudes to living in Ireland. He also gave the impression that he was not studying English by choice, rather his choice was affected by external factors. He had no specific goals for the future. However, the move to R1 Transition seemed to bring about some changes in Nicolae's attitudes to learning English and attending school. In Questionnaire 4 (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.8), his overall score was 81%, the average overall score of the six respondents. Across the four subscales, his lowest scores were in the two subscales measuring intrinsic motivation: overall enjoyment of learning English (77%) and enjoyment of goal-setting activities (72%). His scores were higher in the other two subscales, in the perceived competence subscale he scored 87%, and in the perceived usefulness of goal-setting subscale he scored 93%. This last subscale measured extrinsic motivation, how the learner viewed the extrinsic value of the activities mentioned.

In November Nicolae told me he had no idea what he would do in the future. His responses in the open-format attitudinal questionnaire (Appendix D:3) administered in April 2004 showed that he had developed some specific, personal goals: "For me personally, I want to learn two targets, about construction and new words from Driving Theory Test to get Driver Licence". In self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1997:133) hypothesizes that there are three elements in creating a virtuous circle for goal achievement and motivation: goal specificity, goal level and goal proximity. Nicolae moved from a position in which he could not articulate any goals to a position in which he was able to articulate two personal, specific and achievable goals. When asked whether he was learning what he wanted to learn, Nicolae replied, "Not everything I want to learn, for example, I want to learn more about construction". Although feeling in control of his learning, "I can choose what target I want to learn", Nicolae pointed out that choosing learning content as a group could be difficult, "Is not easy to choose targets because many students have a different idea about this" (Appendix D:3).

Nicolae's extrinsic motivation seemed to have shifted from externally imposed goals to internalized, personal goals. Unlike imposed goals, self-selected extrinsic goals seem to be as motivating as the processes of intrinsic motivation (Deci and Porac 1978). When learners choose their own goals, and achieve these, they feel competent and in charge: "I make [myself] more motivated when I want to learn what I want" (Nicolae, Appendix D:3).

6.7.7 Neda: departure

Neda also left IILT at the beginning of term, a few weeks after the move to R1 Transition. She and her husband had been looking for new accommodation for some time. They lived in a cramped and damp city-centre apartment. Neda announced her pregnancy, and their hunt for a house with two bedrooms and parking space. They found a house in Lucan near friends. Lucan is approximately one hour's journey from IILT on public transport, depending on traffic.

Tim wrote his impression of Neda in my logbook:

> Neda always works hard in class and is more than willing to speak and have a laugh. Her overall motivation is shown by the fact that she won't travel an inconvenient distance to the school, but in class she does what was expected of her and is a quick and intelligent student, even if she wasn't overly worried about sentences and capital letters. (LB: 927)

Neda saw no immediate need to learn English. She led a somewhat isolated lifestyle, often in the company of her husband who spoke fluent English. She didn't drive, and had no children. Her opportunities to come into contact with English-speakers were therefore very limited, apart from interactions with shop assistants and medical professionals. When the class were involved in activities related to Neda's life outside the classroom, her interest was heightened and she applied herself diligently. Neda's motivation in any activity apart from conversation depended on explicit links between the classroom and real life, yet this was a one-way process. If the tasks in class were not relevant to her, she gave them minimum attention rather than working on new skills and capacities that she could later develop in her own life. However, although she realized that the target-setting activities were very useful, she gave very low scores for intrinsic motivation in these activities in the questionnaire she completed. She found the goal-setting activities and the Friday review boring. Enjoying the social context of English class was not a sustainable form of motivation, because not all the aspects of the class presented the same potential for inherent enjoyment. The majority of the other students wholeheartedly endorsed the goal-setting activities and Friday review as very useful, recognizing their extrinsic value.

6.7.8 Summary: cross-section 4

The move to R1 Transition shook the class out of their comfortable routine. Tim's class was more demanding, and some students struggled with the transition. Ivan demonstrated a need to maintain face in front of his classmates. Tomasz and Alina continued to show low perceived competence and some boredom. Tomasz however experienced a breakthrough perhaps through the optimal challenges he encountered in class. Nicolae appeared more interested, felt in charge of his learning and articulated some future goals. Pin was very dependent on the teacher, had very little self-confidence in his oral skills, and his perceived competence as a learner was low. He

made some progress in a subsequent class. Alina had to leave because of childcare problems, Neda left because she moved house. Neda continued to demonstrate elements of intrinsic motivation but not enough commitment or awareness of the extrinsic value of the goal-setting activities.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has described the experience of some adult refugees learning English at IILT. In the form of a narrative, based on four cross-sections over twelve months, the perspectives of learner, teacher and observer have been combined in an attempt to recreate some episodes and processes. Engaged in a routine of regular target-setting and choice, most students seemed to enjoy learning English most of the time, and most believed that they had made good progress. The fundamental needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness seem to be a useful way of understanding the ups and downs of these learners in the classroom. In the final chapter, I draw together my discussion of learning and motivation, and conclude that encouraging learners to take control of their learning is an effective way of responding both to the needs of adult refugees, and the demands of their host community.

Chapter 7
Summary and conclusions

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, I summarize the main arguments of my theoretical framework, methodology and findings. Second, I outline the main contributions of these findings, and finally I consider the limitations of this project, and future directions for research.

7.2 Summary of previous chapters

In Chapter One, I argued that a sociocultural (Vygotsky 1978; 1986) rather than a transmission model of *how* we learn, and a "participating" (Holec 1981; Lave and Wenger 1991; Freire 1996) rather than "receiving" understanding of *why* we learn, are relevant to the investigation of language learning and motivation in adult refugees. From a sociocultural perspective, learning occurs as individuals interact with one another and their environment. The social aspect of formal learning is important, and context plays a vital role. Bandura describes human behaviour as "socially situated, richly contextualized and conditionally expressed" (2002:276).

From this general discussion of learning theories, in Chapter Two I moved to a more detailed examination of formal education for adults, and formal language learning for adults. I then turned to the specific case of formal language education for adult refugees. I outlined what some have argued to be a "best approach" to language learning (Holec 1981; Little 1991) and language provision for refugees (Little 2000), taking into consideration the profile of such a diverse learner group, and the impact this has on traditional assumptions about the language classroom. I discussed the significance of the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001), the European Language Portfolio, and the Milestone ELP designed specifically for immigrants learning the language of their host community.

In Chapter Three, I turned to the role of motivation in language learning. Interest in motivation is summarized by Ryan and Deci (2000: 69): "[M]otivation is highly valued because of its consequences: Motivation produces". I reviewed the major research on learner motivation, and how a series of studies prompted a shift in its conceptualization, emphasizing a more qualitative, process-oriented approach. I considered various constructs of goal-setting in relation to motivation. I concluded that Self-Determination Theory seems to offer a useful means of understanding the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. From this perspective, optimum learning occurs when individuals' thinking and behaviour are congruent with their sense of self. This is contingent on three fundamental and universal psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 1985b; Chirkov, Kim et al. 2003). Factors and contexts, such as the classroom, can enhance or undermine this natural propensity for self-regulation, optimum performance and development (Deci, Vallerand et al. 1991:327; Ryan and Deci 2000:68).

Chapter Four described the methodological design of my empirical study. The research methodology deemed most appropriate was an ethnographic approach using multiple data collection methods. Rather than testing for specific variables, a qualitative methodology was selected in order to understand better the context and influence of the classroom environment on motivation, and to try to discern the learning process from the perspective of the learners (Walker, Pressick-Kilborn et al. 2004).

In Chapter Five, I described the fieldwork site and sample. I reviewed the function and aims of Integrate Ireland Language and Training. I explained how a group of thirteen learners were selected with the cooperation and participation of two teachers, and outlined the various characteristics of this group of students. Fieldwork was conducted over a twelve-month period, divided into three terms spent in three different classrooms. The data collected included a logbook of field notes from twelve months of participant observation, four transcripts of interviews with students and one interview with both teachers, closed and open-format attitudinal questionnaires, student progress reports, attendance records and classroom artifacts.

This data is presented in Chapter Six. It is divided into four cross-sections organized according to the administration of four attitudinal questionnaires in June, August, November 2003 and March 2004. Each cross-section described the main events and concerns in the classroom, with reference to the multiple data sources. Themes which emerged were the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, developing personal goals, and factors which seemed to encourage or hinder positive learning experiences. The need for autonomy, competence and relatedness were discussed with reference to specific incidents and patterns of behaviour. Progress and outcomes were discussed, and the narrative revisited some themes as challenges were met and problems resolved. The description and analysis provided by Chapter Six is inescapably partial, and the data could be organized and analyzed in a number of different ways. However, the chief concern of this study is to examine how the process of goal-setting, a core function of the ELP, seemed to contribute to learner motivation in the language classroom.

I now summarize how evidence from the data suggests that the classroom environment created through systematic use of the European Language Portfolio supports learner motivation and fosters a favourable learning environment which responds to learners' fundamental needs.

7.3 Summary of findings: supporting self-determined behaviour

Self-determined behaviour is discernible in individuals. Optimum functioning, a sense of well-being, curiosity and vitality are all characteristics of self-determined behaviour. In the context of education, self-determination theory is concerned with self-endorsed behaviour, promoting interest in learning and confidence in ability (Deci, Vallerand et al. 1991; Vallerand, Fortier et al. 1997), which in turn leads to enhanced learning outcomes (Miserandino 1996; Black and Deci 2000). The classroom setting does not always encourage such behaviour, and some classrooms may hinder learners from assuming charge of the learning process. Ryan and Deci argue that when their natural propensity for self-determination is frustrated, individuals become passive, alienated and even hostile (2000:74). They describe two types of self-determined behaviour: that which is intrinsically motivated, and that

which is extrinsically motivated and internalized, or self-endorsed (ibid.:71; cf. Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3).

7.3.1 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation causes individuals to engage in activities for the enjoyment of the activity itself, and has nothing to do with goals (Deci 1995: 21). In Chapter 3, Section 3.5, I mentioned Csikszentmihalyi's conception of "flow" (1978) to describe the satisfaction and vitality individuals experience when this type of motivation is experienced. Although these feelings are desirable ends in their own right (Deci 1995: 46), intrinsic motivation has an important impact on results. Individuals who undertake activities, including learning activities, because they are intrinsically motivated achieve better results than when they undertake activities prompted by external controls such as tests (e.g. Ryan and Grolnick 1986; Deci, Koestner et al. 2001). However, unlike adults who undertake flower-arranging or even foreign language classes for sheer pleasure, immigrants generally decide to learn the language of their host community because of external goals. Intrinsic motivation may develop over a course of study, but extrinsic motivation in adult immigrants provides valuable goals which shape and drive their learning.

7.3.2 Extrinsic motivation – internalized or other-imposed?

Immigrants generally have a strong extrinsic motivation to learn the language of the host community, unlike, for example, adolescents learning foreign languages at school, who may not see learning languages as important or useful (Williams, Burden et al. 2002). Nonetheless, the desire to learn English which is focussed on goals or outcomes such as accessing employment and training may not be enough to sustain the process of learning over a course of study. This apparent inconsistency is explained by the distinction made between internalized and externally-imposed extrinsic motives in self-determination theory. Not all types of extrinsic motivation can engender the type of productive, curious and driven learning that occurs when individuals are intrinsically motivated by an activity; self-determination theory suggests only extrinsic motivation that is *self*-selected and integrated with the individual's own agenda yields the results that intrinsic motivation produces. Extrinsic motives can be imposed by other people, situations and intrapsychic factors such as

guilt or ego, but may not correlate with the individual's own wishes, desires and sense of self. Extrinsic motivation, which involves "personal endorsement and a feeling of choice" rather than "external regulation" (Ryan and Deci 2000: 71), shares many characteristics of intrinsic motivation (ibid.: 73). Studies have shown that what Deci and colleagues call "integrated regulation" (Deci and Ryan 2000:71) of extrinsic goals leads to enhanced performance (Miserandino 1996) and learning outcomes (Grolnick and Ryan 1987). I now discuss evidence of intrinsic motivation and internalized extrinsic motivation, using evidence from the data to suggest that the process of goal-setting helped learners develop personal goals which were integrated with a sense of self, as well as intrinsic enjoyment in the process of learning English.

7.3.3 Shifts between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

The focus of motivation seemed to shift from extrinsic goals to intrinsic enjoyment back to extrinsic goals over the course of the year. One questionnaire item stated: "I just learn English to get a job" (Appendix C, item 20). Responses to this statement changed over time. Both Tatjana and Eduardo agreed strongly with it in Questionnaire 1 in June, but subsequently disagreed strongly in Questionnaire 2 in August, after three months of study (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.5.1). Their scores on the Intrinsic Motivation (IM) subscale increased in this period, suggesting that Tatjana and Eduardo's enjoyment of learning English increased, perhaps accompanied by a realization that learning English was enjoyable in itself, or that it offered other advantages as well as employment prospects. In Questionnaire 3 in November (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.5.7), all students disagreed with the statement "I just learn English to get a job". However by Questionnaire 4 in March, only one student of six disagreed (cf. Section 5.5.8). There is some evidence of a pattern where students arrived with a clear extrinsic motivation to learn English to obtain employment. In the following months, enjoyment of English increased for some learners, and remained high, but at the end of the third term of study, students seemed again to fix their sights on the extrinsic goal of employment. The average scores on the IM subscale reflected this. It remained constant in June (86%), August (87%) and November (89%), but then dipped to 81% in March (cf. Sections 5.5.5 – 5.5.8).

7.3.4 *High extrinsic value of goal-setting activities*

Comparing the results of the subscales measuring intrinsic motivation in goal-setting activities and the perceived usefulness (extrinsic value) of goal-setting activities suggests higher extrinsic value than enjoyment. Each student, in each questionnaire (cf. Chapter 5, Sections 5.5.5 – 5.5.8), gave a higher score for the perceived usefulness of the goal-setting activities than their enjoyment of the activities (with the exception of Mina in Questionnaire 2, who gave the maximum rating for both usefulness and enjoyment, cf. Section 5.5.6). There was unanimous agreement among students that goal-setting activities – the Friday review, and choosing and working on targets – were more useful than enjoyable. As to the degree of usefulness, again there was strong endorsement that these activities were very useful. Almost all of the respondents gave the maximum ratings for the perceived usefulness of these activities, apart from Alina, Nicolae and Tomasz who, whilst agreeing that the activities are useful, found them less useful than the other students.

7.3.5 *Intrinsic motivation and perceived progress*

The connection between intrinsic motivation and outcomes was obvious to Adrian, who believed his progress was linked to his enjoyment in the classroom (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.6.3). This link between enjoyment and progress seemed to create a virtuous circle where the students enjoyed learning English, they felt they were making progress, which in turn fuelled greater enjoyment and equipped them with the confidence to meet more difficult challenges. This subjective, perceived progress might have been out of synch with an objective appraisal of their progress, but it is recognized that students' perceptions of their experience of learning tends to have a greater influence on their motivation than the actual, objective experience (Anderman and Midgley 1998).

7.3.6 *Intrinsic motivation alone unsustainable*

Although there was much evidence that students were enjoying learning English in all three classrooms, in the case of Neda, intrinsic motivation alone did not seem to be sufficient to sustain the type of commitment required for the ongoing demands of language study (cf. Chapter 6, Sections 6.6.6 & 6.7.7). Neda thoroughly enjoyed coming to class and she participated in all activities. She seemed to take pleasure in

the social aspects of learning, and her learning was not goal-oriented. Neda's enjoyment of goal-setting activities was low, she found the review activities boring. Intrinsic motivation alone was not sustainable for Neda as not all activities in the classroom were inherently enjoyable; the value of these activities (e.g. Friday review) lay in their worth as instrumentalities which could help learners achieve their goals.

7.4 *Fundamental psychological needs*

In Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan 1985b, Ryan and Deci 2000), it is argued that three innate, universal psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are essential if individuals are to become self-determined, that is, to act volitionally in accordance with an integrated sense of self. In the following sections, I discuss evidence from the body of data collected at IILT which suggests that these three needs were generally met in the classrooms I visited, as well as some obvious counter-indications.

7.5 *Autonomy*

The ELP was designed to promote learner autonomy (Council of Europe 2004). Regular and systematic use of the ELP has been claimed to foster autonomous behaviour amongst language learners in many countries from different backgrounds (Schärer 2000). The ELP was the foundation for planning, implementation and reflection in the classrooms I visited, and the cycle of selecting goals, working towards these, and conducting self assessment was continuous. These were joint procedures shared by the teacher and students, and the ELP was the focal point for discussion and decision-making. As such, it may be likened to a "deep structure", rather than a "surface structure". It was not an added extra but instead underpinned all activities, materials and decisions. The opposite of autonomous behaviour is controlled behaviour, where the perceived locus of causality (deCharms 1968, Deci 2000:71) is external (other people, factors or situations) rather than internal (self). Controlling environments have been demonstrated to diminish intrinsic motivation, whereas environments which encourage autonomy in turn foster intrinsic motivation. Bandura argues that "if people believe they have no power to produce results, they will not attempt to make things happen" (1997:3).

7.5.1 ELP and learners' needs

The three classrooms where I conducted fieldwork were organized according to principles of learner-centredness and learner autonomy: taking learners' needs as a point of departure for all activities, encouraging learner responsibility and reflection. The systematic use of the ELP as the central tool for planning and reflection created an environment where students were encouraged to participate in decisions which affected the what, when, how and why of learning. There were constant discussions and votes about what to do next (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.7.5). There was scope for both minor and major changes of direction and content if the students asked. Adrian's questions were an example of this (LB:575). In the early weeks of term, he had a series of questions about grammar and lexis. Susan asked him to collect his questions together and present them to the class as an activity each week, "Adrian's questions" became part of a day's diary. Not all students were confident or driven enough to make their needs felt; for example, at the end of the third term Nicolae felt he still hadn't learned enough construction vocabulary (cf. Section 6.7.6). It was unclear whether he had specifically made this goal known to the class, or perhaps it was a goal he had only set at a relatively late stage in the term.

7.5.2 Choice

Learners could choose whether to work in small groups or pairs, or alone if they wished. The Friday review worksheet (Appendix F) allowed them the opportunity to give their opinion about the past week (enjoyment, difficulty level). The data confirms that learners were aware of this shift in locus of causality. Rose described how they were "free to do whatever we want" (A2:237 & Chapter 6, Section 6.7.5). The process of becoming autonomous is not a process of becoming independent or individualistic, and no students described it as such. Instead, they stated that they were able to work on activities of their choosing; they became the "locus of causality" and in control of what was learned and how, rather than the teacher or a predefined syllabus. Learners also determined the pace of activities. Studies have shown that students' intrinsic motivation increases when they are allowed to choose which tasks to engage in, and how much time to allot to them (Deci et al. 2001).

7.5.3 *Collaborative learning*

Students also favoured collaborative learning in groups or pairs. Partnerships of less and more able students formed naturally (Ivan/Nicolae, Pin/Eduardo), creating patterns of assisted learning suggestive of Vygotsky's (1978: 86) theory of Zones of Proximal Development (Chapter 1, Sections 1.2.6 & 1.4.5). More proficient learners helped others reach their potential as they completed tasks together, allowing some particularly weak learners achieve "scaffolded results". In an environment which encouraged learner autonomy, this assisted learning occurred in a shifting network of strong and weak partners rather than one-directional, teacher-led assistance. The weekly spelling tests in Susan's classes were another example of such shared learning. New vocabulary became joint property as learners used their list of fifteen or thirty words to test their partner, and defined words their partner didn't know (Chapter 6, Section 6.6.2). Again, this learning occurred without the direct intervention of the teacher. Autonomous learning in these classrooms was collective not individualistic.

7.5.4 *Teacher-dependency*

The only counter-evidence of autonomous behaviour was the case of Pin who remained heavily dependent on the teacher throughout his time at IILT (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.7.5). Although Pin demonstrated initiative in his behaviour outside the classroom, for instance registering at a local library and borrowing learning materials, once in the classroom he preferred to defer to the teacher's decisions, communicate through the teacher, and be helped by the teacher. He was quite resistant to the type of group work that was conducted in both classes, which involved group decision-making and negotiation, preferring to work on his own. Pin was also resistant to the process of self-assessment and preferred teacher assessment. Pin seemed to struggle to take control, and continued to prefer all decisions concerning him be made by the teacher. His journey through IILT suggests that this affected his progress. He was the only student in the group of participants to repeat two classes (R1 Middle, R1 Transition; Appendix E:8).

7.5.5 *Interdependence*

Apart from the case of Pin, the other twelve students all demonstrated signs of autonomous, self-controlled behaviour, which developed over their months of study.

Tim's first impressions of the group of students who moved to his class from Susan's R1 Middle class in the third term were:

> The group also showed a high degree of self-motivation when working on set tasks. As a general comment the group's strategy was to first of all rely on the information they had to solve the set task rather than to look to the teacher for cues or solutions. (LB:773)

It is interesting that Tim saw this as a group dynamic. Vygotsky argued that learning and development occur first on a social plane before occurring on an individual plane (1986:36). The shift from group to individual was also visible in the goal-setting process. Learners in R1 Lower set group targets in a plenary session by suggesting ideas, and taking a majority vote if necessary. By R1 Middle, in addition to participating in the selection of group targets, the Friday review worksheet scaffolded learners as they chose one individual target each week from the "Can do" checklists in the ELP. By R1 Transition, learners were expected to be able to navigate independently the checklists of "Can do" statements, to choose a number of personal goals and to complete their self-assessment without the same scaffolding (Wood et al 1976) from the teacher or worksheets. Vygotsky (1978: 56) argued that the process of internalization occurred through the gradual shift from social to individual, whereby individuals internalize what they were able to perform in a group context, and are able later to perform on their own. This process results in self-regulated individuals, rather than individuals regulated by others.

The process of becoming autonomous seemed to be assisted by the process of learning how to set goals, and the gradual shift from a social to an individual procedure. My observations seemed to confirm that the best way to support autonomy is through creating situations of interdependence and scaffolding in order for individuals to become self-regulated and self-determining. The counter-evidence indicated that one student remained resistant to this process (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.7.5). However, in the case of Pin, it appeared that his need to feel competent, frustrated by poor oral skills, was his biggest stumbling block. In the next section I will discuss how learners' perceived levels of competence affected their motivation and learning progress.

7.6 Perceived Competence

Perceived competence is a second fundamental psychological need within Self-Determination Theory. Individuals need to feel they are able to achieve the task in hand. Perceived incompetence seems to be connected with problems of low self-esteem. The concept of an optimal challenge (Deci 1995:66) is relevant here. Accomplishing an easy task does not provide the feeling of being competent. Encouraging feelings of competence through optimal challenges can be facilitated by the process of goal-setting. Bandura (1997:133) outlines the key components of an optimal challenge in terms of the goal's specificity, difficulty level and proximity. He argued that articulating explicit goals which are neither too easy nor too difficult, and achievable in the present, is a means of stimulating motivation and progress in learning.

7.6.1 Goal specificity, goal difficulty and goal proximity

The cycle of goal-setting observed at IILT corresponded with Bandura's three conditions for a virtuous circle of goal-setting and achievement. Susan noted that the process of selecting goals started with a vague and general target of "I want English" (LB:191). But there was a manifest shift from abstract to specific goals. Eduardo began to focus on spelling and accuracy (A3:669); Nicolae developed two specific targets (learning vocabulary about construction and for the Driving Theory Test, Appendix D:3), whereas a few months previously he had no specific goals beyond just learning English (A2:469). Tomasz's external signs of boredom seemed to be caused by activities that were either too difficult or too easy for him. Susan described his situation in May 2003: "your teacher thinks you are bored senseless. And you get into a sort of spiral, because actually you are not bored, you're finding it very difficult or too easy" (TI:101). Tomasz seemed to experience breakthroughs in his boredom because of two key moments of optimal challenges, (i) in the fifth week of R1 Lower (Appendix E:12), and (ii) at the end of R1 Transition when he moved up two levels, and began to prepare for his education after IILT (Tim, TI:67). During R1 Transition, Tomasz "was quite bored [...] it wasn't hard enough for him. He enjoyed being challenged" (Tim, TI:75). The concept of goal proximity is relevant here. Goals that are only achievable in the distant future do have an impact on motivation; these can be mediated by subgoals. In Tomasz's case, an emerging vision of what he could do after

IILT had an impact on his motivation. "Once he learned about the greater context of where his education is going, then that's where the motivation comes in [...] he saw what could be done, the range of possibilities" (Tim, TI:67). Both Nicolae and Tomasz moved from exhibiting manifest boredom to demonstrating motivated and self-directed behaviour and working on personal goals.

7.6.2 Perceived incompetence and intrinsic motivation

However, other cases of perceived incompetence did not seem to alter over time. Alina and Ivan both demonstrated little confidence in their abilities (cf. Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.5, 6.5.2 & 6.7.3). Alina's low moments in the first term (LB:256 & Susan, TI:149; 665), and her subsequent responses in two questionnaires, seemed to indicate a negative self-image as a learner of English. Alina's overall questionnaire scores, along with Tomasz, were the lowest in each group of respondents. Alina had very low confidence when speaking out in class. Her score on the perceived competence subscale in the second questionnaire was the lowest rating for these items across all questionnaires. Her negative self-image in the classroom was further exacerbated by a perceived "relegation" at the end of the first term rather than a move to a higher level class (TI:665). Alina's impression of herself as less competent than the other students continued in subsequent classes. Alina's questionnaire responses indicated she also preferred to do easy tasks in class. Ivan also had a negative image of himself as a learner. Like Alina, this led to an outburst of frustration in class when Ivan felt a task was too difficult for him (LB:793; Tim, TI:371; 413). Deci and Ryan describe the type of event that led to Ivan's outburst in class as "amotivating" (Deci and Ryan 1985a: 110):

> events which are experienced as conveying that the person cannot master an activity – thus promoting perceived incompetence – undermine intrinsic motivation and tend to leave one feeling helpless.

Perceived incompetence threatens students' enjoyment of activities. Alina and Tomasz continued to have a lower perception of their ability than other learners, accompanied by lower scores on subscales measuring enjoyment.

7.6.3 *Performance and mastery orientations*

How students perceive their competence as learners also seems to be related to their view of their intelligence, and whether they seek or avoid challenges. Learners who see their intelligence or ability as subject to improvement through learning tend to take risks. Learners who see their competence as a fixed entity tend to avoid tasks that they believe are beyond their capability, and fear failure. Dweck (1986; 1999) differentiates between two types of personality orientations in learners, performance-oriented and mastery-oriented. Mastery-oriented learners do not shy away from a challenge which might leave them looking foolish as they see the learning potential involved. Performance-oriented learners tend to avoid such challenges as they risk losing face and thus focus on the potential negative outcomes.

Ivan showed evidence of a performance orientation in his learning style. He felt less competent than other students and did not seem cope as well as his peers; this affected his enjoyment of learning English. He felt under pressure to perform successfully, and did not want to reveal himself to be the least proficient student. He was afraid to speak out and preferred to remain in a "comfort zone" rather than lose face.

7.6.4 *Perceived incompetence and self-esteem*

Perceived competence seems to be related to self-esteem. Pin's behaviour in class suggested that his self-worth was undermined by his perception of himself as a poor communicator in English. Both teachers believed his low self-esteem and self-worth in the classroom stemmed from his very poor oral skills, and a particular difficulty with English phonology (TI:458; 475). His perceived incompetence affected his performance in class. He preferred to interact with the teacher rather than in small groups as he was afraid the other students would not understand him, nor be as patient as the teacher. He thought he was "stupid" and that he couldn't speak English (LB:844). Pin's self-esteem seemed to be "contingent self-esteem" (Deci 1995: 118), which is "present under some conditions but vanishes under others, leaving people depleted and self-derogatory" (ibid.). The breakthrough in Pin's case happened after my year of fieldwork. He finally made some progress in his oral production skills which was recorded in his last progress report in August 2004 (Appendix E:8). This

report also noted an increase in Pin's confidence, suggested that his self-esteem and confidence had been contingent upon his perceived competence in the classroom.

7.6.5 *Fragility of perceived competence*

In Mina's case, a miscarriage affected her perceived competence (A4:430). Mina's scores on the perceived competence subscale were consistently higher than the other learners; on two occasions she gave the maximum ratings for all items (Chapter 6, Sections 6.4.4 & 6.5.3). Her behaviour and progress in class – curiosity, asking questions, checking, using a dictionary, completing all homework – corroborated her self-belief as a competent learner. However, in the second term this behaviour was affected by health issues and a miscarriage. Mina was unable to review her work at home, she became tired, her attendance dropped below satisfactory levels, and she stopped asking questions in class. Her classmate Tatjana noticed the difference in her behaviour (A4:413). Mina experienced negative effects when a difficult personal situation meant she was unable to maintain her image of herself as a competent learner, presumably because of the energy and time that she had previously invested. Her perceived competence as a learner seemed to be contingent on the amount of work she was able to complete.

7.7 *Relatedness*

The third innate psychological need in self-determination theory is the need to engage with the world around us, the need for relatedness. I argued in the previous chapter that this need to connect assumes particular relevance in the case of immigrant learners, where the process of feeling related to the surrounding social milieu is markedly different from the experience of the majority of the population. Ryan and Deci argue that in different situations throughout an individual's lifetime, "intrinsic motivation [is] more likely to flourish in contexts characterized by a sense of security and relatedness" (2000: 71). They also argue that this sense of relatedness is particularly important when activities hold no intrinsic interest for the individual, but rather hold extrinsic value. Extrinsically motivated activities are more likely to be successful when the surrounding community stimulates feelings of relatedness (ibid.: 73). The importance of these findings cannot be overstated in the context of immigrant learners. There seem to be three contexts in which this sense of relatedness

can be fostered or frustrated in the case of the students involved in this study: the language classroom, the home and Irish society at large.

7.7.1 Relatedness in the classroom

There was no evidence to suggest that the classroom environment did not help foster a sense of relatedness amongst learners. Strong bonds of friendship and camaraderie developed as each term progressed, and each move to a new class was anticipated with some apprehension. All of the students who participated in audio interviews told me that they were happy to attend IILT. The process of group goal-setting led to constant plenary discussion and decision-making; both group and individual goal-setting meant that personal concerns outside the classroom became the concerns of the classroom.

7.7.2 Relatedness in the home

Although not the focus of investigation, the home generally seemed to have a positive effect on motivation. Some students were married to proficient English speakers (Neda, Tatjana, Alina, Tomasz). In the case of Alina and Tatjana, their husbands' proficiency seemed to encourage them to expend effort; their spouses seemed to help them at home. Both Tatjana and Rose felt more competent as learners when their progress was commented on by close friends. Tatjana however worried about the linguistic isolation that she would face on leaving school (A4:105); other students also spoke no English in the home. A range of personal situations affected this group of learners as any group of adults: childcare concerns (cf. Appendix E), births, illnesses, miscarriages, accommodation issues, and financial problems. Some of these issues were brought into the classroom through the process of goal-setting, for instance consumer rights, accommodation issues and tax concerns were all discussed. Other personal worries, such as Mina and Tatjana's miscarriages, remained in the background but had an impact on their well-being in the classroom.

7.7.3 Relatedness in Irish society

Moving to the wider context of Irish society at large, experiences were mixed. A degree of increased relatedness and perceived competence seemed to accompany increased proficiency, according to the students' own perceptions of their

performance in public places such as the hospital and Social Welfare offices. Nonetheless, racism and problems of integration were evident. The audio interview with Adrian, Eduardo and Samira (Appendix B) revealed personal experiences of racist remarks as well as hearsay accounts of more serious victimization (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.6.7). Some students had a philosophical view of such negative experiences, believing that Ireland was no better or worse than anywhere else. It seemed to make other students more self-conscious and less trusting; Adrian in particular was very sceptical about the Irish and believed they were hypocritical (A3:596). He was also suspicious of figures of power and authority (A3:394; 574). Susan's account (TI:715) of a minor incident on the bus, and Samira's description of a difficult phone conversation, conveyed the self-consciousness that some of the students experienced in a mono-cultural and mono-ethnic society: they looked and felt different.

7.7.4 Coping strategies

Two ways of dealing with these differences were evident in this small group of students. Rose (cf. Chapter 6, Section 6.6.4) aimed to transcend the differences and to attain native speaker-like fluency in English. She defended Ireland against what she deemed to be unjustified criticism, and was critical herself of a dependency mentality amongst immigrants. Rose seemed to have a highly developed sense of relatedness with Irish society, a desire to connect and put down roots. Nicolae however (cf. Section 6.6.5) had a more negative view of Ireland, perhaps stemming from an initial hostile experience and failure to find employment. He wasn't sure whether he would remain in Ireland, and talked about moving to France. He spoke French and had previously worked there.

7.7.5 Relatedness and intrinsic motivation

The need to connect, and the sense of security that develops from feelings of relatedness, has an impact on intrinsic motivation, enjoyment and satisfaction. In the case of this particular group of students, the language classroom did not appear to hinder this fundamental need. Close friendships, perhaps forged through group and pair work, and constant group discussion and decision-making, led to a very "related" dynamic in each of the classes I observed (cf. Adrian, A3:94 & 101, Eduardo, A3:773). The goal-setting cycle created bridges between concerns beyond the

classroom and learning content. The sense of security that develops when individuals feel connected to their social world appears to be both fostered and threatened by aspects of the learners' experiences in Ireland. Some thrived in their new environment, others remained isolated, others developed some hostility. In the two classes I observed, the process of basing learning content on personal needs, such as taking items back to a shop for a refund or learning the names of various body parts, was certainly a means of creating connections between the learners and their new life in Ireland. Both classrooms provided a forum in which the issues of integration and alienation were addressed.

7.8 *Summary of contributions*

Learning English is essential for adult refugees in Ireland. From the perspective of the host community, equipping refugees with language skills means they are more likely to access training and employment, to become less welfare-dependent, to participate in their local community and add their voice to an increasingly multicultural chorus, thus combatting racism and contributing to democratic processes.

From the perspective of the refugee, learning English is a liberating process of making one's voice heard. Individuals move from passive recipients to active producers, and take charge of their own lives. Some of these steps are simple: passing a driving test, using a bank card, being able to complain about poor services. Other steps, such as putting down roots in a new community, establishing a credit history, participating fully in a child's education, are more demanding. Learning English may have an important psychological impact, redressing exclusion, alienation and depression; speaking English helps refugees take control of their lives.

It is evident that the formal provision of language education plays a vital role in helping refugees improve their language skills. Nevertheless, some approaches to language education may not produce the linguistic and participatory outcomes necessary for refugees to make their voices heard in English.

Refugees in Ireland generally learn English because of its extrinsic value; their motivation is goal-oriented. Yet these goals may be imposed on individuals who feel

pressure to learn for various reasons. Intrinsic motivation to learn English is rare at the outset. The language classroom provides a social context which can encourage self-determined behaviour, by fostering intrinsic motivation and transforming imposed goals into personal goals which are integrated with individuals' agency and sense of self.

In this study, systematic use of the European Language Portfolio created an environment where most learners thrived and felt in control of their learning and their lives. Given the difficulties that adults generally have when returning to full-time education, and the added baggage that refugee status brings, there were very few negative incidents. The first four months of fieldwork showed students attending class in less-than-ideal premises; the next two months brought the upheaval of changing school buildings twice. Yet throughout all this, the classes I observed were filled with cheerful, active learners who were enthusiastic about most aspects of their timetable. The negative incidents recorded helped pinpoint where frustrations lay, and these struggles seemed to be best interpreted as frustrated self-determination: perceived incompetence, inability to take control, feeling unconnected.

The goal-setting cycle of the ELP seemed to be a valuable means of mediating these frustrations. Students learned gradually how to take control of planning and decision-making, and there was a gradual shift from group to individual goals, and from abstract to concrete goals. There was room for flexibility and choice. Connections were made between the classroom and life beyond. Goal-setting was valued by students as useful, and most believed they had made considerable progress in their English.

7.9 Limitations of this project and future directions

This project has a number of limitations. A qualitative, ethnographic methodology is regarded by some as a "soft" option, only useful for gathering data to be tested in a subsequent "hard" study. The group of learners was not uniform as students moved out of the classes I observed, and as a sole researcher I could only be in one place at one time. Participant observation brings its own problems. The researcher assumes roles of friend and confidant in the classroom which may not be conducive to good

data collection. The choice of writing up field notes after class meant that some incidents were surely forgotten. Attrition rates, attendance records and other upheavals meant that data collection was sometimes patchy: for example no questionnaire data was recorded for Pin, and he did not participate in any audio interviews. Limited data from the closed-format questionnaires was used to illuminate wider patterns of behaviour and was not subjected to any statistical procedures, largely because of the small number of changing respondents. An ethnographic study collects a large amount of data in order to create "thick description", but yet it remains an impartial account that has been transformed by the data collection procedures and the choices made in emphasizing some incidents rather than others.

In terms of future directions, I am sure this empirical study will only be one of many future investigations of adult refugees and immigrants learning English in Ireland. Limitations of time and resources meant that many potential areas of interest remained unexplored. More research into the impact of the ELP in the language classroom is needed, and specifically the Milestone ELP in the field of language provision for immigrants.

Methodologically, there are a number of ways in which the findings of this study could be developed and enhanced. In terms of data collection, individual recordings of students in class as they interacted with other learners and the teacher would be a useful means of tracking interest and enjoyment in the learning process. Much of this egocentric speech, and offhand remarks to neighbours, seemed to be indicative of shifts in engagement and control. This study focussed on a group of thirteen learners. A wider study of more learners at IILT would allow some statistical procedures to be carried out, investigating, for example, the constructs in the subscales of the closed-format attitudinal questionnaire, which were only presented in simple percentage form in this investigation and as a means of supporting other data. A narrower, case-study approach would allow a full investigation of individual learners' experiences in the classroom. Partial data completion meant the narrative in Chapter 6 does not give a satisfactory account of each learner's behaviour, experiences, thoughts and opinions. Tracking individual goal-setting behaviour over several months would also provide insight into how learners understood this process and any benefit they gained from it. A further possibility is to match the type of qualitative account provided by this study

with data from assessment procedures, both self-assessment and external assessment, summative and formative, and examine the nature of the linkages between motivation and outcomes. IILT was beginning to develop assessment procedures based on the CEF and ELP at the end of my fieldwork, and this is certainly an area which merits empirical study.

Appendix A: Participant Observation Logbook

	Fieldnotes	Teacher comments
1.	**Wednesday 21st May 2003**	*(SUSAN's comments, handwritten and transcribed))*
2.	Going to spend afternoon with Susan's new class, they have been settling in for 2 weeks now, and	
3.	there has been some movement with new students arriving and others leaving, according to their	
4.	proficiency. Susan feels it is a much younger class this time, and much more motivated, and that they	Average age 7 or 8 years older
5.	are already getting their heads down and working very seriously. She has been wondering why this is,	
6.	and we discussed whether this has anything to do with the fact that this group may have been on the	
7.	waiting list for some time.	Every student in the class has had some formal education in their country – unlike previous two groups
8.		
9.	Spent Wednesday afternoon with Susan's new class. It is a much bigger class than before, and she is	
10.	enjoying the fact that they can now be split up more successfully for group work. I was working with	
11.	Eduardo from Angola and Li from China, as well as Musa from Russia and Paul from Angola. Both	
12.	Paul and Eduardo seemed to much more concentrated in their work than the other pair, and wrote	
13.	extensively about their family. But when the questionnaire about different families came around, they	
14.	were supposed to ask 4 other classmates about details,	
15.		
16.	Paul instead took a copy of Jimmy's (another student from Angola) and copied his details. But	
17.	Eduardo and Li took a little time to feel they could get up and ask their classmates questions.	Li happy now, even in plenary
18.		
19.	All the men from Angola, as well as Christelle and Gloria from the Congo, were keen to talk to me in	Paul still not happy to initiate (July)
20.	French at breaktime, Christelle (19) was telling me about her wedding in the summer.	
21.		

22.		
23.	After the break we were talking and writing about families, and trying to understand the difference	Still "she has 19" is a
24.	between *she is* and *she has.* The class generally agreed that it was quite easy but difficult to	problem with
25.	remember each time.	Christelle/Gloria
26.		
27.	Susan was saying that there is still a tendency in the class for them to complete work, lean back and	Depends on mood – Mina is
28.	say that they have finished, and have not yet understood that there is always more to be doing. When	now excellent at looking
29.	the class finished early and we were waiting for 5 minutes at the end, the women particularly still had	back through her
30.	their folders out and were reading over what they had been working on.	dictionary/folder if she's
31.		finished – Neda still fairly
32.	I saw Emir in the corridor who is now in ((teacher's name)) class, and had an interesting conversation	useless.
33.	about targets. He said that he enjoys the challenge of the class and that it is helping him achieve his	
34.	targets by moving on, because the problem of having war in your country means suddenly that all	
35.	your ambitions are 'thrown in the water' and that you have to start from the beginning again. He says	
36.	he now feels like he is achieving his targets again. I also saw Mohammed from Somalia, and Mahmed	Emir also thoroughly enjoys
37.	from Jordan, they are in ((name of teacher's)) afternoon class too. He said it was difficult to get used	having a male teacher – he
38.	to new people and to make new friends, but that it was enjoyable. They suggested that we could meet	told me this recently. I think
39.	up sometime soon and talk.	he enjoys the challenge as
40.		he was, from day one, the
41.	**Wednesday 28th May 2003**	strongest student in his
42.	The class have really settled down since last week, and their individual characters are being to	group.
43.	emerge, they are starting to have more fun in class. Susan and I were talking about how it takes	
44.	everyone a few weeks just to get their head around being in a classroom, and their roles as learner,	
45.	how they can learn, what to expect from the teacher, from the other learners, from themselves.	

46.	emerge, they are starting to have more fun in class. Susan and I were talking about how it takes	
47.	everyone a few weeks just to get their head around being in a classroom, and their roles as learner,	Gloria grows from strength to
48.	how they can learn, what to expect from the teacher, from the other learners, from themselves.	strength. Very serious views
49.		on women's rights/education
50.	I spent time doing 'face-to-face work' (pair-work) with Gloria from the Congo, early 30s, 6 children,	and the need to embrace
51.	who lives in Glasnevin and has extremely good social skills in English despite problems with	host community.
52.	pronunciation and vocabulary, probably helped by the fact that she has an Irish friend who comes to	
53.	visit her every week.	
54.		
55.	She seems to be a very confident and directed person, high sense of self-efficacy/self-confidence. I	
56.	was also talking to Neda and Mina, both in their late twenties, both from Iraq. Neda is a very serious	
57.	learner but with a good sense of humour – she has been working lots with Musa who is a lot less	
58.	serious, and apparently her influence on him leads to good group work. Mina is a little less outgoing	
59.	than Neda, but is very eager to please Susan, and you can almost feel her need for praise and a 'very	Great idea to come in on
60.	good'.	week 2 or 3 of a course.
61.		Musa likes "to do LORNA"
62.	The group seem accepting to have me in class with them, and apparently when Susan put my name	too when we talked about
63.	on the blackboard they said, oh yes, because it's Wednesday. They all say 'see you next week' on	class activities.
64.	leaving.	
65.	Susan and I also talked about the possibility of me observing the work they do on Fridays – the	
66.	weekly review.	
67.		
68.	**Wednesday 4th June 2003**	
69.	Went to Susan's classroom today to administer the attitudinal questionnaire for the first time. We	

70.	divided the class up into 2 groups of 6. Susan carried on with classwork with 1 group whilst I went	
71.	through the questionnaire with the other group, and then swapped groups.	With hindsight a good idea,
72.		Very important. A very real
73.		"distrust" of authority going
74.	I explained that the questions were only for me, that I didn't need to see people's names, and that it	on in this group – i.e. with
75.	was only so I could find out what people thought of learning English. Everybody seemed happy	papers & to an extent this
76.	enough, and some people continued to put their names on their copies. Going through the	school still with attendance
77.	questionnaire was quite slow work with some people, others were happy enough to look up difficult	and so on. I think its
78.	words in their dictionary and confirm the meaning with me. Some members of the group finished more	extremely important to point
79.	quickly and helped other members. I asked those who were finished early to go through the questions	out that any information is
80.	and underline the difficult words, and the questions they found most difficult to understand.	only for LORNA – not even
81.		for research per se, but
82.	All in all, checking the vocab went very smoothly, and I found a handful of words which seemed to	rather just for LORNA, for
83.	pose a problem. I explained these by giving gestures and other words, e.g. yawning for bored, and	her interest.
84.	happy/strong/not embarrassed for confident when I speak English in class.	
85.		
86.	I had changed the order of questions as during piloting I had noticed that the most difficult questions	
87.	appeared at the start, which was a little discouraging for some people. I asked the class what they	Would have helped that
88.	thought of the scale, and of the questionnaire as a whole, whether it was easy/difficult – too easy/ too	they've seen the ELP
89.	difficult etc. Most people said it was fine, not too difficult, and that they liked doing it.	tickboxes at this stage, idea
90.		of grading something
91.	Some questions provoked discussion amongst the groups, such as whether easy things were good,	therefore not alien (the
92.	or whether you worried when you spoke. Sergei for example was explaining to Li that although he	worksheet with the box on…)
93.	thinks he (Sergei) has bad English, he doesn't worry about speaking it in front of others – it's not his	

94.	language so he doesn't care. Another interesting point was whether you thought in your head in	
95.	English – Mina, who seems very on the ball, eager to please, hardworking etc, says she only has	
96.	Arabic in her head and that English only comes when she speaks. However Christelle, who has	
97.	enormous difficulty reading and speaking in class, says she often practises things in her head in	
98.	English to herself. This is interesting, as for some reason I expected the more proficient students to be	
99.	the ones who rehearse things to themselves.	
100.		
101.	I am going back again this week on Friday afternoon as Susan will be starting more explicit work on	
102.	target setting, with an introduction to the concept and some time spent on the ELP.	
103.		
104.	**Friday 6th June 2003**	
105.	Went to visit today as Friday is the day of the weekly review. The weekly review has 4 key steps.	
106.	Students have become accustomed to steps 1-3, but this is the first week they are explicitly looking at	
107.	targets.	
108.		
109.	1) Attendance	
110.	2) New words	
111.	3) Weekly review of activities	Ownership too i.e. "Why X
112.	4) Targets and ELP	for Thursday, I telephoned?"
113.		etc
114.	1) **Attendance for the week**. An official form is filled out each day with attendance and timekeeping	
115.	for each student, who is then given a percentage for the week (for school records). The first few	
116.	minutes taken up as each person works out their own personal record, which is then this is confirmed	
117.	by Susan. A few rounds of applause for the students who have 100%. Susan said she had started off	

118.	working out each person's record herself, and then decided it would better to hand this job over to	
119.	individuals, to encourage them to take an interest in and responsibility for their own attendance, it also	
120.	helps encourage numeracy skills.	
121.		
122.	2) **New words**. Each student has a sheet with spaces for all the new words they have learned during	
123.	the week. They go through their worksheets in their folder, and write down all the words they	
124.	personally have learned in the last week. Each student then reads their list out aloud to their	
125.	neighbour, who writes down the words, and then has them corrected by the person reading. Some	
126.	students only have a few words, others have more than 20, some only have words to do with the	
127.	theme of that week, and others have words that they have noted in conversation.	
128.		
129.	(E.g. this week, the theme was buses/trains, but Alina had noted '*I am clever*' '*I am tired*', and	E.g. problem with "sensitive"
130.	Eduardo had noted '*rubbish*'.) Learners then read their words out to the rest of the class, and other	& "sensible". In the end
131.	people note down words they like the sound of. During this process, people tend to correct the	Tatjana said "sensitive
132.	pronunciation of their neighbour with whom they are working, or the others beside them – every so	means don't touch me
133.	often looking to Susan to ask for confirmation or advice. Often students come up with ways of helping	today".
134.	others remember – for example today – *occasionally* was proving very difficult to pronounce, and	
135.	Tatjana came up with the system of saying 'ok' and then 'sionally', which everyone found funny, and	
136.	ultimately seemed to be a good way of remembering a long word. Also, the French speakers found	
137.	*disruption* hard to pronounce, and Gloria pointed out that they might be confusing it a little with	
138.	*description*, and they should try hard to make them sound different.	
139.		
140.	3) **Weekly review**. The aim of this activity is to encourage students to reflect on the work they have	
141.	done during the week, and to learn how to evaluate their progress. Consists of a worksheet which	

142.	asks students about the activities they have done that week (i.e. they look through the different	
143.	worksheets which accompany each activity). The worksheet asks students to find 5 new sentences	
144.	(or concepts, new 'things') which they have learned that week. Some students create sentences about	
145.	the class, e.g. *Musa takes the DART to school and gets off at Grand Canal Quay*. Others note items	
146.	such as *www.irishrail.ie*, or DART – *Dublin Area Rapid Transit*. The worksheet asks students whether	
147.	they thought that week was *not easy, ok, easy*. Susan expands on this with *a lot of help, a little help,*	
148.	*no help*, so leading them into the ELP.	
149.		
150.	4) **Targets and ELP**. This was the first week students were explicitly introduced to the notion of	
151.	targets and self-assessment. Started with a questionnaire of 'cans' and 'cants', using the names of	
152.	students and a list of skills, such as:	
153.		
154.	*Musa can swim*	
155.	*Gloria can speak Arabic*	
156.	*Mina can dance*	
157.	*Susan can cook*	
158.	*Neda can dance*	Many still do as I've found
159.		with 'hobbies and interests'
160.	Students were asked to complete the questionnaire, and they asked their classmates for the answers.	
161.	With Susan, the group then reviewed their answers – students initially found it difficult to differentiate	
162.	between *I do* and *I can*, but after some discussion of the different skills, the nuance seemed to be	
163.	cleared up. For example, we discovered that Gloria can't speak Arabic, but she can sing one song in	
164.	Arabic, that Musa can't swim but he can pilot a plane – with a little help from an instructor. The class	Brilliant idea (another
165.	spent some time discussing who can and who can't do what.	teacher's) to put page

166.		number on worksheet – so
167.	The worksheet then asked students to turn to page 20 in their ELPs, where they were to work for the	much more accessible for Ss
168.	first time on their progress – the descriptor: *I can understand bus and train timetables* (check correct	– easier to organise work.
169.	description here). Susan modelled on the board a tick, and the date under the different headings of	
170.	*with a lot of help* etc, and reminded students that this could also be *not easy* etc. She told them that it	
171.	would be different for each person, some people needed lots of help (from her, from me, from other	I'd say a homogenizing
172.	students, from the dictionary), or less help etc. Some students seemed to understand this and were	pattern with Jimmy. He's
173.	quite sure of which box applied to them (e.g. Musa immediately said he needed lots of help, Sergei	pretty cool with gender
174.	said he needed no help – the two then discussed this together, along the lines of *why easy for you?* –	competition etc – a nurse in
175.	*because bus & train, I know this, no problem* – whereas Musa said – *me, no easy, difficult for me*. The	his country, is probably
176.	women all seemed to say that they needed a little bit of help, and when talking about it, they said that	closest to Gloria/Christelle.
177.	nothing was easy, they always needed some help from teacher/dictionary/other people. One	
178.	interesting thing that happened was how Jimmy responded. He had initially put down that he needed	
179.	a lot of help, but in pencil. He had discussed this with me and was sure he needed lots of help. Susan	
180.	asked him to put it in pen so it would be easier to read, and in the meantime she discussed with other	
181.	students whether they needed lots of help etc. As she was discussing it with the women who had all	
182.	put 'a little help', Jimmy rubbed out his response and in pen also ticked under 'a little help'. I wonder	((*SUSAN draws target*
183.	whether this was because he felt he didn't want to be shown up as worse than the women, or that it is	*circles – target drawn in*
184.	a general homogenizing pattern where students don't want to be different.	*hand here*)) is better this
185.		course/last time the
186.	The next step was to explain the notion of a target. Susan gave two visual aids, firstly a timeline,	metaphor didn't work at all
187.	about Michael (the class mascot) learning to drive (will insert timeline here) showing Michael unable to	and even in weeks 15/16 I
188.	drive, deciding he wanted to learn to drive, learning to drive, and passing his test. So Michael set a	was still explaining it to
189.	target, to learn to drive, and he worked at this target for a while, and then he achieved his target.	some.

190.	Susan also drew a picture of a target from archery on the board, which most students recognised	
191.	immediately. Some students explained it in their L1 to others who spoke the same language (e.g.	Excellent for first time – ok, 'I
192.	Musa explained it in Russian, Eduardo explained it in French).	want English' was the main,
193.		but fine at this stage.
194.	Students were then asked to set some targets for the next week in class. The class seemed to	
195.	understand the basic notion, and came up with some targets for the class (although all quite general	
196.	and vague): *Learn new words, do face-to-face work, do some reading, and learn about shopping.*	
197.		
198.	It will be interesting to see what students will think of the weekly review next week, and whether they	We'll try this more week 9/10
199.	will begin to see targets as something quite concrete to guide them in their work. At the moment the	
200.	targets were quite similar to the class contract, apart from the last one, shopping. These are also	
201.	group targets for the whole class, it will also be interesting to see how personal targets emerge, and	V. interesting. Alina, who is
202.	whether all students are able to break away from the group and reflect on their own personal needs.	actually quite proficient still
203.		isn't very forthcoming – a
204.	For the moment, it seems that students who are more confident (in terms of personality not	concern?
205.	proficiency in English) are able to break away from the group and have a 'different answer' without	
206.	fretting about it, whereas the students who are less sure of themselves (and interestingly not those	
207.	who are less sure of their proficiency in English) prefer to stick with the group. Here I refer to the	
208.	process of self-evaluation, as there are no individual targets at the current time.	
209.		
210.	One issue I see at the current time is that Susan is away on development next week, and will be	
211.	replaced by Jane. I won't be sitting in on Jane's class as she doesn't know the students and may feel	
212.	a little ill at ease with a visitor. Susan will discuss these targets with her class when she returns next	
213.	Monday, but it would be interesting to see how this would have been followed up by her personally in	

the week immediately following this particular weekly review.

Wednesday 18th June

Returned to Susan's class today after her week off on development. The class conducted a review of their work on Monday and Tuesday, looking back and looking forward. They discussed some parts of the class contract, such as the need to always speak in English in class, and also the fact that the work was going to get harder, so more concentration would be required.

The class started with correcting the previous night's homework, looking at the simple past. Students swapped their work and corrected it as a group, checking spelling and pronunciation (e.g. went /cooked /watched /visited). This was followed by a discussion of what everyone had done last night. It was interesting to see how students understood the question, what did you do last night. Mina, who is very diligent, understood the question in terms of homework, and told the class she did her homework, she did the simple past, she learned new words. Other students understood it as Susan meant it, in a wider sense, and told the class what they had cooked, that they had watched a film etc. Also interesting was Sergei, who did not appear like much of a risk-taker in conversation, but has lots of self-confidence. He tried hard to explain a long evening of friends who had visited his family.

Other students took less risks in their speech, sticking to simple constructions, such as *I cooked dinner*, *I watched TV*. Students are forthcoming in correcting their peers, I noticed that Neda, Tatjana and Eduardo do this quite frequently (e.g. when someone said *I go* instead of *I went*).

After this, the class started a new topic, looking at directions. On request of Susan, the class split up into 3 groups. Musa took the initiative of counting everybody and saying to the class they should make

238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261.	3 groups of 4. Students were each given a map of Dublin city centre and a sheet of some model questions asking for directions and responses. The remainder of the bubbles remained blank. Students read the questions and responses aloud to each other, and then followed the route on their maps. Musa again took the initiative of asking the members of his group to swap questions and answers so each person read each item (Susan hadn't specifically asked this). Again group members seemed happy to correct each other and be corrected (e.g. with pronunciation of *quay*. The worksheet included empty question bubbles with just the name of a place (e.g. Maternity Hospital, Stadium), and an empty answer bubble. They firstly started to find out where each place was on the map, and then traced out how to get there. The group started to explain how to get there, and then wrote down these directions, finishing with the question. Group work proceeded in an ad hoc manner, everyone worked at their own pace – Eduardo worked on his own and seemed to have no problems, he then helped Christelle who arrived late. Gloria quickly understood the idea and wrote down her directions before checking with me. Alina and Musa worked together. Some diagrams were drawn by group members to illustrate *go up, go down, beside, opposite*. Some grammar questions arose, such as the construction *where is…* compared to *do you know where…is*. Putting *is* at the end of the sentence took a little while, but when the group reported back to the rest of the class, students who read their answers without *is* at the end were corrected by some group members. During reporting back, Susan asked the class for directions to some other places on the map, and students directed her – the class accompanied the person explaining by following the map and adding their own opinions about the best way to get there/ the best way to explain. Then there was a bit of a stir. Alina was sitting in her usual corner, and on either side of her were Musa and Sergei. We were going round the class asking how to get to a place and giving the	

262.	directions. Susan asked Alina a very simple question and she seemed to get a bit flustered, and then	
263.	Musa and Sergei repeated (I think) what Susan had asked her in Russian. Alina speaks a bit of	
264.	Russian, but those two were on either side both talking to her whilst Susan asked her the question	
265.	again, and then said, we really have to speak English in this classroom. Alina then burst into tears,	
266.	and Susan felt so awkward. The class could all see what was going on as we were sitting in a semi-	
267.	circle with all the desks pushed beside each other. Alina went bright red, very very embarrassed. I	
268.	think Susan didn't want to stop the class as she would have drawn even more attention to Alina, who	
269.	is so shy. So we carried on, and then when it came to breaktime, Susan decided we'd all go for a walk	
270.	and practice directions outside.	
271.		
272.	At breaktime, the French speakers were again eager to say hello to me in French, and Gloria wanted	
273.	to talk – she was worried as she had received a letter warning her about attendance. She had missed	
274.	the previous week as her toddler had fallen down the stairs. The secretary told her that this was just a	
275.	precaution, and that her telephone calls to the school had been noted. However, Gloria was still	
276.	worried about it, and told me that she really wanted to keep coming and to learn English, that she	
277.	didn't want to be at home all day long. Susan and I talked about Musa during the break, how he often	
278.	doesn't pay attention and gets easily distracted/carried away, but once he is involved in an activity, he	Outing a good neutraliser to
279.	becomes very focused, usually when there is someone a little more serious than him to pull him in.	the tears situation
280.		
281.	After break, we went for a walk around the neighhbourhood we had been studying on the map, and	
282.	visited some of the places we had been explaining how to get to. The walk also turned into a	
283.	vocabulary lesson, particularly for the women who all took notes, asking Susan and myself for new	And in fact they've all asked
284.	words when they saw things, reading shop signs. As the walk continued, the men also started asking,	for 'outings' again. Plan to go
285.	but didn't take any notes. There was a very good atmosphere, and although groups of friends tended	to ILA/+ museum and maybe

286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309.	to stick together (e.g. the Lingala speakers, the Moldovan/Romanians), there was quite a lot of chit chat in English, joking and questioning. The Alina situation seemed to defuse, she was in much better form and talking to Susan, myself and the others, and seemed to get over the emotion of the earlier situation before. She is such a good student, very dedicated and hardworking, yet I think she just felt pestered and flustered by tuning out, and then the whole thing got on top of her. On returning to class, we collated all the new vocabulary people had noted along the way, and checked spelling/pronunciation. Everyone seemed to be very relaxed, and enjoyed getting out into the fresh air. **Friday 20th June 2003** Friday is review day. The class started as usual with students working out their percentage attendance rate (e.g. Musa is still on 100% attendance – for someone who has difficulty sometimes paying attention, and lots of problems with accuracy/spelling, especially the different vowel sounds in English, he is extremely motivated in terms of attendance, and seems to really enjoy coming to class). The class seem to like working out their attendance rates. Next was the learning diary. Students are asked to find at least 15 new words they have learned in the previous week. They go through their folders and write their new words on a worksheet. Mina and Neda were first finished, Tatjana, Alina and Li were also finished relatively quickly. All of these students keep a detailed vocabulary book. Li often looks words up in his electronic dictionary. Mina is continually looking words up in her dictionary and asking for precisions – e.g. today she asked about *sth* and *sb*, something and somebody, in word definitions. Alina and Tatjana also use their personal dictionaries quite often. Other students took much longer to complete their worksheet. Musa only	a full day at the zoo or something – everyone sees each other in a different context/good for dynamic etc. Also v. good as neutraliser for stressful situations/frictions

310.	found 7 words, although I know from working with him on directions that he had come across many	
311.	more new words than the 7 listed. Eduardo worked very methodically through his notebook and folder.	This blueprint is still going on
312.	Jimmy and Paul seem to need much more help and give the impression they are only doing it	– Mina loves to please
313.	because they have to, and frequently look at their neighbours' work perhaps to find out what kind of	me/teacher – desperate to
314.	words they are putting down. Sergei, although sometimes quite flippant about working and not	hear how good she is…is
315.	speaking Russian, came up with a very complete list including more extensive items from a grammar	that motivation or
316.	review earlier in the week, e.g. *past simple I cooked – before, present simple I cook – usually, I am*	institutionalism (she has 2
317.	*cooking – now or later*. Students who finished read their words aloud to their partner and corrected	degrees – electrical
318.	spelling, and then created some example sentences. Mina, who is very serious about her work, gave	engineering/primary school
319.	as an example sentence *I smoked 14 cigarettes yesterday*. The class found this hilarious, especially	teaching).
320.	as Mina is Muslim, and were asking her if this was a good thing. She said it was not a good thing, but	
321.	that it was a good example. Musa replied that he didn't think it was good example, more laughter.	
322.	Mina appeared a lot more serious at the start of the course, and now seems to be enjoying herself	
323.	much more, participating in the jokes and laughter, and not taking things so literally as perhaps	
324.	previously.	
325.		
326.	After the learner diary, students worked on the review of the week, looking back at how many days	
327.	they attended, how many worksheets they had done, and created example sentences from their new	
328.	vocabulary. They then placed the learner diary and review in the ELP, and after coffee break, did the	
329.	self-assessment section in the ELP (p20). This week the descriptor was about understanding	
330.	directions. The class seemed happier to self-assess this week. There was evidence of less desire to	Learning to review original
331.	be like everyone else, and there was a some variety both with individual ELPs and within the group.	targets set and look back at
332.		these at the end of the week.
333.	The final section of the day was dedicated to target setting. This was quite an easy transition as	

Tatjana had been asking about the A1, A2 levels, and Susan told the class they would be concentrating on these two and not doing anything that was level B before level A was finished. Susan asked the class what they would like to do next week. Musa answered immediately filling in forms. Other students agreed. Someone else suggested telephone calls. The class voted, and filling in forms was the majority vote. Susan asked what kind of forms would people like to learn how to fill in. About 10 different types of forms were mentioned, such as doctor, children's school, video shop, gym, library. Everyone wrote down the type of forms they would like to do the following week.

In terms of interest and enjoyment, the class all seemed to have a good day as a group. Susan had commented that the day before there had also been a very good atmosphere, it was almost as if people hadn't seen each other in ages.

There used to be almost a bored attitude to Fridays in the last class, perhaps as people didn't really understand the point of the learning diary and review. This class however seem to much more adept at it, and so happier. Is it because they are a younger class, or because there are a few very diligent students who are also quite vocal in calling for homework, asking questions, writing things down?

Wednesday 25th June 2003

Following a class vote last Friday, this week the class is looking at filling in forms. They chose to start with job applications, and are trying to express their employment history through English. On Tuesday they had a spelling test for the names of their professions, and today were doing the same test to see if they could get more names right. I was sitting with Mina, Neda, Tatjana and Sergei. Everyone performed better than the previous day, and students corrected their own work, comparing both scores. The three girls all did very well, as did Sergei. Although he has a tendency to drift off, he was

quite accurate and sure of himself as he wrote down his answers. Mina and Neda were much more anxious to get them all right.

We then split into 2 groups and worked on sentences with gaps which focused on *was* and *is*, using the names of classmates, their previous occupations and current status as student as models. E.g He___ an architect in Angola and he ___ now an English student in Ireland. The group I was working with (the girls) were excited to see their own names on the document and proceeded to guess who was who. Tatjana and Mina took charge of writing the answers, and the rest of the group all leaned or stood around them calling out the answers. Once we had finished, conversation turned other things, including who is Prime Minister of Ireland. Gloria started taking notes about the President, Prime Minister and the word Taoiseach. Neda mentioned Tony Blair and the Queen. The group discussed the differences between Prime Minister and President, asking me questions. Gloria said she was glad to know this as her husband had been asked questions about Ireland at the Department of Justice, and she thought that it was important to know about politics in Ireland. She said she sometimes read the paper, as her husband often did so. Neda said that she never watches RTE news, but that she and her husband always watch Arab television on satellite. Gloria then said it was important for her to find out things like this so she could help her children with their homework.

Friday 4th July

Gloria left. Family issues. Her husband got a place on a training programme and she has to stay at home to look after the children. I think this is a recurring problem for students, when their partner finds a full-time job or gets a place on a training course, there are no affordable childcare options so they have to give up school. Talked to Tomasz today, he seems to be coming out of his shell a bit during class. He has missed a few Fridays, I think, and generally is fairly non-committal about what he thinks

about the week. Everything seems to be 'ok' but you're never sure if this is just a polite way of saying it was boring! Daily routine was the topic, getting up, washing, dressing, leaving the house. Neda wanted to know what everything is called in the house, she made such a huge vocabulary list (microwave, kettle, sink, kettle, toaster etc.) Fifteen new words weren't a problem for her!

Wednesday 9th July

Doing likes to, loves to (not sure who asked to do this). The target is "ask questions and understand answers". We started doing this orally, around the class in a plenary session. So, lots of, what do you like to do, what do you love to do. Also, filling in forms.

Wednesday 16th July absent, holidays

Wednesday 23rd July

Christelle left, warning letters about attendance. She had been ill on a number of occasions and asked for an ambulance to come to school. She has been suffering from migraines. Her last visit to the hospital seems to suggest that she had been on the wrong medication for her migraines which was making them worse. She is very young, lives with her father, but is getting married this summer. Her situation left the rest of the class a bit worried, her attendance had been really poor, and her proficiency was really very very low. The others were making progress, and saw her still struggling enormously, and seemed to feel sorry for her. Learning about describing English today: adjective, superlative, verb, noun. Was v popular, everybody taking detailed notes and then translating into their own language.

Wednesday 30th July

Jimmy has been increasingly absent for a number of weeks now, sporadic appearances and I'm sure lots of warning letters. He has now left officially, no explanation, no news from anybody. Using the telephone today – I can leave a simple message, and I can identify important information in a telephone message and write it down. Practising leaving a message with the school saying that I can't come because, I'm sick/child's sick/transport problems. Face-to-face work with one person playing the part of secretary. Lots of concentration and questions about "how do you say this", it seems to be such a useful skill for everybody and I know that they find the telephone rather stressful.

Wednesday 6th August

A little strange today, so much movement in the class has been a little unsettling, especially as Christelle's case was quite worrying and Jimmy's so mysterious. Gloria was very popular with everyone, she has left an empty space. Wrote down some impressions of the most regular attendees (and also those who say they will stay on beyond the end of term – some have had enough, others want to get a job straightaway, one is already working part-time in the evenings in a fastfood restaurant and will go there full-time). Dealing with officials target at the moment, asking for forms, and making complaints.

Wrote down some impressions of students:

Neda: Susan and I have a joke that Neda is a lady who lunches. Her husband is a doctor who is studying for his Part 1 medical exams in January, and Neda seems to come to school as something to do. Her husband speaks good English. She is interested in her appearance, in dressing up and make up, and loves shops. She says doesn't have the courage sometimes to speak out and use her English in her spare time, because her husband is always around and she gets embarrassed because her

English is not has good as his. She has made great progress, although her English was very poor when she started, her social skills are fantastic, in class she would say anything to anybody. She is very open about her life, her stories, her family. She can poke fun at herself, like how she used to muddle up kitchen and chicken. She loves food, loves eating, often brings things into class for everybody. Basically I think Neda sees coming to school as a social occasion, and I think it is this attitude which has meant she has made such good progress. She has really applied herself to her spelling and writing, in spite of herself (perhaps tendency to chat too much and not pay attention), and has talked about perhaps having her funding extended. Often proposes targets, not afraid to speak out.

Alina*:* Alina is the dark horse of the class. She is an excellent student, and all the others recognise this in her. She is very modest, very quiet and shy, but her writing skills, her spelling, her lexical knowledge, ability to put complex phrases together, is really great. That bad day when Musa and Sergei were muttering into her ears seems a long time ago now. I think she is possibly one of the most motivated students in the class. Why is this so? She is a very determined person, and doesn't seem to let setbacks get in her way, even though sometimes she can be upset. She is also very focussed and concentrated. Her work is extremely neat, she always does all of her homework. She is usually ery poised, I think she leads quite a strict lifestyle, not sure what religious nomination she is but they don't go the cinema anymore etc. She seems to get on very well with her classmates, especially Neda, Tomasz, Eduardo. Very dedicated person. She also has come out of her shell, quite affectionate with Susan and myself. Sometimes proposes things, but usually too shy to speak out.

Tomasz*:* He has changed beyond recognition from the first weeks in May. I really did think he was one of the most unmotivated individuals, and was almost counting the days until he dropped out. He

454.	had the typical 'hhmppfff', big deep sighs, looked bored out of his mind. However, his attendance	
455.	remained high, and his class participation too. He gets on very well with Eduardo, they work well	
456.	together. He is one of the students who seems to use English more out of class, he goes quite	
457.	frequently to the cinema (not very many of them do this). He's also a football fan, watches the	
458.	matches on television. He has quickly come to a point where he can make small talk, talk about a	
459.	range of different everyday topics, asks detailed questions. He would often get the bus with me from	
460.	town, and surprised me on a number of occasions with his range of vocab, ability to recast questions.	
461.	He says he aims to finish his funding. Will speak out and choose targets, knows what his targets are,	
462.	is on the ball.	
463.		
464.	**Eduardo***:* An architect from Angola. Again, very little English on arriving in class, but French speaker,	
465.	so he has made rapid progress in vocabulary acquisition. He gets very anxious when he has to speak	
466.	in class, and doesn't tend to say much. However, when he does get started on a topic that interests	
467.	him, he talks animatedly at length (e.g. Angola). He watches Euronews in English, and is very up to	
468.	date with current affairs. He has a wife and children, is a real gentleman, but very shy. Gets on	
469.	extremely well with Tomasz. Doesn't really speak up when choosing targets, but will add his	
470.	agreement afterwards, or sometimes will disagree.	
471.		
472.	**Musa***:* From Georgia although he sometimes says he is Turkish as has family there. Speaks Russian.	
473.	He is a funny chap, very keen to integrate into working life in Ireland, is already working in the	
474.	evenings, (which means he is often exhausted during the day), and has picked up a lot of	
475.	colloquialisms. Wants his family to have a good life here, during piloting the interviews he send his	
476.	ambition was to have his own house, a garage, a garden for the kids in a good area. Can be	Just heard that the R1 ELP
477.	disruptive in class when he doesn't want to do work, but also can be enormous fun.	will not be used after this

478.		term – not sure how this effects my group – will they start Milestone ELP in ((name of teachers)) groups
479.	**Chen** Really the lowest proficiency level in the class, enormous problems with phonology, making	
480.	himself understand to other students. But yet so keen just to take part in the social side of the class, to	
481.	be part of the group dynamic. The class joke is that all he says in English is 'coffee money please!' as	
482.	he is the nominated collector. Has a young daughter and another one on the way, I think his wife	
483.	speaks more English than he does. He often acts things out if he thinks he isn't being understood. He	
484.	goes to pick up his daughter at school and says he tries to speak English there. Incredibly cheerful	
485.	and good-natured.	
486.		
487.	**Mina***:* One of the keenest students I have ever met. Primary school teacher in Iraq, would love to	
488.	retrain and teach here. Needs to know everything, writes everything down, gets in a tizzy about the	
489.	smallest details. Wants to do well, very eager to please. One problem is that she appears to need lots	
490.	of praise, and if she doesn't get it, may perhaps get a little depressed. She also wants to talk lots in	
491.	class, which can be difficult to manage as other students sometimes feel a little resentful. She is	
492.	delighted to be learning English. No problem speaking out, choosing targets.	
493.		
494.	**Tatjana***:* Tatjana is definitely one of the neatest most organised students. Compiles detailed	
495.	vocabulary lists in a big hardback notebook. Very fast learning curve, says herself that she knew	
496.	almost no English. Writes everything down, fastidious. Doesn't speak much English out of class, lives	
497.	with husband and mother-in-law. But sometimes husband's friends call, they speak English. Motivated	
498.	to work after school, to work in clothes shop or hairdresser. Was hairdresser in Bosnia. No problem	
499.	speaking out, no fear at all.	
500.		
501.	**Pin:** From Vietnam, sits with the 'quiet group' of students. In his forties, extremely shy, very reticent	

and really doesn't like having to speak to others in class. Sort of relies on teacher as translator. But keen to learn, improve, has joined the library. His written work is very neat and thorough, no problem grasping rules, remembering exceptions. Phonology is his biggest problem, and confidence to speak out.

Wednesday 13th August

Absent

Wednesday 20th August

Absent

Wednesday 27th August

2nd questionnaire administered. Last week of term! Susan is going to move up a level as well and will now teach Reception 1 Middle (R1M). Some students move up a level with her, some students move up to R1M but to a different teacher and some move up 2 levels skipping R1M and going straight to R1 transition – Mina and Tatjana are going to F's R1T class. Working a review of the term, what happened each week, the five key words to remember from each week.

Wednesday 3rd September

New classes. Left them to it as didn't want to disturb them in their first week. Susan herself takes the next level up (R1 Middle) most of her class move up with her. It seemed to work the last time when I came early in the term but not in the first week.

Friday 12th September

First day in new class. Sixteen students. We stay in the same classroom though. Some students are a little bit confused, same teacher, same classroom, is it really going to be different, but others are happy to stay with Susan. There was also a little bit of talk of a 'conspiracy theory' that this is a 'fake' move, they are not really going up a level. Shame to see Tatjana and Mina leave, but they had both made considerable progress and much more proficient that this group. Worksheet about where everybody comes from, with each student's name, then questions about date of arrival in Ireland (most between 2000 and 2002, but Adrian the longest, since 1999). Also age, marital status and family.

Wednesday 17th September

This week the class is working on writing about themselves, based on the work on introductions last week. Had a look at Tomasz's ELP with him today. He seems to skip the middle bit in the targets on the green pages, he chooses them and then only fills in when he can do it by himself, not when he can do it with help. Must look and see if the others follow a similar pattern. Interesting that last term most of his reviews, which asked whether the week was ok, easy, not easy, he put ok. The question is different now, it asks whether the week was excellent, very good, ok or not good. Today Tomasz wrote, "this week was very good, because very easy" (and it was a surprise to see an entire sentence, spelt correctly! Good work!). Work this week was about introductions, so revisions really for those who are not new to the class.

Friday 26th September

Class had chosen the target how to fill in forms. "Fill in forms with basic information about myself". Target from the ELP: *I can introduce myself and give information about my family.* Have been working on various documents that they might encounter, joining a video library, and then an official

government form. Worked in four groups with application forms, which were swapped and corrected. LOTS of vocabulary today which will probably reappear in spelling tests e.g. spouse, marital status etc. Seems these items need to appear and reappear a good few times before they are really noticed (like marital status from a few weeks ago), understood, remembered and then reappear, e.g. in a formal letter. Next week the target is "carry on a simple conversation with others".

A good dynamic seems to be built up between the 'old' students and the new students. New students seem to be settling in now after a few weeks. My first impressions from the past weeks of the new students:

Vladimir: bricklayer from Romania, extremely quiet to begin with. Very little experience of education, very shy. Seemed completely out of water in school situation, had difficulty especially in writing and spelling. However, as these weeks have passed by, I was surprised to see that he had 100% attendance rate. He has started coming out of his shell, talking animatedly about things that really interested him, especially the day we had the true/false debate (e.g. about the role of women). He also started trying to convey his jokes through English. Also very animated when talking about how he organises BBQs, he likes drinking and parties. He seemed to fit in when he found his place in the class with the men, he participates in the joking, the leg slapping, with Eduardo, Tomasz etc. Doesn't really speak out much when choosing targets.

Brahim: very educated man, very polite, good-natured. Teacher. Teaches Arabic at mosque in Dublin. Comes to school as if he is going to work, with his briefcase and in a suit. Very attentive, always wants to know why. Very devout. Young wife and young son. Good at working with others, but wants to progress and sometimes I think he feels a little frustrated, like the others are holding him

back. Calls for explanations. Doesn't speak out much, but when he feels strongly about something he does.

Adrian is a v interesting person, complex personality. Footballer. Has been in Ireland 4/5 years, but v little English. Didn't seem to integrate into Irish society. From the outset, he has asked v interesting questions, had a whole series of "why do we say this", Several times in class, "Adrian's questions" have become a focus of grammar teaching. No problem whatsoever speaking out in class, choosing targets although sometimes his targets as not shared by the rest of the class (bit of a loner), but the class clown too really.

Ivan*:* quiet and shy, but has entered into the spirit of things. Thought he wasn't going to stay very long, little like Tomasz at the beginning. Doesn't speak out that much, but like Brahim, does when he feels strongly.

Nicolae*:* again someone who has opened up incredibly over the last few weeks. French speaker. Some authority issues, very hostile to authoritarian regimes, has commented a number of times how much he appreciates the 'democracy' of the classroom; how he likes being able to make choices, choose what the class will work on. He says he is keen to carry on, go on a training course afterwards. Has travelled around quite a bit, keen to stay in Ireland now with his family. No problem speaking out now, choosing targets, now that he understands how the system works. Bit reticient/hostile at the beginning.

Rose*:* Lot of get up and go, single mother, daughter in Belgium. The mother of the class. Very confident indeed. Wants to make it here, wants to make money, have a car, nice house, buy nice clothes, be able to look after her daughter. No problem giving her opinion, contributing to targets.

Samira*:* very motivated, very sensitive, mid-twenties from Afghanistan. Very 'little girl'. Has already learned quite a lot of English, very educated family. Thought perhaps she was better than the level of the class, was very demanding at the beginning, didn't understand the teaching methods. Didn't like

how much other students talked in class, or face-to-face work. Not very patient. Always wanted Susan to talk, Susan to explain. Has really blended in though, best friends with Rose. No problem speaking out now, choosing targets

Friday 24th October

Target chosen by class for next week – to write more. Target from the ELP: I can write briefly about myself.

24/10 Last week in old building

Targets – revising writing and filling in forms. From the ELP *I can greet and introduce myself to other people* and *I can fill in a form with basic information about myself and my family*

Wednesday 1st October

Book launch of the school's new resource book Anseo. Didn't go to class.

Wednesday 8th October

Absent

Wednesday 15th October School in temporary building

We moved to what some of the teachers now call 'the space'. It's office premises only yards away from the old school. The move took place over a few days. I think it is scheduled to last four weeks. There is one large shared office space divided with shoulder high temporary dividers, and then some smaller offices also used as classrooms. Susan's class is in the big space, sharing with four other classes. There's quite a good atmosphere, students seem to think it's a bit of an adventure and they know it's only going to last 4 weeks or so. There is natural light, which makes a huge change. Spent

the class planning what to do over the four weeks here, can't do anything too noisy as the other classes are there too. Been doing work on future plans, which seems to be going well, especially with Tomasz who is beginning to talk about courses after school. A target for this week was being able to talk more, in longer sentences. From the ELP *I can carry on a simple conversation with others.*

Wednesday 22nd October

Second visit to temporary building. Really good class today. Susan had a discussion sheet of values and ethical dilemmas, about money, marriage, friends, and it really got the whole class talking. Paul says he has been having lots of bad luck recently and he discovered that his wallet had been stolen. Neda hasn't been in great form this week or last week, she is much quieter and more subdued. Doing a module on directions. *I can ask and understand simple directions.*

Friday 24th October

Visit to Old Library and Trinity College

Excursion to Trinity College with the class, and to the Old Library and Book of Kells. We met at the front of College and almost everybody turned up, even though it wasn't a particularly nice day. We started with a tour of the college buildings, lots of questions about university in Ireland, how many students, how to study here. Their appreciation of the Book of Kells and the Long Room was enormous, thought the calligraphy was incredibly beautiful, shocked by all the books. We all went for coffee in the Buttery afterwards, and had a great end to the afternoon. Ivan was particularly communicative in English, had a hundred questions to ask about doing a thesis, money for studying and teaching etc. Had a really excellent day.

Discovered Paul's funding was stopped; after ongoing lateness, absences, range of different

problems including teenage son's schooling. His wallet was stolen, he needed a new green card. Had to go to son's school in North County Dublin for a meeting. Seemed unable to cope with academic environment, having to be in school in certain hours and provide reasons for absences. Son speaks fluent English.

Wednesday 29th October

Move to new building in Ballsbridge

Turned up at the new building today, and found the class had already moved classroom again! The first classroom was incredibly noisy, with no double-glazing and overlooking the main road. Had moved into another classroom. There was a lot of excitement in the air, "finally we're here". The classroom is quite small, but a huge window and real central heating, with a large student kitchen just across the corridor from Susan's room. Having talked with some of them, they say that this place is more like a real school to them. Now that we are settled, I'm going to start doing some audio interviews with students.

Wednesday 5th November

Conducted first interview with Tomasz, Alina and Ivan in the student kitchen. Quite a big room, we sat around the table and I used one of the school tape recorders. The sound is ok. I'm going to digitise it as transcribing from a tape takes too long. Students were keen to participate, and didn't seem to wonder why we were talking about what we talked about. I suppose some of the questions I asked were quite similar to the Friday review. The interview lasted about an hour.

Tuesday 11th November

Did the second interview with Rose, Nicolae and Neda. Same as before, in student kitchen, school

tape recorder, lasted about an hour. Big debate between Rose and Nicolae about money, Ireland, employment.

Class is starting to feel a bit nostalgic, they know that they will be moving on soon. Some students really don't want to move, I know Adrian feels quite strongly about it (and wants to do something about it), and Eduardo and Alina and that little group who work together (Tomasz) have quite strong bonds with each other now. They don't want to go into different classes, and I think also they have such a strong bond with Susan that it will be very hard for them to have another teacher. The class dynamic is great, but I think moving into a different class, out of their comfort zone, will probably be a good challenge that will push some of them on.

Samira was in tears today. I think the thought of moving on is troubling her a little. Working on a target about telephone conversations and *I can give a simple message.*

Tuesday 18th November

Did another interview with Adrian, Samira and Eduardo. Went very well, although it is quite hard sometimes to hear Samira on the tape. Veered onto very interesting topics, power, corruption, orphans in Angola and in Romania.

Susan had been talking to a collegue about making speeches. She talked to the class about the possibility of making a speech to the rest of the class, and videotaping it. Everyone seemed happy to do it, there were no objections. Some questions about what it could be about, Susan and some of the students gave examples of what speeches are like – a wedding, the Oscars, speeches to thank people, to talk about something you know well about. Speech day was added to targets for next week on whiteboard. Class also set a target wanting to know about banks, money, writing cheques in English.

Other work this past week was on shops, shopping, and opening times *I can read and understand opening and closing times and days in shops* .

This week the class had worked writing a formal letter in English.

Friday 28th November

On Friday, the class had prepared the room before Susan's arrival, pushing desks back. Video camera was set up. There didn't seem to be any nerves.

Some of the students seemed to know already what kind of speech might have been expected of them – e.g. Eduardo gave presentation about his country, Samira talked about Eid. Others gave presentations of the class as a group of people, how they came personally to Ireland. Some had prepared notes. About one third of the class didn't seem to know what sort of task they were involved in, and gave quite a short little presentation of who they were, how they were happy to learn English. Interesting example of intersubjectivity. There didn't seem to be any patterns of what kind of students got the conventional idea about a speech. Ivan, Eduardo, Alina and Susan all made notes and made their speeches from these. The others were totally impromptu and more talking into the camera.

The next time these students are asked to give a speech, they will have a model in mind. It was quite an emotional day, lots of the students were thanking Susan, and also expressing their friendship to fellow students. There was an atmosphere of openness, Nicolae for example giving his experiences of being arrested on arriving in Ireland.

Nobody seemed to mind their story being recorded. At the end of the class, there was still time left, one of the students suggested we could sing songs in English and record those.

Susan had been worried that students wouldn't speak, would be worried about speaking alone, on camera, but she thought the fact that they had been 'thrown in at the deep end' before they knew that it was meant to be 'hard'. We talked about whether self-consciousness builds as you become more proficient in a second language, or whether nerves are 'exported' when you change class, or other students bring such expectations along. These students had been together for such a long time, they were very comfortable with the whole set-up.

Monday 1st December

Absent, moving house.

Thursday 4th December

Went just to do the last interview with Mina and Tatjana. They have been in the R1Transition class. This one was a bit shorter than the other three. We did it in a different room, a small classroom. Tatjana's progress is remarkable, from someone who really arrived at a very low proficiency level. It was quite an emotional interview, dealing with lots of personal issues. You realise how much baggage each learner has to deal with on a personal level, the fatigue, the mental energy required.

Monday 8th December

Sort of an 'end times' atmosphere. Susan has asked students to plan with her specifically what they are going to do each day until the Christmas holidays. The idea is review the whole term, see what you haven't understood. The class seems much better at grasping the planning/target notion when it is concrete like this – 2 weeks class, what do we have to do, how can we fit it in. The sense of urgency maybe! Was the same before in the temporary building, 1 month here, what exactly are we going to do in that time. Targets for the week: Review and planning work until Christmas; review

names of things; review colours/numbers/adjectives; review attendance – Portfolio Day.

Friday 19th December

Targets for the week were: Review of grammar (this was looking back at the term) & tenses; go to museum; make a short speech; have a private party in class; enjoy last day. Huge amounts of food. Neda always makes a massive effort, she brought in loads of food, little cakes, and brought in lots of silver dishes to put them in. Basically party and chat today.

Friday 9th January 2004

Started off just going to Tim's class for half a session, don't want to impose myself for an entire session on my first day! Still an afternoon class (1.15pm-5.15pm). The classroom set-up is pretty much the same, posters on the wall, class contract, targets and planning the term's modules. Eight students moved from Susan's R1M to R1 Transition: Adrian, Alina, Neda, Tomasz, Eduardo, Nicolae, Vladimir and Pin.

Tim's impressions of the class – found their level to be very high, not the typically R1 group. At the top end of A2 rather than bottom end, where they would probably be at the end of a course with him.

Some new students in the class, the students from Susan's class tend to sit with each other but there seem to be some friendships building up along national/L1 similarities. Eduardo and Tomasz continue to be good buddies and sit at the back together. Alina sits with them too. Ivan and Nicolae continue to sit together, Ivan always sits right at the front. He seems to like to hear everything well. Adrian sits right at the back, still arrives a little late, leaves a little early. The desks at the beginning of class are in rows rather than in a semi-circle as in Susan's class. In fact, there are no desks, there are chairs with

766.	armrests for writing on, as in university lecture theatres.	
767.		*((TIM's first impressions of*
768.	Alina/Neda/Tomasz told me they found the class hard, too quiet, a lot of writing.	*the class))*
769.		
770.	Tim – going to use the portfolio and the descriptors on Fridays, quite a full review session, developing	I was first of all struck with the
771.	on from Susan's review. He has them picking out their own descriptors/self-assessment rather than	ease of communication within
772.	incorporating them into their worksheets.	the group and the sense of
773.		class unity. The group also
774.	How some of the students' motivation to attend class depends on ease of getting to school, as some	showed a high degree of self-
775.	move house, they leave school. E.g. cost of accommodation means that many seem to be moving out	motivation when working on
776.	of smaller accommodation in city centre to larger accommodation in Lucan, Tallaght, Blanchardstown,	set tasks. As a general
777.	where they can have house, garden, garage. Most of the students I have been following have been	comment the group's strategy
778.	used to much larger living space (not necessarily luxurious but more spacious) than Dublin. Only	was to first of all rely on the
779.	some of the Asians and Russians seem happy to live in the more cramped accommodation that	information they had to solve
780.	Dublin city centre offers. I know Neda is planning to move out to the suburbs, and Adrian is keen to	the set task rather than to
781.	find out about housing lists, waiting lists etc. Wants to talk about this in class.	look to the teacher for cues or
782.		solutions. There was good
783.	General conversation with students - they find that moving to Tim has meant they are doing more	class discipline but with some
784.	work (and are happy with this, challenging), but that it is very tiring, they need more time to reflect on	(perhaps unavoidable) use of
785.	what they are doing. Think he is a great teacher but feel they have difficulty keeping up with the pace	languages other than English.
786.	of work (Neda, Adrian, Alina).	Overall the class dynamic
787.		was excellent: businesslike
788.	**Wednesday 28th January**	but relaxed with a feeling of a
789.	My second visit to Tim's class.	happy and productive working

790.	Tim starts the class with some small chit chat but moves much more quickly into the material than in	environment.
791.	Susan's class. Students, like in other terms, settle in quickly to the 'school' atmosphere, getting their	
792.	materials out quickly, not really talking too much once Tim starts the class. There is quite a studious	
793.	feel. I'm not sure how all the different students from before are really coping with this change, it's quite	**Eduardo** is first of all a
794.	a leap for them.	gentleman, helpful and
795.		mindful of his other
796.	How very emotional it can get when learners feel out of their depth – Ivan appears to be having a	classmates. I imagine that his
797.	difficult time adjusting to new pace of this class, was very frustrated and upset today. Said that	work ethic from his former
798.	everything was going too fast for him, that he didn't understand, that reading was very difficult for him	career is reflected in his
799.	and that the girls he was working with spoke English too quickly for him to understand (Neda & new	attitude to his studies. He is
800.	student in Tim's class). He was almost in tears. He was then apologetic, said he was sorry, but that it	self-motivated and seems to
801.	was just so difficult for him to read in English. Class can be a very stressful situation for some people.	have his own standards as
802.	Then others take class more as a joke or for socialising.	regards work. Therefore,
803.		Eduardo makes sure that he
804.	Vladimir, making connections today with words in class and words outside of class. Working on how	understands the point of each
805.	to pronounce past tenses, one of the words was *cheered*. He asked me whether it was the same word	lesson or task and works to
806.	you use when you drink, and if it was spelt with an /s/. He then asked me whether it was the same	finish that task to his
807.	word that you use to thank the bus driver when you are getting off the bus. Very interesting example	satisfaction. He is a fast
808.	of school knowledge and everyday, action knowledge colliding I think.	learner who has never
809.		required detailed
810.	The ELP is used in a different way in this class. In Susan's class, more spoonfed, she would take	explanations of lessons or
811.	descriptors out of the ELP and incorporate them regularly into worksheets and blackboard work. As	corrections. He is a quiet
812.	students have moved up into Tim's class, they are having to do more of the finding and reading	student, but not shy to
813.	descriptors and deciding themselves.	present or speak. This, I

814.		think, natural characteristic
815.	**Wednesday 4th February**	hampers practising and so
816.	There was a bus strike on Monday – a lot of students expressed irritation that they hadn't known	impacts on his fluency in
817.	about it, and were annoyed they couldn't come to school. Some of the students did have the more	spoken production.
818.	'normal' reaction of 'oh good, no bus, no school'. Neda has left, it is the end of an era! They have	
819.	indeed moved out to Lucan, to have a house with more space, a garden, a garage. She really wanted	**Alina** is another quiet, highly
820.	to move, and was paying a lot of money for very cramped and damp city centre accommodation. But it	motivated student. She
821.	is very sad indeed, she really was the life and soul of the class. Then Alina started to talk about	studies hard at home and I
822.	leaving too! Her husband is starting some sort of training course, and she would have to look after her	am sure that her husband
823.	little girl and take her to school. It would be a real shame, as Alina is has become one of the most	teaches her at home. Even
824.	autonomous students in the class. When she doesn't understand something, she goes away, finds	though she is having
825.	some grammar exercises to do, and then has Tim check them. When the class is discussing their	childcare problems at the
826.	targets, she is often the only one looking through her ELP to see what they have already done, what	moment, she attends class
827.	is still do on.	diligently. She is a shy person
828.		and so her spoken production
829.	Targets for next week: about work.	lags slightly behind her
830.	Filling in application forms	writing and comprehension.
831.	Having an interview	She is determined to
832.	Doing a CV	maximise her time learning
833.	Finding a job	English so that she can go to
834.	Understanding job ads	FÁS, start work and build a
835.	Career guidance, choosing a job, which jobs pay well	life here. Alina will stick at a
836.	Tax system	task until completed but will
837.	Eventually, information about starting your own business	ask questions if she has any

838.	Grammar – would.	difficulty.
839.		
840.	Some of the class thought it wouldn't take very long, but a few students suggested it might take one	**Adrian** is self-motivated,
841.	day per topic, so they should look at their targets again in 2 weeks (5th March). Looking through the	intelligent and pedagogically
842.	descriptors, the class found it quite easy to see which were relevant to their topic, but also seemed to	streetwise: he always tries to
843.	find it quite boring.	make connections between
844.		his existing knowledge and
845.	Talked to Ivan, who said he was finding it very 'heavy' but that he was very happy. He said Tim is	new information. This is to
846.	giving them lots of new words, new sentences, but it is very quick for him. He said the others seem to	gain the highest possible
847.	understand, but for him, it goes in one ear and out the other. Pin was finding it difficult to understand	quality for his English and his
848.	the communication game played just before break (the bank queue game); he said he felt stupid in	and his family's life in Ireland.
849.	Ireland. Eduardo overheard, and told him he's not stupid, but that English is very hard, especially in a	I get the impression that the
850.	new class. Told him he spoke very good English and that he was making progress. Tomasz lent me	usual ratio between a
851.	his folder and said he hoped I would find something interesting in it for my work. Class had computers	learners active and passive
852.	after the break, Adrian was asking me how he could find out how to use a computer for everyday life,	vocabulary is reversed in his
853.	he said he was scared of making a mistake on it.	case. He is a fast learner who
854.		has an appetite for learning
855.	**Wednesday 18th February**	and who becomes bored
856.	Did videos for job interviews. The class seemed to enjoy the videoing part, Tomasz was helpful in	when not faced with a
857.	setting up the 'stage', Adrian acting film director, lots of applause. Some people were more at ease	challenge. He enjoys
858.	than others, and spoke more loudly/clearly – Alina was very shy and almost inaudible. Eduardo came	company and having a laugh
859.	across as very confident, difficulty reading the handwriting of the script, but his interview was filled	in class, which helps the
860.	with his own questions, initiatives. Ivan also entered into the role with imagination, both interviews	overall dynamic. He is
861.	were very life-like. Nicolae and Tomasz were quite comfortable, but didn't project themselves very	focused firstly on his own

862.	much into it. Vladimir looked quite uncomfortable during it, although everyone added some moments	learning but can also work in
863.	of humour (hello boss etc). Adrian had left early. Targets: I can fill in an application form, I can	groups.
864.	understand and anwer questions at an interview (partially achieved for most students although some	
865.	realised, when they saw a 'real' interview situation, that they would find it really hard). Help finding a	**Tomasz** isn't as motivated as
866.	job – choosing the right job (occupation, career). Finished with a complicated (different people asking	the other students but I see
867.	different things, comparing countries etc) discussion about taxes.	him as a credit to Susan's
868.		teaching and course-planning
869.	**Thursday 4th March**	skills. He does what he is
870.	Working on CVs, work-related vocabulary and qualification equivalencies (welder, tiler, Diploma in	presented with, using, I'm
871.	Civil Engineering). Today in class we were working on CVs. Students had to put a muddled CV of	assuming, the skills he has
872.	someone else back into the correct order, working in small groups. Alina was working with Nicolae	learned in the last two terms
873.	and Tomasz. She took immediate charge of the process, leading the order of items. Tomasz and	in Susan class. Tomasz is
874.	Nicolae however were monitoring closely, they allowed her to work away at it whilst watching, but then	happy to work with any class
875.	intervened when they didn't agree with her. They finally asked me if I thought it was ok, none of us	member and is a pretty
876.	were sure about one item which we asked Tim about. Tomasz and Alina were very confidant about	easygoing personality. He will
877.	CV ordering, particularly the last item first rule, which Nicolae had some difficulties getting his head	ask questions to make sure
878.	around. He asked Tim a string of questions about why, what, where.	that he can complete teaks.
879.		His attitude to spelling and
880.	Next students filled in their own CVs in pen, to be later corrected and typed out. After that, they	grammatical accuracy is also
881.	swopped and inserted interviewer questions on their partner's CV.	easy going, but that perhaps
882.	It seeemed to be a successful exercise – although some learners found it a little more confusing than	reflects on a lack of work and
883.	others if they were less familiar with the idea of a CV, all entered into the activity with interest and	teaching of skills around
884.	enjoyment. Very clear case of people trying to make links with their world outside the classroom and	learning spellings from his
885.	fit it into the analytical framework of a CV and a job interview. Students looking for equivalents,	current teacher.

translations, asking other students how long they had studied for to attain qualifications. Interest in everyone else's work.

Most of the students seemed to really get into it. Alina entered into it with an average amount of gusto, less than her usual effort. She said that maybe she didn't really want to work and wasn't so interested in the exercise. Some of the students were extremely concerned to find the exact equivalents of their qualifications in English.

Alina also mentioned to me that she has been using the self-access facilities, she has been reading books and then answering questions about them. She said she really enjoyed this (reading was an interest on her CV). She said also that her daughter, who is at playschool, was making lots of progress in English, she knew all the colours, the letters of the alphabet song, and that they have been reading books together in English.

On the whole they still seem happy to be learning English – the more academic level of the class seems to be challenging for some of the them, but Adrian for example seems to be thriving. He is much less the class clown.

I administered further questionnaires, filled in by the students who were in Susan's class previously (Eduardo, Tomasz, Alina, Adrian, Vladimir and Nicolae). Spent a lot of time working with Pin on his own, he doesn't seem to interact so much with the newer students but prefers his old friends. I suppose the others do too, but Pin a little more. At the end of the class he said, I'm no good, I'm stupid, I can't speak English. Again Eduardo was on it, patting him on the back and saying no say that, you make progress. Pin has been doing more work at home on Tim's pronunciation tapes,

Ivan is a slower learner, who takes a running jump at new information and grasps as much of it as he can in midair, and then uses what he lands with. I think he sees any lack of knowledge in front of the class as losing face. I think that he feels discouraged if he doesn't grasp new information initially. For this reason, he works best with a crony. I don't think that he devotes the same mental processing time to English as the previous students mentioned. Perhaps he requires more time to reflect in class.

Vladimir is a highly intelligent and motivated learner. He has a practical attitude to

910.	hopefully they will work. ((name of teacher))'s idea of sound charts may also help with P's problems.	learning a language. As he has found that he can't practise his trade here as is, I get the impression that he has his own learning and vocational targets set and spends his time in school achieving them. He likes to enjoy the classes and have a laugh when he can. He is reticent but has plenty to say when prompted. Vladimir will work at a task until it is finished to his satisfaction. He also helps Pin and other group members.
911.		
912.	**Visit to the museum Friday 19th March**	
913.	Went to the Natural History Museum on a very wet and windy day, yet everybody showed up! Tim had	
914.	prepared a questionnaire, which he thought no-one would really complete. Most of the class worked	
915.	away at their questionnaires through the different floors and exhibits of the museum, Tim said it was	
916.	the first class who had actually filled it in. Alina brought her little daughter along with her, and really	
917.	seemed to enjoy showing her all the different animals and asking for their names in English and	
918.	Romanian, counting animals and saying what colour they were. For Vladimir it seemed very	
919.	interesting because he was able to show us the kind of animals he hunted in Romania. Eduardo was	
920.	interested in showing people the types of animals you would see in the wild in Angola.	
921.		
922.	**Friday 26th March**	
923.	Before class started, Ivan asked me how my book (my thesis) was going, am I enjoying it, when do I	
924.	finish it. He said he had met an American lady who wrote novels, said she was really nice. He found	
925.	the American accent much easier to understand, that the Irish accent can be very difficult for him.	
926.		
927.	Rent relief. Tim said this was the second day that they had looked at rent relief, and he hadn't got very	**Neda** always works hard in class and is more than willing to speak and have a laugh. Her overall motivation is shown by the fact that she won't travel an inconvenient distance to the school, but in
928.	far the first time with the class. The second day on the topic seemed to help a lot, as the penny	
929.	seemed to drop and everyone began to understand that we were discussing how to get money back	
930.	from the government. Ivan was in a very chatty mood, I think he is happier talking in small groups. He	
931.	was wondering about bad landlords, if we had got rent relief, if we had bad landlords too. He was also	
932.	wondering about buying a car in NI, was it cheaper. Tomasz was back from his trip to London. Nicolae	
933.	was also in very chatty form, we were talking at length about the fall of communism, he was asking	

about how we were taught history about Eastern Europe here. He said in Moldova there were taught that capitalism is terrible, and that people sleep in the streets, they have no jobs or money. We were also talking about corruption in politics in Ireland and in Moldova. There was an interesting metalinguistic moment when the class compared the word for shop in Russian, Romanian, Moldovan, French, Polish and English.

The second half of the class was computers, the class go straight down and immediately sit down, they don't seem to take much break when it is computers afterwards. They were doing a program where you have to put sentences in the right order again. Tim makes up the sentences during the week according to the topic (this week accommodation) and any grammar-related topics that have been encountered. Learners have to click on squares to find the correct sentence order. It keeps the score, so it seemed to have a competitive edge that some liked – some people did it twice to see if they remembered the answers and got a better score (Alina, Tomasz) others did it very slowly with lots of concentration (Ivan, Nicolae). Ivan said he liked it because he learns new things, he kept getting sentences wrong because he forgot about articles, but by the end of the exercise was telling himself 'the?' or 'a?'. They all seem very happy to be in computer class, perhaps because it is something different from sitting in the language classroom, and also because most seem to have computer knowledge as a personal target. Alina is already quite good but would like to know a lot more. Adrian especially seems very interested in computers and would love to do a computer course.

2nd April

Talking about the weather and everyday things. Using monolingual dictionaries quite a lot. Everybody is now using Eng/Eng dictionaries happily, whereas before most had their own bilingual dictionary in their bag and didn't really see the point of the monolingual ones. During the review, Adrian finished his

class she does what was expected of her and is a quick and intelligent student, even if she wasn't overly worried about sentences and capital letters.

Nicolae's attitude to his English I imagine is similar to his attitude to anything he does: he wants to do a good job. He enjoys making connections between his existing linguistic knowledge and new information encountered. Nicolae will work at an activity until it is finished or until he loses interest in it. I get the impression he has decided on and prioritised his level of effort according to his needs and so isn't particularly interested in computers, but

958.	and more complicated things, and more confidence about speaking out and correcting someone	very interested in speaking
959.	(Adrian, Eduardo today). Vladimir keeps his own vocabulary notebook as well as his pages in his	and vocabulary.
960.	portfolio. His notebook is extremely well-organised and neat. Last week there had been 17 targets	
961.	chosen, but the class didn't get anywhere near accomplishing them all, so carrying them over to next	
962.	week. Talking about nicknames, and then some difficult words to do with the weather, particularly	
963.	spellings – e.g. changeable.	
964.		
965.	END OF FIELD NOTES	
966.		
967.		
968.		
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970.		
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981.		

Appendix B: Transcripts of audio interviews

Transcribed using a simplified version of the Jefferson(1992) Conversation Analysis conventions. Lines are numbered, rather thar each turn.

KEY:

(.)	*short pause* (pauses were untimed)
( )	*inaudible or unclear speech*
(information)	*guess at unclear speech*
((gestures))	*additional descriptions for movements, laughter etc.*
<u>please</u>	*louder speech*
PLEASE	*much louder speech*
[and then [it was	*overlapping speech*

Transcript of audio interview 1

Present:	TOMASZ, IVAN, ALINA
Location:	Student common room, IILT
Date:	5th November 2003
Interviewer:	LORNA CARSON
Duration:	c. 60 minutes

LORNA: I was just wondering if in general you like the new building?
ALINA: yes (.) very nice building is very near the house for me
LORNA: how long does it take you to come by bus?
ALINA: Uh (.) I walk, the road, the Marlborough Road, the, after that, Herbert Park, over the cross the building, the school
LORNA: Marlborough Road is lovely
ALINA: yeah is lovely road
IVAN: what is Marlborough Road?
LORNA: Marlborough Road on the left
ALINA: Herbert Park
LORNA: is it close for you, is it easy to come here?
IVAN: same same, it's not too bad it's not too bad
LORNA: it's just ok?
IVAN: yeah it's ok
LORNA: what do you think of the new classroom?
IVAN: [well
TOMASZ: [a little small but it's ok
IVAN: and the, yes, same school, this building, same school
LORNA: yeah
IVAN: you understand?
LORNA: like a real school
IVAN: easy school, like
LORNA: with a bell
IVAN: Mm
((laughter))
ALINA: I like the bell
LORNA: It reminds me of my school when I was a student
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: So, I was wondering, I just wanted to ask you, do you enjoy learning English at the moment?
TOMASZ: yeah!
LORNA: in general, is it good?
TOMASZ: to learn English, now is much much easy than when we start
ALINA: yeah
LORNA: so you see a difference?
TOMASZ: Mm, yeah. For me, maybe, I see a difference every day. Maybe other people don't see the difference
LORNA: what kind of difference?
TOMASZ: For me, now is easier, I understand better (.) everything
IVAN: better, understand better, writing many things. Writing and speaking, writing and reading. Is much much (.) than first time
TOMASZ: Mm, easy
LORNA: how long have you been in school now?
IVAN: I three months, how many weeks? Eleven weeks
LORNA: how long have you been?
IVAN: Eleven weeks.
TOMASZ: ah ((laughter))
TOMASZ: seven months?
ALINA: seven months.
IVAN: Seven months
TOMASZ: Seven?
ALINA: Seven.
TOMASZ: Yeah they go like that, ((makes noise of air passing))
LORNA: Yeah. And, are there days that are better? Days that are good and days that are bad? Or classes that are good and (.) so so?
TOMASZ: Ah, for me, every day is ok
LORNA: is it difficult to come every day, your attendance?
IVAN: I think it is happy, coming this school. I have (no problems)
LORNA: so no problems
IVAN: no problems

TOMASZ: last (time) when we were in the first class, I got, uh, 80%, now I got 90%
LORNA: do you think that is because it is a nicer school, or because it is easier to learn now
TOMASZ: uh, I think, easier, for me, I think so.
ALINA: maybe, is different
TOMASZ: [for me
ALINA: [speak, conversation
IVAN: conversation yes
ALINA: is different, because in the home I will speak Romanian and the class, speak English, very much I enjoy it the course.
LORNA: do you speak Romanian in class ever?
ALINA: no
IVAN: no
IVAN: in the house
ALINA: in class never
IVAN: in home
ALINA: speak Eduardo with Tomasz, speak Samira with ( ). No speak Romanian you. Nicolae, Vladimir.
LORNA: And do you think now, what is the atmosphere like (.) in class, are they your friends?
TOMASZ: Yeah, I think so
LORNA: you know, are you close friends with these people, Rose, Neda, Bashir, Adrian, Chen
IVAN: yes, friends, yes
LORNA: you know, you see them every day
IVAN: yeah, very happy, Chen ((laughter)) coffee money!
LORNA: and what about (.) what is the easiest part of learning English? What is easy for you? And what is very difficult for you?
TOMASZ: ((chuckles))
LORNA: personally, it changes
ALINA: because no speak every day, no speak good, because I am going to go to shopping, little little sentences, no sentence full, no, I tell the story, yesterday I told in the museum. No speak every day. No stories speak
LORNA: and is that difficult then, to make long sentences?
ALINA: yeah, no speak long sentences:
LORNA: And what is easy for you, spelling or grammar [or
ALINA: [full sentence speak English
TOMASZ: easy, easy
ALINA: is easy, spelling test for me
LORNA: 30 out of 30
ALINA: no problem. Speaking
LORNA: Ivan, what is easy for you, or difficult for you?
IVAN: for me is 50/50 hard, and writing and spelling and speak at home
LORNA: do you think you have made progress, are you better?
IVAN: yes (.)
LORNA: [that's good
IVAN: [because now I not need the translation, all the time take, translation. Myself translating. I go to Social Welfare, wherever. A little idea correct, I have idea correct spelling. Little little, no one hundred percent, I think myself. Before all the time, come on please, reading, what is this, reading English paper, now no problem, anything understand
LORNA: what about you Tomasz, what is easy or difficult, what do you like and what do you not like?
TOMASZ: I like speaking, to speak, and difficult, spelling. Spelling is more difficult for me.
LORNA: and how to do you practice spelling?
TOMASZ: uh, I don't have time in home to practice, the kids, it's difficult ((laughter))
ALINA: it is!

TOMASZ: very busy, very busy, when I go home, but Susan make the spelling tests for me. Maybe not very hard, from 30 I make 10 wrong
LORNA: yeah
TOMASZ: 70%, 60%
LORNA: do you like this idea of 30 new words, is it difficult to find 30 new words?
TOMASZ: No. Now, I think [no
IVAN: [no because
TOMASZ: [before, when we start
IVAN: when we start new week and we write new words, no problem
TOMASZ: before when we start, oh my God, 30 words! ((chuckles)) how you find them, 30 words? ((laughter)). Before we had 15 in first class, yeah?
LORNA: ah ok, and how it's?
TOMASZ: now it's 30
LORNA: and after?
TOMASZ: maybe 70!
IVAN: no!
LORNA: do you imagine yourself maybe in one year speaking English? How do you think you will be in one year?
TOMASZ: I don't know
IVAN: speak no same the English people or the Irish people, that is impossible
TOMASZ: for one year? In one year, it's not possible to learn? Uh, I think maybe 70%, 80% learn, maybe 70%
IVAN: and all day
TOMASZ: maybe when we leave this school, maybe we speak very well, very well. One year I think we speak very good
LORNA: and what would you like to do once you leave school, would you like to go to training or more English or FÁS or, have you an idea of
ALINA: after the school, go on the FÁS, maybe speak English when I go to FÁS ((laughter))
ALINA: English and computers
TOMASZ: yeah, the same, computers. Something with computers, some course
LORNA: do you do computers still here?
TOMASZ: yeah, yeah, yes. Somewhere in the class, Susan's class, we have computers
LORNA: and what kind of things have you been doing with computers? What kind of work?
IVAN: writing, typing
TOMASZ: first steps
LORNA: is anybody very good?
IVAN: no, Chen. Very good?
TOMASZ: Rose, because she have computer in her house
LORNA: yes, it makes a difference
LORNA: do you like computers Ivan, or do you prefer cars?
IVAN: is my first time with computer, my first time, asking, where is? Where is? Where is?!
LORNA: I know the problem. This weekend I showed my aunt how to send email. Hello Lorna – h middle, e top, l middle right. It took a very long time, two hours. ((chuckles)). What would you like to do?
IVAN: um, I don't know how many, after school I go to work, don't like studying. I happy just the English, English. No like studying, my life is very very hard. No like staying home reading, writing
LORNA: yes, it's like, frustrating
IVAN: it's not same,
TOMASZ: Want to work, yeah?
LORNA: get a job, like taxi-driver?
IVAN: I don't know, later, six months. Because I want, I don't know, after six months I want to go FÁS, help me pick the best, maybe driving licence for bus
LORNA: Oh, good job, that would be interesting, having Ivan as your bus driver! ((laughter))
IVAN: oh no!
TOMASZ: would be fun

LORNA: one twenty please!
TOMASZ: yeah!
((laughter))
IVAN: after more years, I think!
LORNA: maybe! Do you like coming to school? Is it strange as an adult with children to come to school every day and be in a class with a teacher?
ALINA: me, I like, every day come to school, because for me, relax, I speak English
TOMASZ: ( )
((laughter))
IVAN: new speaking, new writing,
ALINA: because in the home, little, the book. Because my daughter every day say, oh mama, speak English! But no good speak English, last night my daughter she say, no speak English mama!.
LORNA: as a father, is it strange to come to school?
TOMASZ: no I like it
LORNA: if you had to describe this school to a friend who was new to Ireland, what would you say? Come to my school because it is (.) how would you describe it?
TOMASZ: to a stranger?
LORNA: I go to this school, it is, what is it like? It's in Ballsbridge…
TOMASZ: it's a very nice school, nice people in the school, good teachers
LORNA: what would you say, Ivan, to a friend or your wife or someone, how would you describe it?
IVAN: international studies!
((laughter))
LORNA: very international!
IVAN: very happy about it, you learn, mm, geography, yes
LORNA: like yesterday
IVAN: like China and Africa and everything
LORNA: and yesterday we were talking about religion, with Chen, it was very interesting
IVAN: about the Christmas, and eh, like, the story of every land
LORNA: yeah
IVAN: history of every land
LORNA: yes it was very interesting yesterday
ALINA: yesterday I no come to school
LORNA: [we were talking about babies and
IVAN: [the Christmas, how you say
LORNA: and about wearing a cross, mm, what's in here and what's in here ((gestures to head and heart)). Chen was very funny yesterday!
IVAN: yes ((laughs))
LORNA: what about the targets, the targets this week?
TOMASZ: mm, about conversation in doctors, yeah?
ALINA: yes, conversation with the doctor
TOMASZ: we write the postcard for Christmas, spelling test
ALINA: spelling test, and the grammar, the, the, the Viking, write the story
LORNA: and who chose the targets this week?
TOMASZ: everybody
LORNA: are you happy, are they good targets this week?
IVAN: yes
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: what was your target this week, what would you like? More spelling or writing or
IVAN: writing
TOMASZ: I said more spelling (.) mm
LORNA: and what is yours, what would you like to do?
ALINA: new words
TOMASZ: the paper,
ALINA: yes, read the newspaper
LORNA: is it difficult every week, choosing targets?

TOMASZ: yeah
IVAN: it's easy
LORNA: it's easy
TOMASZ: ((laughs))
IVAN: easy change, every week
ALINA: no is difficult
TOMASZ: I don't know
LORNA: is it difficult to find new ideas, or for everyone to be happy, everyone to agree?
TOMASZ: I think so. Everybody say ok for spelling test.
LORNA: is it democracy?
TOMASZ: yes ((laughter))
LORNA: what about, you know in a traditonal school you have a textbook for learning English, a textbook with grammar, but here we don't have a textbook but folders, the blue folders. Do you like the way we have the blue folders and everything in the folder?
TOMASZ: yeah
ALINA: mm
LORNA: What's good about it, why do you like it?
TOMASZ: why do I like it?
LORNA: If you were the teacher, would you think it is a good idea
TOMASZ: no problem, the folder is like a textbook
LORNA: does it help you learn English?
TOMASZ: yes you can find everything
LORNA: everything
TOMASZ: in my folder, you can find everything, because I have the date and the week, it is very easy.
LORNA: and do you look back ever to the beginning and see what you did months ago?
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: very easy things
TOMASZ: easy topics, now is much difficult
LORNA: what about the decisions in class, do you make them as a group, do some people not like to, do some people not speak in class?
TOMASZ: not much
LORNA: are there some people who don't speak in class, or one person like Adrian who says, this week we have to do
TOMASZ: no,
LORNA: or is everyone [quite
TOMASZ: [no, everybody speaks, Alina speaks something, Eduardo (.)
ALINA: sometimes
TOMASZ: when we choose the targets, everybody speaks
LORNA: do you like working in all the class, or prefer face-to-face
TOMASZ: I like all the class
ALINA: all the class
TOMASZ: face to face is not very good
ALINA: because very very little speak in the group
TOMASZ: yeah,
ALINA: very much quiet in the group
LORNA: so you talk more whenever it is the big group or all the class
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: and are you nervous when you speak in front of all the class?
TOMASZ: no, when I know what I should speak, not nervous. I forget some things, I think, I should have say this, happy.
LORNA: and are you nervous, Ivan?
IVAN: no
LORNA: just talk talk talk?
LORNA: Alina, I know you can be a small bit nervous sometimes,
ALINA: mm
LORNA: in the big group
ALINA: yes in the big group.

LORNA: and if you had to choose a teacher, what would you say makes a good English teacher? What is a good teacher for you?
TOMASZ: ( )
LORNA: like if you had to make a teacher, make a model of a good English teacher, what would you say?
TOMASZ: oh! Susan is a good teacher!
LORNA: yes, I think she is lovely, very good
TOMASZ: very quiet
ALINA: she speaks slow
IVAN: yeah, slow
TOMASZ: very clear
IVAN: no nervous
TOMASZ: mm
IVAN: easy
LORNA: yeah, very calm
IVAN: yeah calm
TOMASZ: very good woman
LORNA: and is being quiet a good thing?
TOMASZ: yes, because a good teacher like John, no Tim
IVAN: Tim,
TOMASZ: yes Tim, very good but he speak very quickly, ((makes sound de de de de de))
IVAN: "you understand" "you understand"
TOMASZ: yeah
IVAN: another one "you understand", and nothing I understand! ((laughter))
IVAN: I understand ((makes noise of air passing quickly, zip - nothing))
TOMASZ: he is good, but very quick
IVAN: yes very quick, it is impossible [to
TOMASZ: [he write very quick too ((chuckles))
LORNA: does everything very quick
TOMASZ: yeah!
LORNA: and what about a good student, what is a good English student? What do you have to do to be a good student of English?
TOMASZ: hm ((sound of thinking))
LORNA: do you think you are a good student?
TOMASZ: I don't know, I can't describe myself, maybe someone else? ((laughs))
LORNA: do you think Alina is a good student?
TOMASZ: yes for me Alina is a good student. She helps every student if anybody wants help to spelling, for something right
LORNA: especially
TOMASZ: a little bit quiet, but is ok. Rose is good
LORNA: yes Rose
ALINA: Samira
TOMASZ: Yes, Samira, Adrian
LORNA: and why are they good? Is it because they speak a lot?
TOMASZ: no, speak good, write good
LORNA: what do you think Ivan, what is it to be a good English student? Do you think people in class are good students, do they work hard, do they do their homework?
IVAN: I think better coming to class than home, in home you just (.) make the homework,
LORNA: yeah, homework can [be
IVAN: [in school, spelling spelling
LORNA: so do you think there should be more schools like this, would you recommend this is as a good place to study?
TOMASZ: yeah, there should be more places like this cos many people waiting for this school, how many people? They should make more something like this.
LORNA: and is one year good, one year five days a week?

TOMASZ: it's ok, not too much
LORNA: do you not get tired?
TOMASZ: sometimes, but like when we was young, we studied in school seven hours
LORNA: that's true
TOMASZ: and em, well now is ok, four hours is very good
LORNA: and do you think you become like a child in the classroom, do you behave like when you were at school ((laughter))
IVAN: not like child, like student
LORNA: so are you happy learning English in Ireland, are people helpful in Dublin when you try to speak English?
TOMASZ: people?
LORNA: yeah, like on the bus or in shops, are people nice?
ALINA: yes, sometimes I speak in the shop, customer service, maybe problem, and uh, speak at the doctors, speak maybe about my daughter, because before, nothing speaking! ((laughs)). Now I speak little and more confident, little little
LORNA: was that before coming to this school?
ALINA: yes
LORNA: and what about you, Ivan?
ALINA: now is ok. On the bus.
LORNA: are people friendly when you try to speak and get it wrong, or are they nice?
IVAN: Irish? Very nice, em
ALINA: sincere?
LORNA: sincere
ALINA: sincere
IVAN: yeah
LORNA: are they?
IVAN: yeah
LORNA: that's good. And have they been nice to you
IVAN: in the Social, um, ((laughter)), not like me, Social Welfare, Social
IVAN: very good, very calm, very (.) it's good
LORNA: so no problems, no bad experiences
IVAN: no bad experiences
TOMASZ: no bad experiences
LORNA: because you have good experiences with your landlord
TOMASZ: oh yeah, [very
ALINA: [is very
TOMASZ: [very very good, and now he goes to the Thailand for half years, half year in Ireland, half year in Thailand
LORNA: what a life!
TOMASZ: I think he has family there, I never ask him
LORNA: yeah
TOMASZ: but now coming the, the second landlord, there will be a change, but landlord very good too
LORNA: what about your children
TOMASZ: my big one very good, everything without problem, cheers, thank you, bye, everything. Funny. Understands small area.
LORNA: and your son as well, he has been saying some English, what does he say?
IVAN: he, on TV yesterday, said cuckoo, not thank you, cuckoo ((laughter))
TOMASZ: cuckoo! And how old?
IVAN: two years and three months
TOMASZ: hhmm, mine is one and a half
IVAN: and said, bye bye, hi, how are you. No other.
LORNA: ( )
IVAN: impressive speak
LORNA: do they watch Irish television?
IVAN: yeah, children
TOMASZ: yeah, my boys
IVAN: ( )
TOMASZ: watch uh
LORNA: cartoons

TOMASZ: cartoons
IVAN: Po, Tinky Winky, uh
LORNA: oh, what are they called?
TOMASZ: Teletubbies
IVAN: yeah, Teletubbies
TOMASZ: Bear
LORNA: Big Blue Bear?
TOMASZ: Big Blue House?
TOMASZ: Bear in the Big Blue House, yeah
IVAN: Big Blue House, yes
TOMASZ: they loves this
IVAN: ((chuckles)) yeah
TOMASZ: yeah, and he watch the, uh, Simpson
((laughter))
TOMASZ: Oh my God, they kill me, every night, 6 o'clock, oh Daddy Simpsons
Simpsons!
LORNA: do you watch The Simpsons with them?
TOMASZ: sometimes, yeah ((laughs))
ALINA: Tom and Jerry
LORNA: Tom and Jerry
ALINA: ((laughs)) every day every day Tom and Jerry or Baby
LORNA: baby?
ALINA: baby, uh B-A-B-E ((spells it))
LORNA: oh, the little pig
ALINA: yeah
TOMASZ: ((laughs))
ALINA: the pig speak, the dog speak,
LORNA: that's funny, it's cute
ALINA: the sheep, uh, pig, duck, every, uh, cow, horse, very nice
LORNA: that's a nice cartoon. Do you understand everything on the cartoons?
TOMASZ: yeah the cartoons are very easy to understand. Simpsons for me is very
difficult
ALINA: yeah
TOMASZ: because it's for big children I think
LORNA: big children like us, adults
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: all my friends watch The Simpsons ((laughs))
TOMASZ: the big blue house is easy too, and teletubbies
LORNA: the teletubbies, but they speak a funny English, it's not really English
TOMASZ: baby English
LORNA: they say, do it again, one more time
IVAN: and bear in the big blue house.
LORNA: and do you go, I know you go to the cinema
TOMASZ: yeah I do
LORNA: quite a lot
IVAN: sometimes, then one time for three months
LORNA: yeah
TOMASZ: I was Saturday
LORNA: so, how was The Matrix?
TOMASZ: the third Matrix, very good. The best in parts
LORNA: really
TOMASZ: more action,
LORNA: ok
TOMASZ: it was ok, very good
LORNA: where you happy with the end?
TOMASZ: I don't tell you! ((laughs))
LORNA: no no don't tell me, I don't want to know! Did you like the end?
TOMASZ: it was ok, um, ah you'll see.
LORNA: I'll have to go. Have you seen the Matrix?

IVAN: just 5 minutes, how do you say?
LORNA: trailer
IVAN: trailer?
LORNA: trailer
TOMASZ: I watched the, the, the trailer about the Matrix, it takes 3 years to make the film, yeah many people works on the film, 1000 people make everything. The pictures, the photos, the, uh (.)
ALINA: ground?
TOMASZ: the ground, the machines everything. Oh my God. Many many people.
LORNA: I have to go and see it. What are you going to see next?
TOMASZ: next, uh, The Lord of the Rings
LORNA: oh yes, me too
TOMASZ: the Matrix made by two Polish guy, two Polish brothers
LORNA: yes?
TOMASZ: Warowski
LORNA: what's their name again?
TOMASZ: Warowski ((says it slowly))
LORNA: and are they second generation Polish?
TOMASZ: no, Polish
LORNA: Polish Polish
TOMASZ: Polish Polish
LORNA: what about you, do you like the cinema?
ALINA: mmm, no, but before I was married
LORNA: really, before you were married?
ALINA: yes, now no
LORNA: oh dear!
ALINA: ((laughs))
TOMASZ: it's the kids, yeah
LORNA: do you watch television in the evening, do you watch the news [or
ALINA: [I watch the news morning, and
LORNA: which programmes do you watch?
ALINA: afternoon, Discovery
LORNA: oh yes, Discovery, it's good
TOMASZ: yeah, it's great
LORNA: interesting
ALINA: Discovery, and maybe film, but I don't like because the time
LORNA: in the evenings. Does your family watch television or the news, do you watch Sky News [or
IVAN: [Well, like Euronews every morning,
LORNA: Euronews
IVAN: Euronews
ALINA: Euronews
LORNA: every morning?
IVAN: every morning. And movies
((door knocks, L says come in, someone comes in to get a glass of water))
LORNA: you like movies on TV? Are there any good ones on this week?
IVAN: sorry?
LORNA: any good movies at the moment?
IVAN: nothing today, maybe Friday Saturday Sunday better movies
LORNA: there is always something on on Saturday night at 9 o'clock
IVAN: yes
LORNA: always something good on TV3 or
ALINA: or uh, TG4
LORNA: yes TG4, the Irish, do you ever watch the Irish channel?
((laughter))
TOMASZ: sometime, maybe one minute
IVAN: mm ((laughs))
LORNA: you too? And then go, I don't understand!
TOMASZ: I, uh, have satellite
LORNA: satellite

TOMASZ: sometimes in the mornings I watch cartoons with the kids, satellite
((door knocks, LORNA says come in, someone looks in and leaves again))
LORNA: and the kids are big TV ( )
TOMASZ: yeah
LORNA: is satellite expensive?
TOMASZ: I have it from my country, my mum sent for me, she pays over there
LORNA: really
TOMASZ: yeah!
ALINA: very nice, ((laughs))
TOMASZ: it's not very expensive
LORNA: I know that Neda watches a lot of satellite TV
TOMASZ: I have maybe 25 channels
LORNA: 25 channels in Polish
TOMASZ: in Polish, maybe 7 in Polish, and the others, what's the name?
IVAN: translate?
TOMASZ: translated, I have English, I have Euronews, Russia, 150.
LORNA: so what are you doing for Christmas then? I know you are going back to Poland
TOMASZ: Poland, very nice, make party, 25th, I uh, invite my family, all my family. Maybe me and wife we go in some party for New Year, and we come back
LORNA: back to school
LORNA: what are you doing Ivan for Christmas and New Year, do you have plans?
IVAN: no plans at the moment
LORNA: do you know what you are doing?
ALINA: staying
IVAN: I want to go to Moldova,
ALINA: but very expensive, the ticket from uh
LORNA: how much is it
ALINA: 1000 euros, for [uh
IVAN: [for how many, three, four
ALINA: 1120 euro for three people, for family, I or husband or uh
IVAN: daughter, yeah
TOMASZ: is very expensive
LORNA: it is very expensive
ALINA: mm, expensive
TOMASZ: but you need to buy before, to buy 2 months ago the ticket
ALINA: yeah
TOMASZ: now is very expensive, everyone buys it now, the ticket, must pay €700 for one person
LORNA: €700 for one person! For €700 you could go to Australia or India [or
IVAN: [From where?
TOMASZ: from here to Poland
IVAN: yeah?
TOMASZ: if you want to buy now the ticket
IVAN: ah now
TOMASZ: ((laughs))
IVAN: just one way or two ways?
TOMASZ: two ways
IVAN: and just one people, 700? Huh.
LORNA: isn't that expensive?
IVAN: not expensive?
LORNA: it is expensive
IVAN: Moldova now is €490, return
TOMASZ: now?
IVAN: now for December
LORNA: but still, that is €500 for you, and then your wife and then the children
IVAN: yes
LORNA: that would be the same as €1500 for the three of you. Maybe next year?
ALINA: maybe next year
LORNA: everyday you put one euro in a box

ALINA: ((laughs)) yeah, I have a (hippopotame), my daughter, (hippopotame) you put every day the uh money, change?
LORNA: yep, change
ALINA: the change, one change, two change, three change in (hippopotame)
LORNA: that's a good idea actually. I keep in a box one cents, two cents and five cents, all brown coins.
TOMASZ: yeah, I do the same, and big big
IVAN: ( )
TOMASZ: no no no no, what is the name of the metal,
LORNA: like tin, tincan?
LORNA: then nearly every two months you have ten euros
TOMASZ: put it all on the table all at once
LORNA: good for Christmas presents for your children
IVAN: mm
LORNA: do your children know you come to school? What do they think?
TOMASZ: Yeah, he say all day, don't please don't go. Maybe I say, I go the school I buy for you sweets when I come back, ok ok go! And that way, he uh, lets me go to school! ((laughter)). When I say nothing, he cry, yeah. And he go to the door and stay like that, don't go don't go! I say my wife, em, take him the home.
LORNA: does your little boy know you come to school?
IVAN: no. He doesn't understand. But don't like when I go, anytime. Is not important if for school. He like outside, like me, driving, like me. Outside outside. I think everything children like outside. Driving. I buy bicycle, oh no! very good driver.
TOMASZ: I have too bicycle for my boy. My sister, uh, buy for him a present. Small bicyle, very good. ((laughs)). Before he not know what's to do, I show him. He can, he don't know to (.)
LORNA: steer?
TOMASZ: steer, he go straight on, and ((makes noise of falling)) oh my God! Mummy explain him to take straight.
LORNA: very good!
LORNA: does your daughter mind you going to school?
ALINA: no, it's ok. She love very much my husband! ((laughs)) in the morning
LORNA: that's good.
ALINA: sometime she start why you go to school, stay at home.
LORNA: imagine in 5 years they will speak brilliant English, perfect English
TOMASZ: my kid 6 years second class he speak very good
LORNA: like yesterday, Paul's son called. What age is he, 15?
IVAN: yes, 15 years
LORNA: and he talked on the telephone to Susan, and he asked, How's me da at school? Susan said he had a perfect Dublin accent. She was amazed.
TOMASZ: Hm. I have some friend in London, when I was in London I worked in London in a garage. He has one friend, maybe eighteen years, nineteen years, he speak maybe 10 languages, he speak Polish, Russian, Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, he say he wants to study. I dunno, nineteen years is good.
LORNA: isn't that good?
TOMASZ: fantastic
LORNA: your kids will speak perfect English and Polish, and Romanian and English.
TOMASZ: now for children is very important, 2 3 languages if you know them, is very important.
LORNA: for working on computers or call centres, it's important. But it is difficult isn't it? It's easy for children to learn a language.
ALINA: my daughter in playschool, three years, two years and 10 months,
TOMASZ: my boy maybe (.) and come back
ALINA: four euros, one day, every day four euros.
TOMASZ: thirty euros for one week.
ALINA: and twenty five euro social welfare, difference paid.
TOMASZ: where is in the playschool?
ALINA: in Rathmines, nursery centre.

TOMASZ: I have to ask the place, there are many many children waiting
LORNA: waiting lists?
TOMASZ: yeah, waiting lists
TOMASZ: fifty euro per week, and my wife was pregnant, one hundred fifty euro
LORNA: someone here was sending his children to a creche in Ballsbridge, 800 euro a month
ALINA: It's very expensive
LORNA: that is the price of an apartment
ALINA: crazy
IVAN: democratic, democrat
LORNA: yes, we need a democratic system, 30 euros per child
TOMASZ: but is private
LORNA: they will learn perfect English in playschool
TOMASZ: is very expensive
LORNA: children are expensive
ALINA: mm
LORNA: especially at Christmas time
TOMASZ: oh yeah, not maybe now but in five years, when they understand
LORNA: they will soon understand
TOMASZ: maybe
LORNA: ( )
TOMASZ: I called to my mum, she said, when you coming, when you coming, come on. Everything is ready. So so, don't worry. She buy everything, sweet, for the kids, three. My father check everything, everything is all right, everything is working. The lights, the electrics, we are coming.
LORNA: that's lovely
TOMASZ: mm
LORNA: a nice Christmas. So what are your plans until then, what is next week in school? Do you know what you are going to do?
TOMASZ: mm, we have the targets for this week
IVAN: yes
TOMASZ: and on Friday we choose something else for next week
LORNA: how many weeks?
TOMASZ: four?
IVAN: four, five
LORNA: very short
TOMASZ: sixteen weeks
LORNA: and then you finish in January?
TOMASZ: no no no
ALINA: start January four
IVAN: five, fifth
ALINA: fifth
TOMASZ: fifth of January
LORNA: time to move on, you have made progress
ALINA: new students
LORNA: do you like the idea of new students, new teacher?
TOMASZ: ((laughs))
IVAN: little
TOMASZ: when you learn all the names of the students ((laughs)), ok
LORNA: do you like change, [or
TOMASZ: [I don't like, I don't like change
LORNA: Alina, are you the same?
ALINA: no like change, the teacher, the students, it's ok now.
LORNA: you're happy now
ALINA: yeah. Understand everybody, understand, I speak, understand ((laughs)). Because, and I, now, change the teacher, change the students, no speak.
LORNA: yeah it can be difficult can't it. And then new targets when you change, it is more difficult English, more grammar,
TOMASZ: mm
ALINA: mm

LORNA: are there some days when it is just too difficult, when you are tired?
TOMASZ: in this class?
LORNA: yes and you just can't understand, or is it usually ok?
TOMASZ: grand
LORNA: are there some days when it is too easy?
TOMASZ: too easy? No
TOMASZ: past few weeks, two weeks, is easy
LORNA: I think we are almost at the end of the tape. How much more is there to go?
IVAN: five minutes
LORNA: five minutes?

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcript of audio interview 2

Present:	NEDA, NICOLAE, ROSE
Location:	Student common room, IILT
Date:	11th November 2003
Interviewer:	LORNA CARSON
Duration:	c.55 minutes

LORNA: Last week I had a sheet of paper with questions, but this week I forgot it! I started by asking people what they thought of the new school. What do you think?
NEDA: Everybody start me and Rose!
NEDA: yeah, you're right!
ROSE: I think is not too bad, is nice place, is clean, is too much buses
NICOLAE: too much cars outside!
ROSE: sorry?
NICOLAE: outside, you know?
ROSE: with windows, uh, is nice, I like it. The toilet is very clean, big, and big too. Is ok.
LORNA: the classroom is quite small though
NICOLAE: the classroom is small
ROSE: yeah
NEDA: all classes equal?
LORNA: I think some classes are bigger. I'm not sure which ones.
NEDA: is very nice, because very near my house, ten minutes in the bus
LORNA: do you walk?
NEDA: no ((laughs)) don't like walk!
NICOLAE: don't like walk!
NEDA: I get very tired and very hungry. I, um, get to the bus and the, I wait, 30 minutes, not walk! No, I wait 30 minutes in station bus
LORNA: But if you walked it would take you 10 minutes!
NEDA: yeah, but don't like. Very hungry!
LORNA: oh Neda!
((laughter))
LORNA: I think Alina walks.
NEDA: Alina, yes. Yesterday I told Alina come with me, my husband um, in the car, my husband no no no walk!
ROSE: yeah yeah
LORNA: keeps you fit. How long does it take you to come from your house to school?
NICOLAE: it's (.) twenty minutes in the bus from my house
LORNA: that's quite good
LORNA: and are you the same? About twenty minutes?
ROSE: yes, about twenty minutes. I have to walk from my house to, to O'Connell St, maybe five minutes. Five or seven minutes. And then I get the seven, the number seven or the five or the 46. I don't like to ( )
LORNA: the 45 also comes, although today I walked
ROSE: it seven or five, usually seven. Or seven A
LORNA: and have you had anything to eat, lunch or coffee or anything?
NEDA: I think this is good because, um, open area, not same as old school
NICOLAE: what was uh here before?
LORNA: it was veterinary school
NICOLAE: what?
LORNA: for vets, animal doctor
NICOLAE: ah, animal doctor
LORNA: my friend worked here, that's why back there it smells, there is a smell of chemicals, and I think it was a place for dogs and cars. Part of a university.
NICOLAE: so like Trinity College?
LORNA: yes, but before it was UCD, other university.
NICOLAE: ah
LORNA: and then Trinity bought it. I like it
ROSE: it's a nice place
LORNA: as we say, not too bad!
((laughter))
LORNA: so do you think at the moment you are making progress in learning English?
ROSE: yes
NICOLAE: yes
ROSE: yes
LORNA: good. In what way?

NICOLAE: in some new words, now I speak a great deal, maybe ( )
LORNA: Yeah, I think so too
NEDA: also grammar English, before I can't speak any words, I think now good for me!
LORNA: how long have you been coming now?
NEDA: mm, sorry?
LORNA: how long have you been a student here?
NEDA: I think seven months now, or, because, after come to school, I can't speak any words because, before, I don't like English ((laughs)) yeah! In my country I don't like English. I don't know, um, how, um, in the school my country learn little speak English, in exam I look in my friends, take words. Now, I like!
ROSE yeah, English, a little, no, just dialogue and uh, questions, where what, this, oh my God English!
LORNA: and now it's completely different?
NEDA: yeah, more words and uh, the grammar, and I don't like spelling tests! But now happy because you come with me! ((laughs))
NICOLAE: don't like English because it is hard, you know, but is very important for the (.) this is first language in the world, very important. If you come, living here, what's the word?
LORNA: obligatory?
NICOLAE: yeah obligatory
LORNA: do you think, do you find it difficult to learn?
ROSE: No, easy, it's not too much difficult for me because in my country we learn English in the school
NICOLAE: you learn English?
ROSE: yes, uh, but, um,
NICOLAE: why you don't speak English more?
ROSE: because I wasn't too much (interess)
LORNA: interested?
ROSE: yeah, about English, I remember, we have one book, English for Africa. Every day when I saw that, I thought, ah, this again
((laughter))
ROSE: because you know, in my country, when you think about Europe, you see only Paris or Belgium or maybe Switzerland, not Ireland, you know? You can't think one day you will be in Ireland or America. For my country, just Europe, and that Europe is only France, or Belgium because, when you go to school, you have English for Africa, what is English for Africa? But when I came here, I, I spoke only, hi, hello, no hi, good morning, how are you, my name is
NICOLAE: maybe?
ROSE: no, maybe is first! ((laughs))
NEDA: new word!
ROSE: when I start to learn English, maybe is the first word I really really like
LORNA: really?
ROSE: yeah, maybe, strong, word like that!
((laughter))
ROSE: I love you!
NEDA: ((laughs)) I think this more used for cinema!
NICOLAE: yeah!
LORNA: why did you have to learn that?
NEDA: mm!
ROSE: yeah, it's like that, when you go somewhere, how can I say I love you, or I don't like you, or, you know I'm a woman [and
NEDA: [listen to you (.) for Rose
((laughter))
ROSE: yeah, yeah, but now I think I've improved my English now, more for writing, and uh, for speaking, because I have one old friend, he is Irish, he saw me the first day when I came in Ireland, and uh, sometimes we talk each other, that's last week, when he speak with me by phone he say, oh Rose, you speak English now! ((laughs)) he says oh, that school is fine for you! I think

now is ok, I can explain something, if I'm angry I can scream in English, because before, if I was angry, I speak in French. *Non je veux pas, laise-moi tranquille!* But now I can say something

LORNA: ((someone comes into the room)) come in, we're just making a tape, but you can have a drink (.) ok

ROSE: now is ok, I can talk with you, if someone call me and speak English I don't care, I say, I can talk, but before when someone called me on my phone, I say, I'm sorry I don't speak very well. I start always by that, I'm sorry I don't speak very well English. Oh, is ok, is ok! But not now, I can talk, it's ok.

LORNA: because you came to church with me in English

ROSE: yes, it was ok, I understand when the pastor talk about Bible, about (.) and I can understand when I watch TV some news or some movies, yeah, because my sister-in-law, she is from Kenya and she speak very well English, before when I watch a movie, I want always stay with her, what is it? ((laughter))

NEDA: same for me, I ask always my husband, what's happened? ((laughs))

ROSE: say, stop stop stop if it is a video, what is the matter now? now is ok, now is ok, yesterday I watched Nigerian movies, I understand everything! I understand everything now! The accent is a little bit different, you know, but I understand.

NEDA: sometimes new words

ROSE: like, I'm going to kill you today

NICOLAE: I don't understand when somebody speak very big, different words, for me it is not easy. It is very good for me (( ))

LORNA: that's good, because they speak very quickly

NICOLAE: and the uh, English teams, American films, Irish, sometimes words, the accent, for it's ( ) now, I want, uh, I read the book and the newspapers

ROSE: that is very important, some books, newspapers, watching TV, is very important, in English, and sometimes, you know the, the movies like, Eastenders or Coronation Street, yeah, is nice because you can put the, the (.)

NEDA: text

ROSE: yeah, text, this is good at the same time, you can read

NEDA: and look

ROSE: you know, the words like, come here, close the door, what happened, you understand, it's like that, you can write it (.) shut up! ((laughter))

ROSE: the good things and the bad things

LORNA: the bad things!

ROSE: shut up!

LORNA: always murder

ROSE: always murder or something like that,

NEDA: for me now, satellite Arabic, film with the write English, speak Arabic, write English. This very nice for me, for English

ROSE: English translation

NEDA: this very nice, I, yeah. I see and listen Arabic and see what's word

ROSE: what the word is in English

NEDA: good

LORNA: because like in Belgium, you have TV in Dutch, and I don't speak Dutch, but it is written

NEDA: same in dictionary, you take the word,

LORNA: yeah you see, it writes like this

LORNA: but you learned French very quickly

NICOLAE: me, yeah, because I worked in France. I didn't go to school, just working and speaking. Some people ( )

LORNA: Do you think that helps you learn English, because you have learned French?

NICOLAE: yeah, yeah

LORNA: you see similar words

NICOLAE: yeah, sometimes it's the same words, the same thing, very good

LORNA: ((knock at door)) yes, come in, we are just making a tape but you can have a drink if you want

NICOLAE: and I think in one year times, will be very good for me, many more English, good.

LORNA: do you think English is easier to learn than French?

NICOLAE: easy

ROSE: Easy, English is easy to learn than French, because I think, em, for English, when you know very well the past, the present and the future, I think it is big key for you. When you speak French, French is plenty of things, you know? *Passé simple, futur composé*

NICOLAE: it is too much

NEDA: the grammar?

ROSE: yeah, and in French when you can't understand grammar you can't speak

NICOLAE: grammar is everything in French

ROSE: but it is not in English, English, when you know very well the past, the present or the future and the crazy verb, learn

NEDA: crazy verb ((laughs))

ROSE: like that, crazy verb, irregular verb, that is very important, you can speak English.

NEDA: English needs mind, mind, take more and more words and mind grammar. I don't know for French ((laughs))

ROSE: for French you need to know very very well, because anything in French is for woman and for man

NEDA: change woman and man? Oh!

ROSE: you can't say, you know in English you can say, father, you know, the father, the mother, but in French is not like that. You have to say *le papa, la maman, une fille, un garcon,* everything is two two two two two

NEDA: male and female

ROSE: yeah! Everything, *une radio cassette, une bouteille,* but in French. Bottle, tape, is easy!

LORNA: do you think it is easy to learn English or is it quite difficult?

NEDA: English? For me, start difficult, different, and now, no for me, is easier. No everything easy, or grammar now I think good for me, or just new words, sometimes the big words, I can't speak the words. Yeah, because, mm, sometimes, some words in Arabic, difficult for me, and in English! Difficult and different. Or now, I think good, ((laughs)).

LORNA: do you enjoy coming to class and learning?

ROSE: yes

NEDA: sorry?

LORNA: do you enjoy coming to class?

NEDA: yeah, yeah

ROSE: yes and Susan is very very nice

NEDA: very nice

ROSE: nice teacher

NEDA: good teacher

ROSE: is, when she teach you in, how you say that, she show you that, she wants you to know something from her. You know, when I say I don't understand, she comes, she explains

NICOLAE: she helps

ROSE: she helps you, she is good teacher

LORNA: and what about the way we learn things in class, the way we do things, with the folders, and targets, and tests and things

ROSE: yeah, we are, is good, and Susan give us that right to choose what we need, that is very important. You know, sometimes she can say, what do you want to do now? You know? She can't say, oh now is only grammar. No, she say to you, what do you want? Do you want grammar?

NEDA: chooses

ROSE: Chooses. No, we are free to do whatever we want. That is very very important.

NICOLAE: Somebody want grammar, somebody want revision

NEDA: yeah, is nice teacher
ROSE: she makes everything, maybe you want grammar, I want only spelling test, and she make three or five things with different persons.
NEDA: yeah
ROSE: it's great
NICOLAE: I prefer to *mélange* this course with the computer, together, I think it is very important. I think two half days, you know, and two hours the day for computer is very important
NEDA: yes
LORNA: do you have computers?
ROSE: yes we have computer school
LORNA: in this new building?
NEDA: On Thursdays
NICOLAE: Thursdays
ROSE: but I can't call that computer school, because I learn computer school. What we do in uh, computer class
NICOLAE: no, but because you learn before, you know
ROSE: that's why I said, listen
NICOLAE: and the, for the people who start this school, is very important
ROSE: you know, what you say, that is not the starting computer, you know why? Because I can ask you something about computer, only the word, maybe you can't say to me this is a mouse, this is a monitor, this is a keyboard, you know
NEDA: yeah
ROSE: they give you only computer and you say, right, what's is this? It's not enough.
LORNA: mm
ROSE: in my opinion is not enough, is not computer school, [we
NEDA: [I think
ROSE: *passe-temps, comme on dit en français*, but this is my opinion, is better to get one computer, computer's teacher, someone who can teach us the beginning of computers. Because now, maybe if I finish my English school here, I have to learn more computers again, and after that maybe I can say I'm looking for a job. You speak English? Ok, but what do you know again? I can say I know how to ((makes sound of typing))
NICOLAE: But you have to go in other school, maybe half year, if you want to learn uh
NEDA: only English
ROSE: you are a man maybe, you are married, that is your problem, but I am a woman, maybe I am married next year. I can't go to school again for computers!
NICOLAE: no no no, not yet, because (.) my friend, starting new school,
NEDA: Computer
NICOLAE: computer and English, you know? Because this school very small, he starting before. Now he speak very good, he learning and writing, and also very good computer, you know? I think he after four months.
ROSE: you don't understand me!
NEDA: one hour, come to school, start the school, just learn computer, teach computer
ROSE: fine, but if we are left only to what we are doing, last time
LORNA: yes, and you see, Chen never saw computer before, Ivan never saw a computer before, never did anything, so for them it is a very different beginning, just to be able to say, this is a computer, you can do this
ROSE: [write some letter, how to do this task, it's very important
LORNA: [but for you
NICOLAE: I think for Rose, she's now, she want to do more, because me and somebody like me, nothing (.) and for you you want progress
NEDA: yeah
NICOLAE: because no stay in this class, going on
((laughter))
LORNA: you're too good!
NICOLAE: yeah!
LORNA: but do you like the things like the spelling tests, thirty new words

NEDA: ((laughs)) I don't like this! ((laughs))
ROSE: I think this for writing, because when you learn some language you have to know how to speak and how to write it, and how to read it. It's three things very very important. When Susan talks about spelling tests, it's nice because I think, now if I can write or read, it is for that. You know? Because I can say 'Ruthless, Ruthless? Yeah Ruthless. But if someone say to me, can you write Ruthless ((group laughter)) I can't! Shame, you know! ((laughter)) Yeah. It's shame. You know I have one friend by internet, he's from, uh, Algerian. And he gave me his phone number. I call him. Sometimes when he send me some mails, his French is very bad, you know, very very bad. And one day when I call him, he speak very very, when he speak French you can think maybe he is a Frenchman. *Oui, ca va, comment tu vas, moi je suis bien*. But that day, I say, my God, why he can't write very well French, but he speak very very well French.
NEDA: yeah
LORNA: so you want to write well
NICOLAE: yes yes
ROSE: you write and you read and you speak
NICOLAE: *pratique*
ROSE: spelling test, you have to write them, is [very very
NEDA: [I think I know is important, the writing and the um, or I don't know why, because, the origin, I don't like English! This don't help me. You understand me?
ROSE: I understand.
NEDA: because you not like, or must learn English. No you like this, you like learn, for me I like cook! Everything for me, special cook, I read and I examine
NICOLAE: I think in my opinion in one year's for people is good learning language. Because before in my country someone come to live in ( ) and before he living in you know, not Russian region. One year, and in one year time, he speak very good Russian. Very easy you know, this is for [me
ROSE: [my first teacher in Donegal (.) people come here only because, you know, social say, oh go looking for a job, and they say, oh no, I want to go to school, I want stay. Some people, I'm not sure, but some people say I'm only here because Social give me money. They think maybe they only come for uh, you [know
NICOLAE: [somebody is enough, driver
ROSE: but that is not good
NICOLAE: why?
ROSE: listen, if you don't like the work. Listen to me please, when you friend say to you, for me it is enough because I am a driver, English
ROSE: you can say to him, is no good. Is no good.
NICOLAE: why?
ROSE: maybe he can lose that job
NICOLAE: no, he not lose the job
NEDA: please!
ROSE: remember, you never know, today you are president, tomorrow maybe. ((laughter))
I told you
LORNA: I think for some people, they think they only need to learn a small amount of English, but as you say, in general that is not good because
ROSE: yeah, you need to know everything about life
NEDA: this national language, the English
NICOLAE: national? No. Is first language I think, but national
NEDA: first, national
NICOLAE: now now yes, English is first language, but before Irish, because now, normally it's because Europe
LORNA: the two languages are both national languages
NEDA: in the world, how many languages? In the world, English
LORNA: in the world?
NEDA: in the world, English, yeah!

LORNA: but what you are saying is right, 20% learning English isn't good enough really for a real life, because

ROSE: [because, maybe you can lose

NICOLAE: [but no

ROSE: [no, but you are not able

LORNA: hang on, just listen to Rose, I think I agree

ROSE: maybe you say your friend is you know, and if he speak just a little English is no for him because, uh, he have €200 a week, is not enough. Maybe he can make cash, you know? He lose, maybe he lose his leg

NICOLAE: he have to

ROSE: PLEASE! He have to look for, uh, somethings, he can't drive

NICOLAE: if he lose his leg, it's for social pay!

ROSE: oh my God! If you can think like that you are a man, you know

NEDA: yeah! Sometimes need speak English

ROSE: he's a driver! If today he go to hospital

NICOLAE: no

ROSE: [he have to speak

NEDA: [yeah

ROSE: [and this and this and that, and my wife, you know?

LORNA: I think what Rose is saying is that it is always good to learn the language of the country

ROSE: ok, yeah

NEDA: shy, you feel shy because everyone speak with you and you,

ROSE: yeah you (know)

NEDA: and you no speak English

NICOLAE: don't like, coming to school, for learning. For learning. If you don't want to stay in home and can't no work, then is good, but

ROSE: that is good for for them maybe. If I say that to you because I don't like you to agree with that mentality, you know? I want you to explain them that that is not good. Because maybe if you think like them, maybe one day

ROSE: you say to us, oh, I have my job, bye bye Rose. No!

LORNA: but you think if you carry on in school, in one year you will speak good English?

ROSE: yes

NICOLAE: yes

ROSE: it's you, it's your mind, [it's

NICOLAE: [for me I want to learning very good. If I want, *si je peux*

LORNA: if you can

NICOLAE: yeah, if I can. I think for somebody is very important, for somebody not very important. Practising is important.

LORNA: do you think you are quite motivated?

NICOLAE: yes, I want, for me, I want to learn, uh, 80%

ROSE: 100%!
((laughter))

NICOLAE: no, because 100%. Because I don't speak Romanian 100%. Some words I don't understand in Romanian. Is my mother language and I don't understand. In this school, I speak Russian, you know, and at home I speak Romanian.

LORNA: and with us you speak French

NEDA: more language!

NICOLAE: for me, some words Romanian. For me, nobody speak very good Russian 100%. Romanian, some words, Alina speak I ask Alina, you know, about bad words, because you know, I don't *pratique* this. I don't think I will speak English 100% in Ireland. Maybe my my my children will speak, no me.

ROSE: of course, they are Irish

NICOLAE: yeah,

LORNA: just enough

LORNA: so would you say you are quite, you are motivated at the moment to learn English?

ROSE: yes, yes

NICOLAE: because he, she, want to work, she want to work before, after this schooll,
and you know, what do you do. Special place.
LORNA: you know where you are going.
NICOLAE: Speaking with some people about, you know, and me, I don't know, maybe driver
ROSE: if you are driver you have to speak English, because you are a driver here.
Maybe you have some problem, if Garda came, you can say, I'm drive!
NEDA: everyone still live here needs speak English, for me, example, go to the Holland, must learn language Holland. Yeah? Because I, uh, speak with everyone.
NICOLAE: because I am one brother, he (.) he working in my country teacher of
mathematics, and he says, no place for me in Ireland for working in a school. Is very difficult you know? For some people, Irish people is difficult, for me is very difficult. Learning English, then after learning something else, you know, is very very difficult. And maybe for driver, is not job for all
LORNA: we need drivers
NICOLAE: and for my brother, yeah in school, very very difficult
LORNA: so that's his target?
NICOLAE: he speak now very very good English
LORNA: maybe in the future.
NICOLAE: I don't know
LORNA: so what are your target this week in class?
ROSE: new words, writing letters
NICOLAE: only!
NEDA: very busy this week
NICOLAE: more important words, after special words,
LORNA: what is the spelling test this week?
NEDA: health
LORNA: bronchitis!
NEDA: chicken pox! ((laughs)) for me very easy to remember, chicken, kitchen. Em, husband Alina (.) uh, Tatjana, the chicken pox.
LORNA: and Tatjana had the chicken pox?
NEDA: has them
LORNA: and what are your targets for next term in Susan's class, long term targets or maybe for after school, once you finish learning English? Do you have ambitions or targets?
ROSE: yes
NEDA: ((laughs))
NICOLAE: yes
LORNA: what's your target?
ROSE: my first target is I want to learn very very well, I want to speak very very well English. I want to speak English like an English woman. Then, looking for a job, like receptionist, or call centre
NICOLAE: yes you need to speak English for a call centre,
ROSE: maybe I can learn another language too, maybe Dutch, or
NICOLAE: yes, but English French is very good
NICOLAE: very nice hotel you know, five stars
LORNA: what about you Nicolae?
NICOLAE: I don't know, I can't now, I don't know the future
LORNA: do you think you'll stay for one year?
NICOLAE: For now I don't think about the future,
LORNA: just one year learning English, and then?
NICOLAE: maybe I want to, you know, change jobs, I don't know. I don't like too much this country, you know, cold, I prefer to live in France. Very good country, for me, because I know the (language)
LORNA: do you think you will stay in school for the 12 months?
ROSE: yes
NEDA: I think no
NICOLAE: yes, but if I have good job
LORNA: if a good job comes along. So you don't think you'll stay, Neda?

NEDA: no, for me, not twelve months, maybe sixteen
LORNA: ok, so longer
NEDA: but I'm not sure, this because I felt no good, little good, little! I know myself, yeah, or after finish here, I go to the other school, learn English, language English and computer in city centre
LORNA: Jervis Street
NEDA: this nice I think. Yeah, after this I looking for work, to use computer. No cashier, no any work. No I want work good. Computer, I like this. When in my country I like computer but I can't buy computer in my country because very expensive.
NICOLAE: and this other school, it is for what people?
LORNA: for people from here, next level, it's the Jervis St
NICOLAE: now, for me? What's it called?
LORNA: I think it is vocational, or pre-vocational (.) English for specific jobs. I think you need to be a higher level here, and then you can move. More computers, maybe
NEDA: eight hours
LORNA: oh is it full time?
NEDA: four hours for learning English, and after this rest, breaktime, after this, four hours just computer
ROSE: where?
NEDA: where is? city centre. Jervis
LORNA: Jervis St
NEDA: beside centre
LORNA: if you ask Susan
NEDA: they take from here, this paper, qualication, yeah?
LORNA: qualification
NEDA: same qualification from here
LORNA: a brochure
NEDA: yeah yeah I think this is ok, take em, take you money for bus, no tickets money every week. And the rest eats some food free. If you want now English, wait, four months, very busy. Very busy.
LORNA: waiting list
NEDA: yeah waiting, no direct
NICOLAE: sometime
NEDA: or good and tell the secretary I want after four month or five month
ROSE: I will ask about it
NEDA: or em more people. Or no just in city centre I think also in Tallaght, and in, three schools, I don't know where is
LORNA: city centre is good for you Rose
ROSE: yes
NEDA: very near your house
LORNA: how would describe a good English student? If you had to describe a good English student to me, what would a good English student do? What are the characteristics of good students?
NEDA: learn
LORNA: learn
ROSE: come to school
LORNA: come to school, yeah!
((laughter))
NEDA: and uh, bag every (day)
LORNA: like in class
NICOLAE: concentrate
NEDA: ((laugh)), bag every work, every day, every grammar
NICOLAE: homework
ROSE: do your homework
NICOLAE: and uh, practice, at home, in the home?
LORNA: at home
ROSE: and speak English every day
ROSE: at home too

NICOLAE: home, uh, my wife
ROSE: you can speak with your wife and your children
NICOLAE: yes, with my children I sometimes speak in English
ROSE: that is important, you know when you have children who speak English, you know, and uh, you can speak English
NICOLAE: I think my children speaking better
((laughter))
ROSE: yeah, that is the children, you know
LORNA: children are good students
NICOLAE: very quick
NEDA: their friends everyone speak English, other house or home
ROSE: to speak English, if you learn English and you go home and you speak, African language or Romanian or Arabic
NICOLAE: yeah, because you are tired! Just not English language
ROSE: is not
NEDA: not good me
NICOLAE: some fifty percent of people in Dublin foreign people, not speak very good English. You know.
LORNA: mm
NICOLAE: in the streets
LORNA: and what makes a good school? Does this school help you learn?
ROSE: yes
NICOLAE: yes
LORNA: what way or why?
NEDA: I don't know, this school big, no small, and I think after three months this summer and in garden and the shopping near, everything better.
LORNA: that's good
NEDA: so come to school
LORNA: what do you think Rose? How does the school help you learn?
ROSE: the teacher is good, help you learn, uh, what again, you know is some things. I don't know if somebody know that, you know when they pay for us the ticket
LORNA: the bus ticket?
ROSE: yes, the bus ticket, is very very important. Because I think if you can buy ticket by yourself maybe most people say oh I'm tired, but when you have your ticket, you know you can go there. It's like, free, you know, every day I can say everything is free apart from coffee money. That is important, how do you call that, in French it is *motivation*
LORNA: motivation
ROSE: yeah, motivation. Everything is free, I can pay my bus, I can pay the school
NEDA: everything is easy here
ROSE: yeah everything is easy here and when you come here, um, and the teacher is kind
NEDA: nice
ROSE: and nice, *tout le monde est gentil*, yeah. That is very very important. When you go somewhere...so you know, everyone is very kind, in French it is *disponible*, *tout le monde est disponible*. Help us, that is very very important. You know, because you can teach us very well, but when you are not kind...it is nothing
NEDA: it is not [like
NICOLAE: [this school is for refugee people, it is very important for the teacher to be kind. Because we have another problem, you know, some people is very tired
NEDA: yeah
ROSE: and when you drive us crazy
LORNA: that's true, because some people don't have time for refugees, in the streets, they are tired, not interested
ROSE: yeah
ROSE: that is the first things I like here, that *facilité*, everything is easy, everything
LORNA: yeah, that's good
NEDA: Politicians here good, when you have some problems

ROSE: when you have some problems you can just call you know, you can just call and say, and they say, oh it's ok

NEDA: is easy and everyone

ROSE: But if is other persons then they say, ok, if you don't come today, tomorrow it is finished!

NICOLAE: ((laughs))

NEDA: yeah

((school bell rings))

NICOLAE: like in my country

ROSE: like in my country, you can't call, you can't [say

NEDA: [or taking just money, they say, come come! This, uh, same my country, take the money, the boss take the money, oh no problem come!

ROSE: no problem

NEDA: take money! ((laughter))

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcript of audio interview 3

Present:	EDUARDO, SAMIRA, ADRIAN
Location:	Student common room, IILT
Date:	18th November 2003
Interviewer:	LORNA CARSON
Duration:	c.60 minutes

LORNA: So, I'm going to tape because then I can go home and write on my computer what you say, and then I'll show you what you say. So it's just questions, it's like a class review, and I just want to know is learning English enjoyable, do you enjoy learning English here?

ADRIAN: did we start?

LORNA: yeah

ADRIAN: it's on?

LORNA: it's recording, it's on. So I just want to know are there times when it's good, are there times when it's bad, learning English, when you are tired [or

ADRIAN: [no, good idea, if 8 hours learning English, but 4 hours per day learning English, ok.

LORNA: yeah

ADRIAN: yeah, you think small

LORNA: do you like coming everyday?

ADRIAN: yeah ok

SAMIRA: because to learn and to knows about the language we must study, we must knows about the language, we, if we work someplace, we learn some course or college, we must, is good for us. Everything that is in this course we learn is good

LORNA: so you think everything is good? Optimist, happy. Is there a red light?

SAMIRA: yes

ADRIAN: it is red light

LORNA: the red light is on

((laughter))

LORNA: this is just for me, for nobocy else in school. And so you think everything is good?

SAMIRA: yes, everything

LORNA: do you think the class is too big or too small, the number of students?

ADRIAN: it's ok

EDUARDO: it's ok

SAMIRA: because our class was nice, we could hear [every

ADRIAN: [I think Lorna ask if it's good, many people in class

LORNA: yes

ADRIAN: so be like 15 people no problem

EDUARDO: fifteen people, good

LORNA: what are your favourite parts, do you like working as a whole class or working face-to-face or small group or working on your own?

ADRIAN: [oh

EDUARDO: [face to face

ADRIAN: nice, you teacher, teacher with you when you start, big group, teacher teach, new, how you say hello, alphabet. I think it's good at start in a big group if you don't know speak English

LORNA: and then

ADRIAN: and then, after a few months, go by face face, or groups, 2 3 people. But I think first time, teacher is hard work with all the class, no separate, to start teach.

LORNA: the first things, small things

ADRIAN: yeah, and after that, after few months, small groups

LORNA: and do you think, is it difficult for four hours at the beginning

EDUARDO: sometimes you get restless

ADRIAN: because you don't know every word in English, is very hard, you know. It is, it is.

SAMIRA: at first it was difficult, at first I heard one word that was easy for me, entrusting. I like

LORNA: trusting?

SAMIRA: entrusting

LORNA: entrusting

SAMIRA: yes, I like it now because, it is a word in English that is easy for me and I like it

LORNA: so you are happier speaking English now?

SAMIRA: yes
LORNA: and do you speak in Arabic in class?
SAMIRA: no
LORNA: with Neda [or
SAMIRA: [no, just English
LORNA: and do you speak in French or Lingala [or
SAMIRA: [yeah, always!
((laughter))
EDUARDO: yeah, no, sometimes
ADRIAN: sometimes because no understand, it's easy to explain, because I think it is ok to explain in which language you understand
LORNA: yes
ADRIAN: if you say a word and no understand, if I say a word and no understand but if Eduardo explain me in French I understand. Easy, ok? Understand
SAMIRA: but Eduardo never speak at the start of the study, and after break speak with his friend, I didn't hear speak.
EDUARDO: I speak my dialect at breaktime, with Rose, Paul
ADRIAN: but you have to speak in English
EDUARDO: at breaktime
LORNA: yeah, but you speak in English during class
EDUARDO: yes, speak in English, I like my group, I like Tomasz, Alina, Neda, and these people no speak my, [uh,
SAMIRA: [language
EDUARDO: yeah, my language
LORNA: do you think you have made friends in class? Do you think the people in class are now your friends?
ADRIAN: mm, yes
LORNA: yes and no?
ADRIAN: yes, because they are different nationalities, and is very, is better to be friends. I myself like total freedom, friends and uh, I don't like when we talk about Bin Laden and Saddam and, I don't like this, killing us and everything. I like freedom everywhere. The life, you know, and we can be friends because Arabic people no have same life as me or Eduardo, but we are friends, we totally respect, I think, we have jokes, we joke.
LORNA: so do you think class is fun, is it enjoyable? I mean, in the morning whenever you wake up, do you feel, oh no, I have to go to school
ADRIAN: oh no, no
SAMIRA: just depends on weather. Can be boring, when the bus comes. But in class is very good, learn some new words, new speak, you are speaking becomes every day.
ADRIAN: you find many things like about Orthodox people, she doesn't know many, like Samira, doesn't know many things about Orthodox, about Romania, and I, I don't know about Afghanistan. It's good uh, or maybe, I don't know about Angolese people
SAMIRA: new friends
ADRIAN: it's uh good
LORNA: social, like little society
EDUARDO: yes
ADRIAN: good, good
LORNA: yeah
ADRIAN: to know the people, you know?
LORNA: I had the same [experience
ADRIAN: [new
LORNA: new discoveries, new things
ADRIAN: yes, for me it's ok, I like it. I like it when I fight with the words, I like this. Is like a
EDUARDO: [((laughs))
ADRIAN: [*Provocation* ((pronunces in as French)
LORNA: provocation
ADRIAN: yeah

EDUARDO: yeah
((laughter))
ADRIAN: but it is ok for English because we have to fight in English words
((laughter))
SAMIRA: I don't know, I never sadness, but I know Adrian joking, I never sadness. Sometimes I fight with him but it's ok ((laughs)), I know joking.
LORNA: so how long have you been studying now?
SAMIRA: uh, eleven weeks
LORNA: you've been here eleven weeks, and you
ADRIAN: more
LORNA: twenty? Thirty, forty?!
EDUARDO: um, in this school, eight, seven months, since April
LORNA: since when, April? May?
EDUARDO: six months
ADRIAN: May, June, July, August, September, October, November, six months
SAMIRA: seven
ADRIAN: seven months
LORNA: and do you think you have made progress
ADRIAN: oh yeah. Who, me? Me, yeah! Unbelievable! Yes!
EDUARDO: for me (.) [50 50 because, um
ADRIAN: [because, oh sorry Eduardo
EDUARDO: yes, because before I didn't understand Alina speak, Samira speak, but now I understand when they speak. I think for me ok
ADRIAN: and I think is better good idea to stay all class till finish, so just send me in another class, Eduardo in another class, I think is same teacher, same class. But I will speak this with Susan
LORNA: yes, I agree, I think you have a special atmosphere when you stay together
ADRIAN: yes, we can maybe talk to Mervyn and say we have a good class, they want to stay till May together. Because you know, we know each other. He come to school with new words, neighbour, we start to speak with neighbours, in the shop, and we come with new words, we start to speak, "sorry what is this Eduardo"? Tell me this. Oh, this is shopping, shopping. Oh, what is shopping? You know, when you go to shop. And we know each other and we know Susan likes, we have, um (.) when you like something, you progress. When you don't like you don't progress. And myself, I think, this is true. This is why I am asking Susan we stay, because it's ok, you know, if we change.
LORNA: I think it is difficult when you change because everything is new
EDUARDO: yeah,
ADRIAN: no but maybe because you don't understand, because you don't understand the English, many people has another accent.
LORNA: exactly
ADRIAN: and we don't know with another teacher, no understand, we have, we stay, I don't know. For me is not ok.
LORNA: yes, maybe you take 2 or 3 weeks to understand, to adapt
ADRIAN: yes yes yes to understand the teacher, the (pronuntion)
EDUARDO: pronunciation
ADRIAN: pronunciation, the other students. Now when I speak with Samira and Eduardo I understand, because I know him, I know how you (pronuntion)
LORNA: yes, I know how you feel. I thought it was good when you stayed in Susan's class and Susan moved with you to the next level
EDUARDO: yes
LORNA: so you say you progress when this, steady, or do you think more like this, up and down ((makes gestures to demonstrate))
ADRIAN: oh
EDUARDO: like this, up and
SAMIRA: up
LORNA: Fast or quite slow?
ADRIAN: this depend on people because look Eduardo is forty-four years, no? Now it is a little bit, uh
((laughter))

ADRIAN: Samira is twenty, uh
SAMIRA: three
ADRIAN: Twenty. She catch quick than me or Eduardo, because we are old, you know. She has no problem from the family, the children or something. She's ok with, uh, she catch quick than me or Eduardo.
LORNA: the old men?
((laughter))
ADRIAN: yes, this is the truth.
ADRIAN: in (comparation), in (comparation) with you!
LORNA: because you have children, family,
SAMIRA: yeah
ADRIAN: she catch uh, you know
SAMIRA: I have no problems
LORNA: other things
ADRIAN: yes yes, and this you can say, you can't make (comparations). But it's ok, I think it's ok because we are few from start from May, we start together, no?
LORNA: yes
ADRIAN: we make, [uh,
EDUARDO: [progress
LORNA: yes progress
ADRIAN: we progress
ADRIAN: and Susan, em, it's ok, we understand, she speak very clear, she has like a, what you call it, when you (.)
SAMIRA: time?
ADRIAN: when you have a time [to
LORNA: [she is patient?
ADRIAN: she uh, has a patience
LORNA: she's patient, and friendly
ADRIAN: yes, and we progress
SAMIRA: she never sadness. I never see Susan sadness, she's very nice. And she teach well and she uh
ADRIAN: I think we have to talk to Mervyn I think to leave us with her next few months after January. Because we are happy and we make progress and maybe if we change we don't make progress
LORNA: do you think the system of choosing targets together is a good thing? You know the targets, what's the target this week?
EDUARDO: this week
ADRIAN: uh, grammar
SAMIRA: grammar
LORNA: grammar, oh
((laughter))
LORNA: who chose the grammar target?
ADRIAN: oh, together
SAMIRA: yeah
ADRIAN: it's ok, it's a good idea, yes
SAMIRA: always,
ADRIAN: spelling also. We chose yesterday, no?
SAMIRA: yes
ADRIAN: spelling
EDUARDO: writing
SAMIRA: writing
ADRIAN: grammar
SAMIRA: reading
ADRIAN: it's a good, good
LORNA: it's a good one?
ADRIAN: mm
LORNA: is it useful for real life? Life at home?
ADRIAN: yes
SAMIRA: yes, of course

LORNA: in what way? Like have you specific things you need to know this week for home or [for
ADRIAN: [I mean
LORNA: or some words you find difficulty spelling?
ADRIAN: yeah some things
LORNA: can you think of some examples of things?
ADRIAN: yes yes. We do these new words, thirty new words, dictionary, she maybe no know word, Eduardo doesn't know and is better for all. Maybe I have a word, and you have a spelling test, and you say it
SAMIRA: yes
ADRIAN: enjoy, and Samira say, what is this enjoy and Susan, and we explain and she learn, enjoy
SAMIRA: yeah it's a good idea one person write thirty words, what she knows and something in my idea I write thirty words and then Eduardo doesn't know what is this word, and he writes thirty words and I also, I don't know what is the meaning of this word. Is very important conversation too and one person and another person write it's very good for and for writing and spelling how we spell and em I like it and I have a lot of problem with writing,
LORNA: spelling
ADRIAN: spelling
SAMIRA: yeah spelling and I have, but it's, I think, the target of this course is very good and everything is very good, it's normal and it's not boring
LORNA: that's good. Are some targets easier than others?
SAMIRA: yeah
LORNA: are some targets difficult some easy?
SAMIRA: yeah, some
ADRIAN: mm, it depends, depends
SAMIRA: and uh if you study it's not good
ADRIAN: yeah
SAMIRA: if you study, it's not hard. If you don't study it's hard. Yeah. One day Susan say for me you should write about your country and because I didn't write, it was hard for me, and it was the first time. And I say ok I write and Susan asked me did you bring your homework and I said I had some problems, like this because some words I had problems that I can't write.
LORNA: so you think it's homework, homework helps. And do you think
ADRIAN: no, if you know you, in a class, you, you, uh, not come, attend
LORNA: attend?
ADRIAN: attention
LORNA: pay attention
ADRIAN: you learn, you learn, yes? You learn if you attention.
LORNA: and do you like it in class when everybody chooses, not just Susan, not just the teacher? Do you like it when the whole class says, this week we all...
ADRIAN: yeah
EDUARDO: yes, it's good
SAMIRA: this week, uh, we have new review, new target, I think, week nine
EDUARDO: eight
SAMIRA: eight?
EDUARDO: yeah
SAMIRA: just very busy week this week
LORNA: very busy week, new school
SAMIRA: new school [and
EDUARDO: [yes new school
SAMIRA: different things that Susan tried and I wait to start
LORNA: So do you think last week was a good week?
EDUARDO: last week? No.
LORNA: it was a very short week
EDUARDO: it wasn't a good week. Very short
LORNA: not enough time to something. You need five days
EDUARDO: yeah, five days is very good, very nice

ADRIAN: yeah, is good no two three days, ten hours study. No I think it's good five days, four hours, I think. Because four hours is ok I think. If it's eight hours only three days, not good. Because you, you get tired, you get like, uh, sick

SAMIRA: cross, sick

ADRIAN: now it's ok, no problem, I think five days, ok yeah

LORNA: and what about the materials, the folders, the handouts, do you think it is a good system?

ADRIAN: yeah, it's good

SAMIRA: good system

ADRIAN: it is good, good

LORNA: why is it good for you?

ADRIAN: because we have targets, you can, it's easy, to choose, no?

SAMIRA: you have to think that you write

SAMIRA: you think that you write in the folder

LORNA: ah, and would you like a textbook?

SAMIRA: you don't have any fresh thing, oh I want this, no, all the thing is in here

LORNA: and you can look back

EDUARDO: look back yes

SAMIRA: what did we learn last week, what is the meaning of this, what is the past form of this word

LORNA: so it's like your own textbook

SAMIRA: yeah, own textbook

EDUARDO: yes

SAMIRA: yeah, like book, yeah

LORNA: I think it's a good idea, I like it. Do you think, um, can you think of any improvements you would like to change in class?

ADRIAN: to change?

LORNA: do you have any good ideas for new things?

ADRIAN: change class?

EDUARDO: no no no

LORNA: <u>in</u> class, new ways of learning, learning more, learning better?

ADRIAN: um, I think it's ok, no

EDUARDO: for me no. I'm happy.

LORNA: and what about, I was wondering about targets. Everyone chooses, but what about your targets outside school, in life. Adrian I know one of your targets is new house, new corporation house with garden. What are your ambitions, you know, after school, what do you want for you, for your family.

EDUARDO: [hm

SAMIRA: [yeah. I want study, I want to study college, I want to go to school, because before I didn't understand the language and em my family said to go to school, and actually, I um finish school in my country but it was very um long time that I finish, now I forget everything, but I, some problems I had, but I want to study.

LORNA: yes. And what about you Eduardo, what do you want?

EDUARDO: For me I want to go FÁS after this school, because I'm looking for money ((laughter))

EDUARDO: yeah, looking for money. My dream, uh, to help the poor children in my country. But now I don't have money, is very difficult and I think a lot of time about this problem. Big problem, I don't forget it. In my region, my native region

SAMIRA: religion?

ADRIAN: <u>re-gion</u>, not religion

EDUARDO: region yes.

LORNA: so there are lots of orphans?

EDUARDO: yeah, many orphans,

ADRIAN: why orphans?

EDUARDO: orphans from war, many many children

ADRIAN: no mum, no dad?

EDUARDO: no mum, no father, no

ADRIAN: yeah

EDUARDO: no daddy. For me is very problem, when I think, every time I think this, I look for money
LORNA: to send
EDUARDO: yeah, for this people, is very difficult. Because the government don't, the government leave these people alone, is no good for me. Is my target, I make specialisation for my job and I get a job
LORNA: and then be able to send money back to Angola. Yes. And is there a charity in Ireland that tries to help?
EDUARDO: charity, charity, um, I don't where is charity, where is. I have this address for this charity, maybe every week I can send twenty or
LORNA: yes, twenty euros
EDUARDO: but I don't know who is this charity in Ireland
LORNA: we could find out, because I know in England, you remember the Princess?
EDUARDO: Princess Diana, yes
LORNA: she was in Angola
EDUARDO: in Angola, yes
LORNA: so I think there are some charities which work for that, we could find out about that. I didn't know there were so many orphans.
SAMIRA: hm
ADRIAN: everywhere, I think everywhere is bad, but I think it's uh, parents fault. They leave their children, no?
LORNA: but I think these children, their parents were killed
EDUARDO: their parents is dead
ADRIAN: yeah?
EDUARDO: yeah, they come for people. No parents.
ADRIAN: ah because in my country, parents give birth, gave birth, and they leave, left children.
LORNA: [in an orphanage
ADRIAN: [and go
SAMIRA: mm
ADRIAN: this is not ok
EDUARDO: no. In my country is different, my country, the government killed the parents, yeah, the children is alone. No parents, no dad
ADRIAN: this is very sad
LORNA: mm
ADRIAN: you see, is the problem with the people who has the power, you know?
LORNA: yes. And in Angola there is still war, civil war?
EDUARDO: civil war yes
LORNA: but there are many orphans in Romania, in orphanages, special houses
ADRIAN: yeah. I saw some, no is not too many, but they, um, they don't care. They, um, same thing. The people who has the power, like managers and um, they take for them the money for them. To be rich. And they leave these children to live in shed buildings, they call the TV, they say, look we are very poor, we have no money for this children. No money, but they take the money for them! Understand? And after that go to TV and say, please come, see our, our house for children, no we have no bed. Look toilet very dirty, but they, government, give money, gave money, paid them to make nice. But they, they didn't, they took the money and put it in their pocket. Maybe just they they bring some uh new tables. No money! You give government pay only for this, but they said instead to say this table cost €20, they said I pay €30, and €10 put in his pocket. OK? Understand? And they say no money! And is coming maybe the English TV and the BBC and make, oh, very poor, look at these children, but and they said help, but they send help and the people who, the managers, supervisors, who is in the place, they took it for them, for friends, for family, and gave it.
LORNA: but do you think that you could change that? You say you don't like the people in power?
ADRIAN: yes!
LORNA: do you think you could work in power and change it, or I could, or anybody could?

ADRIAN: yes!
ADRIAN: I said ok, you pay me this, no problem, And they said look, we have like ten thousand, ten thousand euro for make nice this room. No problem! I don't take this money. I ring construction, yeah, firm, agency, bring here, you talk to me and them. How much cost this? Eight thousand euro, no problem. You are taking back two thousand euro, no money for me, just salary! But they didn't do that. Okk, they said ten thousand, and maybe they pay five thousand to make something and five thousand they put in their pocket. Is not good. Understand? This is the power everywhere, even in Ireland!
LORNA: oh absolutely
ADRIAN: if. [Like
SAMIRA: [in our country is not possible, most people have money. Now no. But they work, they have a job, those people doesn't have money they don't have any job. My aunt's husband, he didn't work, um, he just at home, and uh, everything time say that uh, this um, these people who do like this are not happy, because the government say we don't have this money. There are a lot of problems now in Afghanistan.
LORNA: but do you think it will always be like that? (.)
LORNA: do you think good people can change it?
ADRIAN: yeah
LORNA: do you think
ADRIAN: no because who gives this money should, uh, they have to control. This is the mistake we, they give money but they don't control they trust, they have to, uh
SAMIRA: they killed, they killed
ADRIAN: [they have to, uh,, check
SAMIRA: [uh, good persons. If the person be kind and good, they killed him.
ADRIAN: yeah yeah
SAMIRA: yeah, they killed him. They are all bad, they don't want to help poor people, they just want to give money to um, to make his or her life better
LORNA: Nice cars
SAMIRA: nice car, nice house, go holiday any place, come back, say to the people we don't have money, we
LORNA: and it's the same Ireland
ADRIAN: absolutely
EDUARDO: mm
LORNA: people aren't killed, but it's the same problems
SAMIRA: yeah
LORNA: someone builds a new road, because he is brother of the mayor
EDUARDO: in Africa it is very very big problem. In Africa, the problem for Africa, uh, I don't know, the *Fonds Monetaire International*
LORNA: International Monetary Fund
EDUARDO: Monetary, yeah. Give the money for every Africa people, but is money no for the Africa people but for dictator President. The dictator president take the money in the bank, in Europa
ADRIAN: yes
LORNA: Swiss bank
EDUARDO: yeah, Swiss bank
ADRIAN: commission, they take commission
EDUARDO: yeah. Why, the big manager from the uh, uh, uh, Fund
LORNA: monetary fund
EDUARDO: yeah, why not make control for this? This manager is co-co-*complice*
ADRIAN: yeah
EDUARDO: yeah, *complice*. Is no good.
LORNA: no. So, are we optimists or pessimists?
EDUARDO: yes. In my country, in my region, my region is very rich in Angola. 80% gold for all Angola region. American company, French company, Italian company
ADRIAN: Russia
EDUARDO: no Russia, Russia is for diamonds, diamonds in my country
LORNA: are there diamonds in the Congo?

EDUARDO: yeah, diamonds in the Congo and Angola. But America people telling the government, every time say, I don't like the dictator in Africa but in my country no problem, dictator, no problem, because take the the, the hoil, the petrol. Yah. Is no problem. When you have oil, no problem. Dictator, no problem. The problem for America, petrol

ADRIAN: ok

EDUARDO: yah. Is no good. My president is, make, outside the, the *Croix Rouge*

LORNA: Red Cross

EDUARDO: the Red Cross, make outside my region, because when the, the soldiers, the Angola soliders killed the people, my village, is not good for killing the people, the outside people.

ADRIAN: mm

EDUARDO: no problem. Tomorrow, every road closed out

ADRIAN: [out

EDUARDO: very, uh, mm, *la vérité*

LORNA: the truth

EDUARDO: yeah. Is no problem for the Angola, the road closed, is no good

ADRIAN: yeah

LORNA: have you, do you think since you came to Ireland, have you had good experience of Irish managers, Irish supervisors?

EDUARDO: in Ireland?

LORNA: Have you had always good experiences, or some bad experiences?

EDUARDO: hmm

LORNA: maybe Department of Justice, Immigration

EDUARDO: no, for me, for to, no

ADRIAN: yeah

EDUARDO: no for me no racist

LORNA: not racist

EDUARDO: no racist. Because for me, is very good people

ADRIAN: no, because you are in front, they say yes, ok, very nice, but after that, in the back, they don't do nothing for you, but when they speak with you, very nice. Oh, very nice children, very nice, how old are you, I'm ok, can you help me? Yes, yes, I can help you. No no.

LORNA: but then they don't do anything? Have you seen a difference now that you speak good English? Do you see a difference now you can speak English, and before, when you didn't speak much English?

EDUARDO: hm

ADRIAN: yeah

LORNA: A difference in the way people talk to you

ADRIAN: mm

LORNA: are people nicer now you speak English?

SAMIRA: yeah, hhmm. Before uh (.)

ADRIAN: [because they understand

SAMIRA: We know understand the language

LORNA: yeah

SAMIRA: what he say, if it is kind or very bad

EDUARDO: ((laughs))

SAMIRA: because we don't understand the language. Now that we learn something, we know something, it is, I think, in my idea, all the people that live in, the Irish people, they are very kind.

LORNA: so good experience?

ADRIAN: ah, not all

LORNA: not all

ADRIAN: like every country. Bad people and nice people. There is, like you, you very nice, but example, going park my wife and my children, and Irish children said, go back in your country. No good for children. They know this from the parks, because six seven years, eight years, they don't think to say this, go back in your country. I think they heard this in the house, the parents saying

LORNA: yes, watching television and saying

ADRIAN: Romanian, Angolas. But when the parents speak with you, they look very nice, but just pre, pre, pretended?

LORNA: yeah, they pretend.

ADRIAN: uh, yes. The Irish, they don't, because they they, have a bad life and they have to be, uh, nice in how they are now, because they have experience, bad experience, they have to be nice with the others foreign, foreign, understand?

LORNA: yes

ADRIAN: so they, some of them, no understand.

LORNA: I think some of them, even though before they had bad experience and a bad life, they still don't understand other people.

ADRIAN: yes

LORNA: They are not nice to other people.

ADRIAN: Yes. It is like the Jewish. When God, God saw them, sent Jesus and Jesus make uh,

LORNA: miracles?

ADRIAN: yes, and they didn't believe

LORNA: yes, they

ADRIAN: you know

LORNA: it's a trick.

ADRIAN: it's the same

LORNA: it's the same thing

ADRIAN: when God says, you'll be, because you saw what, what, uh,

LORNA: I did?

ADRIAN: I did, I have the power and I can do miracles ((says word hesitantly))

LORNA: yeah

ADRIAN: and they didn't believe, and they say, you, you don't have your, uh, country, you don't be like, uh, you, you, they will have like the Jews. They will have all the time problems. You looking back, Jewish, they was killed in the, you know, they have no country, now they fight with Palestinians for country, you know? They always have problems.

LORNA: I think we Irish are the same, always having problems

ADRIAN: yes, because they have, not all, but they have to understand people like me, like Eduardo, like Samira, with problems. I think it is education, education, education. Education, they [don't

LORNA: [yes, they are not alone, other people exist.

ADRIAN: I mean, sorry, because, I like America. I like America. I told you, I no like the power people, who has the power, but I like America but it is free. Freedom. If you go in America, you see Indian, you see Chinese, you see Pakistan, you see Romanian, you see Russian, you see people, and nobody said, uh, nothing, go back in your country.

LORNA: no.

SAMIRA: no

ADRIAN: but here it happens, to my children, to my wife and my friends, in park. Say go back in your country.

SAMIRA: and also, in the kindergarten, and one girl from Irish say, I don't want to play with you because you is black. She cry, she cry. She come home.

LORNA: what age is she?

SAMIRA: she's six years old.

LORNA: that's horrible

SAMIRA: she cry, and uh, last night, she cried, one of my friends, she's really bad, she come and say for all the children, do not play with this girl because she is from the foreign country. She is here [on

ADRIAN: [I mean, in the school is not happen, because the teacher say to parents, speak with her, what I know in my experience. Teacher speak with the parents, speak with the other children, and no very big problem. But first when my little girl, oh yes, problem. No play with her, ok

SAMIRA: yes

ADRIAN: no no they are false. Many Irish people. I know people, I [recognise

SAMIRA: [no no doesn't understand what is the meaning of this, and teacher must say for them do no do this, it's not good
SAMIRA: now she not like go to school
ADRIAN: yeah of course
LORNA: but you've had good experiences Eduardo?
EDUARDO: for me, 80% for me, cos I don't talk Irish people
ADRIAN: is not ok because you don't [maybe
EDUARDO: [is normal, normal. Every country have this problem
ADRIAN: no in my country we have Iraqi, Angola, but I didn't say to African people, go back to your country!
SAMIRA: no, you can't, you doesn't say, but another person from your country, yeah?
ADRIAN: But I didn't read in the papers things like that, or uh, Angola or Romania peoples fire home, and here, it's happened. They put fire on Nigerian man's house or car, and they put a fire, you don't know, I have friends live in a bad area, they, they broken, or, what you call it ((gestures filling a bottle and throwing it))
LORNA: petrol bomb?
ADRIAN: in the house. This happens, in Blanchardstown.
SAMIRA: hm
ADRIAN: I dunno what part, just because they are Romanian, just to do something. In my country is not happening. If you have a friend, tell me, but I, myself, I don't know, somebody foreign, who has no problem, ok, no problem with Romanian people, say something bad to them or something, no problem. Nobody put fire to their car or broken window. Here it's very bad. Really very bad.
SAMIRA: I think in every place it's like that, I think. Because before we were living here we were living in Pakistan. Because the fighting in Afghanistan, and every time we are here, and they put stone in, uh, newspaper, and they put it our gar, garage, in the door, with the stone. And go in your country, why you are staying in our country, what you are doing here, and it was very, uh um, hard for us, um
LORNA: scary
SAMIRA: yeah, scary
ADRIAN: but they are not Muslim?
SAMIRA: they are Muslim, they are Muslim, not real Muslim. They are so-called Islam, make Islam
ADRIAN: if you go in Romania, nothing will change. I know, never, if you are nice and you don't do bad things. Nothing say to you. If you are going, I play football, uh, Cameroon man come in, nobody say nothing to him, uh, some, he's like friend. Every, uh.
LORNA: open?
ADRIAN: yes
LORNA: I think like
ADRIAN: every
LORNA: all countries
ADRIAN: no, because, because, we had before very bad, [uh,
LORNA: [yes
ADRIAN: and we understand, like uh, when was the war with Iraq,uh, with the, (.) with Saddam. Romania said, uh, yes Saddam it's a bad man, shouldn't be on the power, Saddam, because the people suffer, ok? And Romania say, all the people say like that. Because before, it's the same like Ceaucescu, you know Ceaucescu, Romanian dictator? Before? Saddam is same like Ceaucescu and Romanian people say is no good for Iraqi people to have a president like that. They have to fight and we have to help them to get free. Ok? You understand this. And many Iraqi people in Romania, they have business, Arabic people in Romania. There are Chinese, 25 000 Chinese, have business. Maybe Romanian no have, uh, something to eat, but if you go to Chinese to see, they have business open and no problem. 25 000 I saw on the TV, and no problem. If you pay tax, nobody say to Chinese go in your

country. Iraqi and Arabic people many in our country with business. Nobody say go back! If you want to open a business you, nobody, you don't [get
LORNA: [no problem
ADRIAN: Friends ((pause))
LORNA: so do you think you will stay for one year in school? Do you think you will do one year of class? Twelve months.
EDUARDO: one year? In this course?
LORNA: do you think you will stay for one year?
EDUARDO: mm
ADRIAN: yeah! It's free, to stay one year.
LORNA: five more months, I think
ADRIAN: yeah! Because it's ok
LORNA: and will you stay to the end?
EDUARDO: hmm, I don't know this. depends, is complicated. Have big problem. My problem for, ((hesitates)) I like spelling very good, is my thing, because my job is, when you not spelling very good, it's not good for my job.
LORNA: yes
EDUARDO: yah, I like ((pauses))
LORNA: you need to be accurate
A: yeah. Correct, yeah
LORNA: do you think you will stay to work on your spelling?
EDUARDO: yeah, mmhmm
LORNA: and then what is the next step? Will you go to FÁS for training, or?
ADRIAN: maybe
LORNA: what do you see? I know you talked about a computer course
ADRIAN: or maybe to go for English, better English, and after that, computers.
LORNA: so another English course then training.
SAMIRA: yeah
LORNA: would you be do you ever think, oh, there's too much to do, it's depressing. Learning English is too difficult, I'm stopping now.
EDUARDO: ((laughs)) no
LORNA: I will stay just at this level of English, it's ok for now.
EDUARDO: ((laughs)).
LORNA: do you see it
ADRIAN: it's very, it's very hard because uh, sometimes I want to say to person if I have a problem when I go out, and, I don't find in English word to say to that person. I'm thinking in my, I can't say it
SAMIRA: hm
SAMIRA: what I want
LORNA: yeah
ADRIAN: you know?
LORNA: frustrating
SAMIRA: yeah
ADRIAN: to say what I'm feeling. We are not honest, you know?
LORNA: you say a different thing. Do you think that learning a second language is difficult or easy?
ADRIAN: depends on, on where you start, if you start from child, if you child you find you, you catch, and if you are like me and Eduardo, you get very, [uh
SAMIRA: [tired?
ADRIAN: ((pauses)) is very hard.
LORNA: do you think you are a good learner? Do you think you learn well?
ADRIAN: it depends
LORNA: what does it depend on?
ADRIAN: it depends, on your brain
LORNA: yeah! Do you think your brain is good for languages?
ADRIAN: I don't know. I'm very lazy. My wife says I don't learn English. I talk to her yesterday evening about this. I said I think now I speak good English than my wife, because she says, she's no good, very good. But she knows a little bit, but she, I think, I want to say to her, I told her, if you go from January to May in my place, because she doesn't know very well English ((laughter)). I'm

thinking to speak with Mervyn, maybe let her come in my place for four months from January.
LORNA: Do you think you are a good learner, do you think you learn well?
EDUARDO: ((draws breath in)) before it's very good, but now, I have many many things to learn ((laughter)). Yeah, before in Angola, French, Spanish, yes, Portuguese is my language. Yes. To learn French, Spanish.
LORNA: French, Spanish, Portuguese, English, that's a lot of languages.
EDUARDO: now English
ADRIAN: yeah because they emigrate in Spain, Portugal
EDUARDO: No
ADRIAN: in France
EDUARDO: no, many, my country, is, ((hesitates))
ADRIAN: Spanish come in your country?
EDUARDO: no, the Congo is, hm,
LORNA: beside?
EDUARDO: beside my region, is (fron), frontier
LORNA: border
EDUARDO: in Congo. My region speak French, Portuguese,
ADRIAN: Yeah because
EDUARDO: Spanish
ADRIAN: French was
EDUARDO: in Congo
LORNA: and Portuguese
EDUARDO: my country speaks Portuguese, I learned Spanish in my country.
LORNA: Can you tell me what, what do you think makes a good teacher? What makes a good teacher? If you had to describe the perfect English teacher? What would you say? What qualities, or
EDUARDO: qualities?
LORNA: yes, for being a good teacher?
ADRIAN: to be a good teacher?
LORNA: what do they have to do to be a good teacher?
ADRIAN: to speak clear, first, and understand. No speak like ((speaks very fast de de de de)), no accent, good clear accent. No like Irish accent or American accent. To speak clear.
LORNA: anything else? Eduardo, what would you say?
EDUARDO: yeah, same, same Adrian.
LORNA: or, who makes a good learner of English? How would you describe someone who learns English well? What is it to make a good English learner? A good English student, what do you have to do?
SAMIRA: mmm, to study
ADRIAN: yes, to study
SAMIRA: study,
LORNA: what way? Examples?
ADRIAN: like go to school,
EDUARDO: do your work in house
ADRIAN: to be attention to the teacher, read, write,
EDUARDO: talk to people
LORNA: and who do you think in the class are good learners? Can you see examples of good learners?
EDUARDO: in the class?
LORNA: yes, who is a good student?
EDUARDO: mm
LORNA: can you think of any examples?
EDUARDO: hmmm
ADRIAN: I think everybody good
EDUARDO: no, for [me
ADRIAN: [cos everyone
EDUARDO: [I work in group, my group, Tomasz, Alina, Neda. For me, I like this group because these people no speak my language. I like these people. These

people understand very good when I speak. I understand these people. I like this group.

LORNA: so you think they are a good group?

EDUARDO: yes, for me is very good, yes.

ADRIAN: Ok?

LORNA: and what about you? Imagine there is a prize every week, a special prize, chocolate, for one student. Which students do you think do their homework, read, watch television in English

SAMIRA: hm

ADRIAN: you can say

SAMIRA: Rose is good

LORNA: why is she good?

SAMIRA: she good because she speak more and she mmm she have more idea about everything and just um in class I um as soon as speak, I understand what you are saying. But the answer, when Irish people speak with me, say something, I don't understand.

ADRIAN: no because they speak the, they saw us, and they speak fast

SAMIRA: and also no understand me, what I say, sorry I can't understand what you say

ADRIAN: they pretend

SAMIRA: I, I am very nervous, I can't see why I'm not secure, why not understand me? Last night I speak on the telephone with one person that have a house, and they are looking for a house, and I say for them, I am looking your house, what is your address. He doesn't understand me! Say, what you say, I cannot understand, sorry. And put the phone. I was so sadness. I speak clear!

LORNA: because maybe they never speak to different people of other nationalities, they only speak to Irish people

SAMIRA: yeah, I think so. I was so nervous, I thought, am I lazy? I can't speak!

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcript of audio interview 4

Present:	TATJANA, MINA
Location:	Student common room, IILT
Date:	4th December 2003
Interviewer:	LORNA CARSON
Duration:	c.45 minutes

LORNA: So tell me firstly what do you think of the new school?
TATJANA: I don't know, is nice building, is no cold, is nice smell ((laughter)) other bad smell, dirty, and uh, I don't know, it's very nice, windows!
LORNA: I know, natural light!
TATJANA: Yeah ((laughs))
LORNA: It's amazing! What do you think Mina?
MINA: I think it is uh, better, than the last, uh school, and uh, everything, central. Is very good.Is up a level, not, narrow?
LORNA: yes, not narrow, nice and wide
MINA: it's wide, yeah
TATJANA: it's wide
LORNA: how long does it take you to come?
((sound of thinking))
MINA: for the school? about half an hour
LORNA: by bus?
MINA: by bus
TATJANA: I need one and a half, two, two hours sometimes.
LORNA: really? Where you are coming from again?
TATJANA: Clondalkin
LORNA: oh yeah
TATJANA: going back home, is very difficult, on Naas Road, you know, traffic.
LORNA: the Naas road is very busy
LORNA: so how long are you pregnant now?
TATJANA: five months
LORNA: five months,
TATJANA: five and a half
LORNA: yeah because it's long on the bus especially if you are pregnant
TATJANA: yeah, sometimes I have pain on the back, you know?
LORNA: yeah, because you are sitting still
TATJANA: But I talked with school
LORNA: ok
TATJANA: and after Christmas I stop
LORNA: so that's it! ((laughter)) When's the due date?
TATJANA: March, middle of March
LORNA: and do you know if it's a boy or a girl?
TATJANA: no, I don't have scan now, yes before, but when I have, two months, I have scan. Baby is little. I think in September baby is eight millimetres, is very small.
LORNA: very little!
TATJANA: But now I didn't have any scan.
LORNA: when's the next one?
TATJANA: Eighth of December with the GP, and after Christmas, in January, and the hospital
LORNA: very good. And do you know which hospital you are going to?
TATJANA: Crumlin, no, Coombe hospital, you know?
LORNA: the Coombe
TATJANA: but I have in my village you know, health centre. But I don't go on hospital, just health centre. Before I went to hospital, two times, for blood, and I don't know first time, because now I go to health centre.
LORNA: and is it difficult, explaining in English about the baby, or is it, has it been easy?
TATJANA: after when baby born, yeah??
LORNA: or now?
TATJANA: now? I don't know for me this is first baby, everything is new, it's difficult, you know, you just sit down, nothing work. But for me is very good, you know? ((all laugh)) I home sit, think, alone, touch and think
LORNA: your husband doing everything?
TATJANA: yeah, and mother-in-law
LORNA: oh yes

TATJANA: yeah, she cleaning house! ((Mina laughs)) I just little help, you know, about feed or little or table or something, but she is doing everything
MINA: you have very nice mother-in-law
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: Do you have any plans for Mina?
MINA: em, not, uh
LORNA: not yet?
MINA: maybe
LORNA: will you be [sad to see
MINA: [but my baby, you know, get miscarriage
LORNA: yeah
MINA: but not four months
LORNA: yeah
MINA: three months and a half
LORNA: yeah
MINA: it is very problem if I get pregnant again near this time
LORNA: so do you have to wait?
MINA: yeah, a year, the doctor tell me you need year, long time
LORNA: yeah
TATJANA: yeah, I had same before. Same year, you know?
LORNA: really?
MINA: same year?
TATJANA: same year! ((Mina laughs)), uh. On the May, I, uh, had two months, and I had miscarriage. But doctor say anything, no. And after that
MINA: how long?
TATJANA: just two months, one and a half, two. After two months I again pregnant! And now, is good.
LORNA: yeah, absolutely.
MINA: is different, first. I, uh, the doctor she can't say if he girl or boy. And then girl when I take first sonar.
TATJANA: but everything because I had difficult pregnancy, you know? She had very big hormones, baby lie on the stomach for long time,
LORNA: yeah
TATJANA: can't move, everything.
LORNA: so you have to wait then a year, and then you can try again?
MINA: yeah
LORNA: would your husband like children?
MINA: and me also! ((laughs))
LORNA: yeah, me too.
TATJANA: But sometimes is very funny when baby move in your stomach, you know? Same football! ((all laugh)) And uh middle night sometimes, same. And to wake up me. But no problem, is good.
LORNA: that's nice
TATJANA: everything is nice problem
LORNA: it is. So will you be sad to leave school?
TATJANA: yeah because I'm scared about English, home I speak Bosnian. I don't know, I would. I want more Irish friends. My husband yes, but. Sometimes his friends come at home, but no same. No everyday, maybe one a month. I leave school nine months and I back again on September.
LORNA: oh you can come back next September?
TATJANA: yeah yeah
LORNA: oh that's great.
TATJANA: because I have babysitter, you know! ((laughs))
LORNA: yes your mother-in-law, wow! So how long can you come back for in September, can you come back for six months? Four months?
TATJANA: six, because I have two level
MINA: we got, she get, now two level, first with Susan and now with ((name of teacher)).
LORNA: very good

MINA: in this school you can take for one years and half, if you make, eh speak English
LORNA: yeah, so if you progress, if you advance
TATJANA: yes
LORNA: you can come, so six months from September, to, em, February, March? April? Next year.
TATJANA: no, I think May, maybe.
LORNA: May? Very good.
TATJANA: Yeah, because is now, you know, when you start in September, and, uh, January you stop this course, and you have
MINA: you, next uh,
TATJANA: next year course,
MINA: after, after May. After March, May?
TATJANA: I start school in May, you know?
MINA: Same last year
LORNA: so you'll have your baby and then come back? In May?
TATJANA: in September.
LORNA: Very good. That's good news.
TATJANA: yeah. After holiday you know
LORNA: of course!
TATJANA: because I didn't have holiday this year.
LORNA: well I'll have to give you the address of, eh, my church has during the day a free creche for non-English speakers
TATJANA: yeah?
LORNA: so they can come once a week and speak English, with other mothers, and then there's, there are, em, nurses to look after children.
TATJANA: where is this?
LORNA: it's at my church, in Dublin. Upstairs you have the church,
TATJANA: Yeah, and down?
LORNA: and downstairs you have a childcare centre
TATJANA: Ok
LORNA: and I think on Wednesdays there is a special service for refugees and people who don't speak English
MINA: I heard about that, because, in the class, I think she leaves her child and speak English
LORNA: yeah, because you speak English in the morning with other mothers and the babies can play, listen to music and the mothers can speak English, and it's free. Because sometimes my friends go, other teachers go, just to speak English with the mothers
TATJANA: very good
LORNA: I'll give you the address
TATJANA: ok no problem, thanks
LORNA: after the baby is born
TATJANA: yes
LORNA: so what are your plans then for after school?
((laughter))
MINA: I don't know! I don't ((laughs)). If I speak English, I, uh, learning English to do, maybe I go university, if they accept me!
LORNA: yep, for the teaching?
MINA: yes, if I get in ((laughs))
TATJANA: I like take any job, you know? Same cash?
MINA: You can take a job? And study in English, in night?
LORNA: yeah, a part-time job and study?
TATJANA: but I don't like university, you know? ((laughs))
LORNA: what kind of job would you
TATJANA: I like, uh, work on the shop, you know? Clothes, and the till,
MINA: yeah
LORNA: yes, cashier
TATJANA: Yeah, my sister-in-law, she is manager of (name of shop) in the ILAC centre, you know? Little shop, is boutique, yeah?

LORNA: yes. Is she Irish or Bosnian?
TATJANA: Bosnian, but speak very good English. In my family, everyone speak very good English, just I no.
MINA: Because for you for short time here
TATJANA: yeah, I here one year and two, three months I think. I came September last year. I thinks my English is not bad with one year, yeah?
LORNA: I think you have made very quick progress
MINA: yes!
TATJANA: yeah?
LORNA: since the beginning in Susan's class, you have really progressed. You have too. I'm sure your spelling and
MINA: now, yeah.
TATJANA: When I came in Susan's class, I didn't know anything.
MINA: same as me ((all laugh))
TATJANA: maybe a little
MINA: word
TATJANA: what is your name or hello, hi, help, you know ((laughter)). But you listen on the TV, you know, words, but now is good. I go on the hospital sometimes alone, I don't need translation, yeah?
LORNA: that's good
TATJANA: yeah. I know when midwife asks me about blood (press), (presh)?
LORNA: blood pressure?
TATJANA: pressure, yeah, and urine and something, headache, backache or something, swollen head, you know. Many things.
LORNA: lots of new vocabulary
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: lots of new words
TATJANA: about health
MINA: we take lesson
LORNA: oh yes? A lesson on the body
MINA: yes
LORNA: so what's ((name of teacher)) class like? Is it a big change from Susan's class?
MINA: yes, very big change for me
TATJANA: and me
TATJANA: and people same
LORNA: was it quite difficult to change you know when you knew all the people in Susan's class?
TATJANA: yeah, is very difficult maybe one month, first one month, and after that it is same.
LORNA: and what kind of things have you been doing?
MINA: now?
MINA: about shopping, not for ( ), but what's the name,
LORNA: winter?
MINA: not for short vocabulary
TATJANA: [more
LORNA: [phrases
MINA: yeah, for phrases
MINA: everything, about shopping, about the health, about
TATJANA: transport
MINA: transport
TATJANA: and take cash ((laughter)), bank?
LORNA: banking
TATJANA: drinklink, yeah? Said before some people say for banklink drinklink
LORNA: that's right, that's true in Dublin, before going to the pub. Have you been working, doing much groupwork?
TATJANA: no no
LORNA: not as much
TATJANA: maybe face-to-face, you know, just sometimes, but group no.
LORNA: and what about the Portfolio?

TATJANA: I don't have Portfolio
MINA: we don't have Portfolio! ((laughs))
LORNA: so, you don't know, you know when you say, I can do this with a little help,
TATJANA: yeah, no we don't have that
LORNA: No, you don't have that at all? And targets, have you been working on any targets?
MINA: no
LORNA: do you miss that?
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: do you miss it from Susan's class?
TATJANA: just we have every Friday review
MINA: review, yeah, every Friday
LORNA: so do you prefer that system of learning, or do you prefer Susan's? I won't tell either teacher! Just for me, not for the school
TATJANA: no, I know, but first month is you know uh for me is very difficult, but when you have every month same, after that you adapt
LORNA: You adapt
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: But do you prefer having more, like targets, this week we do these things,
TATJANA: yeah, yeah I like this
LORNA: yes
TATJANA: you take, um, maybe five, and just do it.
LORNA: five things?
MINA: yeah, it's a good idea
LORNA: yes, because I think it helps you, um, it helps you see, maybe, this week, it's clear
TATJANA: yeah,
LORNA: I don't know what you think, I just listened to what Neda and Eduardo say, they say it helps them
TATJANA: it's nice, it's good
MINA: mm, it helps them
LORNA: because they see on the wall this week
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: we do bank vocabulary, this week we write a letter. Susan had it always on a big poster. So do you feel quite motivated at the moment? You know, motivation, do you know the word motivation, when you feel you enjoy and you like learning English, or do you feel quite tired?
TATJANA: ah, yes, worried
LORNA: yes, or does it depend?
MINA: I am not boring, sometimes that I feel! ((laughs))
TATJANA: sometimes I feel very boring,
LORNA: bored
TATJANA: yes, I don't know, school
MINA: me never ((laughs))
LORNA: never?
MINA: never
LORNA: and why not?
MINA: I like it, my, this work, I get very happy because I eager you know for learning. I don't feel sleepy or boring in the class
LORNA: in the class
MINA: because when ((name of teacher)) she speak I speak in the class, em, looking for another vocabulary
LORNA: so not bored, not tired,
TATJANA: but you feel tired, you know. Body tired ((laughs)), but after that,
MINA: because you situation now, because you very tired now!
TATJANA: yeah, every time move, and the chair
LORNA: yeah, uncomfortable?
TATJANA: yeah.
LORNA: So what do you think, what do you like most at the moment that you are learning? ((someone comes into the room to take a book and leaves again))

What are the best things? So if you had to make a list of like good things and bad things, what would you put in the good list about learning English?
TATJANA: everything is important you know, because everything people need for life out
MINA: yeah
LORNA: so most things are good?
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: is there anything you would like to change, or put in the bad list?
TATJANA: Eh, no, I don't understand just, I don't know word for this, you know when you get off, on something
LORNA: phrasal verbs?
TATJANA: phrasal verbs, yeah
LORNA: are they difficult?
TATJANA: yeah! Sometimes
MINA: sometimes
LORNA: one word mean many things, you know, when you have 'get', you know, what is get. When you put up get up, get off, get on, same?
LORNA: mm, get on the bus
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: so that's difficult
MINA: get into
LORNA: get into, yeah, get into bed
MINA: into car
LORNA: get into the car
TATJANA: but get on off the bus? Same?
LORNA: you get off the bus and you get on the bus, you get off the train and you get on the train
LORNA: what about the way, the way we learn English here – do you think the way we learn English is good or is there anything you would change, the way the school is organised?
TATJANA: I don't know, for me it's good
LORNA: Is it very different from the way you learned English before?
MINA: yes
TATJANA: yes
MINA: yes, very different
LORNA: in what way?
MINA: in our country, is very different,
TATJANA: but I didn't learn English in my country, you know?
MINA: Oh!
TATJANA: I learned Russia
LORNA: ah ((laughter))
MINA: no for me English
TATJANA: but your country is different, you know, teachers speak your English, teacher speak your language sometimes, you know if you understand one word of English, he said you, or she, and uh your language. I think it is different, you know?
LORNA: because here, the teacher can't explain to you
TATJANA: yeah!
LORNA: in Bosnian
TATJANA: ((laughs)) something, you know
LORNA: and how did you learn English before?
MINA: uh, we take in, in my country, start study English from the fifth years, when I start, from fifth years until the last, uh, years from secondary school. For eight year. But every day for one hour. Is not enough, is not enough. And not, uh, what this name, concentration.
LORNA: yeah
MINA: not concentration, not new vocabulary, just limited words, go come, I love you, sleep, childrens,
TATJANA: not speaking, yeah?
MINA: speaking, but limited words
TATJANA: little, yeah

MINA: yeah, and uh, if you go university, some university they study English, with the the, my language, for two years. They can speak English after they get their, uh, licence. But my sister yes she can speak English because in her uh university they she study English with, uh,

TATJANA: Arabic?

MINA: with Arabic yeah. With the, her sense, what she study. You understand? But me no, my university you can't, they didn't use English.

LORNA: so do you think you have made a lot of progress? Do you think you have changed, your English has developed?

TATJANA: yeah,

MINA: yes, very

LORNA: you have to listen to this tape in one year ((laughter)) and then you can listen to yourselves.

MINA: I laughing about my English ((laughs))

TATJANA: grammar, yeah

LORNA: I think grammar, definitely, you have learned a lot more past tense

TATJANA: because sometimes use me, sometimes I, you know?

LORNA: yeah, you're not quite sure which one to use

MINA: wrong word, I speak

TATJANA: or past tense, did or had or something

LORNA: yeah, that's right, I have had or something.

TATJANA: yeah

LORNA: and tell me, because this school is specifically for people who come to Ireland, do you think there's a good link between this school and life in Ireland, does it help [you

TATJANA: [yeah

LORNA: [integrate and learn more about

TATJANA: because you have free school, you don't pay anything, you have everything free, teachers free, place,

MINA: tickets

LORNA: yeah, bus tickets and stuff. So that heplps you, encourages you to come?

TATJANA: after that you can take any job, if you know a little English.

LORNA: and do you think the people in the school, do you think they are good students? The people in your class. Are they good students, are they learning well?

MINA: I don't know. In my class?

LORNA: do they work hard?

TATJANA: not everybody ((laughter))

MINA: not everybody, but everybody has many work in their uh life, in their life.

LORNA: Yeah! Who, can you think of anybody who works hard in your class? Is there anyone who

MINA: Tatjana, she works, she work a lot learn English. And Eduardo, speak good

TATJANA: there's one man

MINA: Eduardo?

TATJANA: he's good, same

LORNA: and what does Tatjana do that is good?

TATJANA: hm!

LORNA: she works hard?

TATJANA: I speak much, more, I ask every time, you know

MINA: is good for learning, you know. Today you speak wrong, maybe tomorrow you learn it, this way is wrong. Speak that not this. You take this right, you speak it.

LORNA: and do you think Mina is a good student? ((laughter))

MINA: no!

TATJANA: she now is, is very quiet, I don't know why. Before asked everytime, what is this, what is this

LORNA: really?!

MINA: yeah

TATJANA: yeah, but now she is very quiet.

LORNA: why?

MINA: I don't know ((laughs)) I don't know, um, first time when I was with Susan's class, I bring up all my the page to home, and everything I review at home, but now, I can't
TATJANA: no?
LORNA: is it because, um, you've changed class?
MINA: no, because I'm tired
LORNA: ok
MINA: I'm tired. Not change my class, I'm tired, my body's tired.
LORNA: and because you have too much work to do?
MINA: and my health is not good
LORNA: so you go home and sleep
MINA: I told you about the miscarriage. I have miscarriage
LORNA: yes, so because you are tired, and then you go home and you go to sleep. I think you need lots of energy to review
MINA: not good. Ill.
LORNA: and your hormones
TATJANA: up and down!
MINA: not for, for me is good if you keep yourself, just one or two times
LORNA: I think if you have many miscarriages
TATJANA: just eat, or I think, people have any problem, loss
MINA: no, I don't have problem with my
TATJANA: no no no
MINA: I get down stairs
TATJANA: I know, something problem, you know
LORNA: Yes
TATJANA: You feel, I don't know how you feel. Sad? You don't want go tomorrow, you know?
LORNA: Yeah. It must be difficult to get up and come to school when you are feeling sad
TATJANA: Yeah, I know when I lost my baby
MINA: I come down upstairs, I felled in my back after two hours three hours and lost you know, at the home? Everything the day, you see here. Is a big problem for mother
LORNA: did you fall on the stairs?
MINA: yeah
LORNA: and did you hurt yourself?
MINA: Yeah
LORNA: your back?
MINA: yeah in my back, like blue
((sounds of sympathy from Tatjana and Lorna))
LORNA: did you trip on the carpet, was it carpet like this?
TATJANA: yeah?
LORNA: did you
MINA: after I faint, I was running for the bathroom, in the bathroom.
LORNA: you fainted?
MINA: two hours I didn't know!
LORNA: two hours? Where was your husband?
MINA: and I phoned him
LORNA: oh! That's terrible!
MINA: yeah!
LORNA: when did this happen?
MINA: a year, one years.
LORNA: that must have been terrible, lying for two hours. And then you went to the hospital?
MINA: yeah, but lost the baby normal, no operation
TATJANA: I didn't have any operation because my pregnance is very small no operation most normal way just she tell me [rest
MINA: [rest
LORNA: and was your husband ok, was he very sad?

MINA: yeah, for me, not for baby, because me I lost many energy you know?
LORNA: yes I think you do lose energy
MINA: and pain
LORNA: does he still come to school?
MINA: no
LORNA: is he looking for a job?
MINA: but job not available in Ireland at this moment
LORNA: what would he like to do?
MINA: he like, he like to work in market, you know? Cos in my country he has, in my country situation is good for work, he was, he had before car and market and big house
LORNA: so would he like to sell things here, buy and sell?
MINA: yeah, he like it, maybe for future
LORNA: and how is his English?
MINA: it's very good, very good
LORNA: I remember his face, I remember him coming.
MINA: I remember, he tell me, one time with ((name of teacher)) class
LORNA: was he in ((name of teacher)) class?
MINA: just one time, yeah
LORNA: it's funny, you remember people's faces, they are always very familiar. And I saw him in the shop, I know you!
MINA: he told me, I know her face but not her name, just he saw you for one time with ((name of teacher)).
LORNA: he's got a good memory
MINA: he's very clever
LORNA: I hope he gets a job. I think it's important for men to get a job and you know, be able to feel like a man!
TATJANA: for mine the same. But he was here for five years
LORNA: really? And when did you come?
TATJANA: sorry?
LORNA: when did you come to Ireland?
TATJANA: same her
MINA: same her! Because when we introduce in Susan's class, oh, you are new, same also!
TATJANA: and Neda too I think, she came last year.
MINA: yeah but I think she came after us
TATJANA: after us
LORNA: so when did you get married then?
MINA: I wait for my, in my country?
LORNA: yes
MINA: I wait for my visa and come. He came here first
LORNA: he came here first and then you came.
MINA: yeah
LORNA: did he go back, did you get married in Iraq
MINA: yeah yeah
LORNA: two years ago? When did you get married? What date?
MINA: I was engaged, engagement?
LORNA: engaged
TATJANA: engaged
MINA: I was engaged for five years because not way to come here, to Ireland. After that he come back, and after visa
LORNA: and you came here
MINA: yeah
LORNA: that's good. That's a nice story ((laughter)). I think Neda has, I think got married
MINA: yeah, in Iraq. And Syria.
LORNA: Yes, Nedaad was in Syria too. Were you in Syria?
MINA: yeah
LORNA: what about your husband, how's his job?
TATJANA: she like big driver, you know? She driver

LORNA: he's a driver?
TATJANA: yeah, he's driver. I change he she, for me, the same ((laughs)) he drive truck
LORNA: oh really?
TATJANA: and he need going to next year I think FÁS for big truck
LORNA: oh yes, the HGV licence
TATJANA: I don't know, is very big, you know
LORNA: yeah, big big big truck
TATJANA: he drive for one man
LORNA: does he have to do a special test for that? With FÁS, a special course?
TATJANA: yeah. He went one month on the FÁS
LORNA: ok, so he's done it.
TATJANA: yeah
LORNA: did he like it?
TATJANA: hmmm, sometimes no because sometimes he go in one day early and be three days
LORNA: ok, and then drive back here. That's quite tiring
MINA: is hard
TATJANA: but I think this is just for Christmas now
LORNA: Ok
TATJANA: maybe after Christmas he do just city no or I don't know, Cork. Not far, you know
MINA: in the city, not to London or
TATJANA: yeah, I don't like because
LORNA: do you miss him?
TATJANA: yeah. But he tell me, this is life, you need money ((laughs))
LORNA: this is true. And which company does he work for?
TATJANA: Uh, Euroexpress
LORNA: Euroexpress. So deliveries?
TATJANA: yeah, for clothes, just for clothes. Roches Stores, for many city Roches Stores. And I don't know, any small shopping you know. But expensive!
LORNA: very good. And then does he have to sleep in his truck?
TATJANA: sometimes in the hotel, you know?
MINA: oh!
TATJANA: his boss pay hotel. But same on the truck, have a bed, is nice bed, you know, and same is not cold, is very hot
MINA: weather is very cold
LORNA: but he must get lonely, it must get lonely travelling
TATJANA: no, he likes
LORNA: does he listen to the radio?
TATJANA: sometimes he, you know, alone sing! ((laughs))
MINA: alone! ((laughs))
TATJANA: before I went with him on the Cork and the ( ) and I don't know, many city in Ireland. Same and Belfast
LORNA: oh really?
TATJANA: yeah!
LORNA: very good
TATJANA: he buy for the car something and big sale on Belfast you know
LORNA: oh yes, big market for cars, second hand
TATJANA: yeah, but you can't new and second, for second-hand. Yeah.
LORNA: so, do you ever speak English with him?
TATJANA: no ((laughs)). Sometimes, you know, one or two words, I put on the bus.
LORNA: I asked you this question before, on a questionnaire, do you ever think in English inside your head? Just for yourself?
MINA: yeah!
LORNA: Mina, you must do your homework now
TATJANA: I sometimes think home you know, because full day I thinks in English, you know, because I can't use Bosnian. When I came home, when I back home, I thinks in English but I don't know what is, English or Bosnian ((laughs))
LORNA: confusing! And do you ever think inside your head
MINA: sometime

LORNA: and what do you think?
MINA: sometimes I make sentence, I think this right, this wrong, oh, last week I said this wrong word, not much with this word
LORNA: so you try new things, and can you hear, sorry
MINA: for speak English in my head, with my neighbour
LORNA: with your neighbour
MINA: yeah
LORNA: and what nationality is your neighbour
MINA: Chinese
LORNA: ok
TATJANA: mine Irish, because you know, I live in terrace house
MINA: terrace
TATJANA: yeah, but many people work in my area
MINA: yeah
TATJANA: because I don't look anything, you know, maybe for seven days I don't see my neighbours
LORNA: yeah, my neighbour is retired, I see him almost every day
TATJANA: yeah?
LORNA: he's always very happy, coming and going, to get his post, going for a walk. He sees everything. It's nice. And where to do see yourself in one year's time, two year's time, speaking perfect English? Can you imagine it? ((laughter)).
MINA: yeah
TATJANA: I have much sometimes want it. I have how I looking for three years, you know.
LORNA: and how do you think you'll look?
TATJANA: I thinks my husband like for me, you know, car, driving licence but I'm scared because everything is dangerous you know. Many people dangerous driving. And job. I don't know. Is nice memory.
LORNA: and a child who speaks English as well? Bilingual Bosnian/English?
TATJANA: yeah ((laughs))
LORNA: and do you think you'll speak good English in two years, what do you think your English will be like in two years?
MINA: I think it's good, maybe
TATJANA: because two year's is long time.
LORNA: It is. Because already you have made progress in the short time, you know, since the beginning of this class
TATJANA: yeah, six months just.
MINA: I get letter for come to this school. After I apply, after eight months they sent, they sent to me letter. Come, we have a place for you. I come before this, sorry, before this time, maybe I get better now.
TATJANA: Same, I wait
MINA: how much? How many?
TATJANA: em, I applicate on September when I came in Ireland, and I start the school on same
MINA: same, same
LORNA: there's a long waiting list
TATJANA: because they didn't have place, you know?
LORNA: was it worth it, was it worth waiting?
MINA: yes
TATJANA: yes, because in the home, you can't speak, you can't use words, just looking and thinks, you can't speak
LORNA: you need others to speak
TATJANA: yeah, you need other persons. But who speak slowly, you know? ((laughs)) Many people speak very quickly ((laughs))
LORNA: Irish accents
TATJANA: yeah. One time my husband's friends ask me about English, he said me you know have every good English! You know before when I ask you about something you didn't know anything but, he very speak quick, uh, he very quickly speak, you know. I can't understand any words, just maybe little
LORNA: strong accent?

TATJANA: yeah. He live, Kildare, no Kilkenny
LORNA: Kilkeeny?
TATJANA: Kilkenny, yeah, forty five minutes from city, yeah?
LORNA: Kilkenny, yeah, or Kildare is close as well. Kilkenny is maybe further, an hour and a half
TATJANA: this I think is forty five minutes
LORNA: Kildare maybe
TATJANA: Kildare
LORNA: it's night-time already
TATJANA: yeah.
TATJANA: four fifty-four
LORNA: we'll finish up and you can go back to ((name of teacher)).

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcript of teacher interview

Present:	Susan, Tim
Location:	Small classroom, IILT
Date:	21st May 2004
Interviewer:	Lorna Carson
Duration:	60 minutes

SUSAN: ((Talking about Eduardo)) Architect in his own country, he had the learning skills already. He just needed to be taken by the hand and pointed in the right direction.

TIM: And by the time he'd got to me, he'd been taken by the hand, I'd say, and you'd put work in front of him and he'd do it. He asked me 2 questions throughout the whole course. I'd always check with him, because he was quite a reticent character, and I was wondering maybe he wasn't saying anything, but he when he didn't know something he'd ask, like when he couldn't figure out the thing. So Eduardo was well up there, you know, he reminded me of Vladimir. Vladimir had that capacity to be extremely, highly self-motivated, and also, any question he asked me was quite intelligent, so Vladimir had the ( ) As well. I think.

SUSAN: When Eduardo did that video presentation at the end of the term, he was the only one who did a proper presentation. The others were just sort of chanting stuff, but he did a presentation on Angola, didn't he. You know, population, import, export. He'd researched the subject as a presentation. You know, up until that last week, I'd found him very quiet, very very reserved, but it wasn't because the stuff wasn't going in. That was just his way of learning it. Yeah, and as Tim said, if there was something he didn't get, he'd stop you [and

LORNA: [Eduardo was different from Vladimir in that Eduardo had gone through more formal education. He did adapt very well to the classroom situation.

SUSAN: Look at Li, you know, when he was in the class, he helped him out a lot because we did a lot of one to one stuff, and I think he quite enjoyed that. I don't think the age difference really bothered him. I think he is just a quiet, I think in school when he was studying architecture I think he would have been a quiet student. It's not just a language thing

TIM: He's intelligent, and he applies himself, you know.

LORNA: What about Neda?

TIM: I didn't really get to know Neda so well. But I mean, personality-wise, it was very easy to get to know her, she always enjoyed herself, you know what I mean?

SUSAN: School was like a coffee morning ((laughter)). She used to come in for an hour in the afternoon ((laughter)) she'd pop in.

LORNA: Because the thing is, Neda didn't really want to work

SUSAN: No

LORNA: She was here for, personally I think she was just here to socialise

SUSAN: Yeah, which is, there is nothing wrong with that. Improve her English just a little bit so she can manage. You know, I don't think there is any long term plan to get work, I mean, her plan was to have children and start a family, you know. I think the class in general, because it was quite a tight group, I think she sort of calmed down a little bit when people like Eduardo were quite serious, it was more stuff like that that would get her to put her head down. You know what I mean? She would have been quite happy to sit and chat about recipes all day, you know, or what you do at the weekend. That was her sort of enjoyment. When the others were quite concentrated, quite serious, when they would get down to it she would

TIM: Yeah, if there was an activity, she'd do the work, she'd never not do the work in class, you know. I can't recall her not doing work, or doing something sloppy. She'd always, she always did what was put in front of her. But any feedback, she always chat as soon as possible, you know.

SUSAN: Yeah, yeah.

LORNA: Can you remember any bad days?

SUSAN: Ramadan last year was really tough. I don't know if it was just that month, or the fact that we were in the temporary space, but that whole month was a disaster zone. It was a very low point, she was very tired, she just wasn't very interested. I don't know what was going on personally, I don't know if things were hard at home, but that was a very very hard month. And then when we moved to this school, she started getting interested again. That was very low, she wasn't really interested in anything, finding everything just a little too

difficult, although it wasn't, she was well able for it. Maybe it was just Ramadan, maybe she was just hungry and tired.

LORNA: What about Tomasz?

TIM: Yeah, hard-working character, you know? Still here, still battling away. Jumped two classes, you know. He was in the reading and writing group, but, yeah, he didn't last there. That wasn't the place for him, so eh, Tomasz was motivated to work in class, and then, he would really punch in whatever you put in front of him he would learn. But then, once he learned about the greater context of where his education is going, then that's where the motivation comes. Researching that, and he saw what could be done, the range of possibilities. Em, he was, I gave him all the VEC booklets, and, you know, I didn't, you know, he said he wanted to do something, and then I asked him what he wanted to do. I met him in the corridor and he had more information than I had given him on it, you know, so he must have had a look at that, subsequently. He was quite bored in the weeks of the reading and writing class, it wasn't his level, it wasn't hard enough for him. He enjoyed being challenged, you know, and he wanted to communicate, you know.

LORNA: Yet whenever he first arrived, he was a real ((sound of bored sighing))

SUSAN: Yeah

LORNA: The first two weeks or three weeks, he seemed so bored

SUSAN: Yeah yeah, he wasn't one to hide his, you know, but he was in a very nasty place, you see it with students sometime s, speaking, listening, no problem, able to communicate perfectly well, but reading, writing, hasn't a clue. Where do you start? You know what I mean? Because I've found myself very often, people would be doing things and I would be having a chat with him at the back of the classroom about you know whatever because, you could have a little chat with him, but then reading and writing were a huge problem. But at the same time, I think he was a difficult student to try and meet the needs of, you know, because he had so many different needs, and he was so bored for a long time. I think at the beginning definitely.

LORNA: And then there was a transformation

SUSAN: Yeah, I don't know what was going on but it was almost like kind of. Well, I suppose you are always surprised when someone doesn't have the tools to do homework, or to know what to do in class like checking their own spelling, or something like that. If the person doesn't the way you check it is to take the correct words and check it against your test, you know I think you run into problems. You assume too much. You assume somebody would know that, but I mean, he didn't know a lot of things at the beginning, so once he got going he was absolutely fine. How can you be motivated when you don't know what motivation is? When you don't know that sitting and huffing and puffing and not really opening a book is not an outward image of motivation, do you know what I mean? So your teacher thinks you are bored senseless. And you get into a sort of spiral, because actually you're not bored, you're finding it very difficult, or too easy, or whatever.

TIM: Yeah, I remember covering a class that he was in, and I was talking to a Polish guy, his English wasn't great at all, he wasn't up there at all, you know. That must have been around that time. But even something like spelling, spelling would have been his problem, em, and he knew what he had to do, to eh, improve his spelling. You know what I mean? I know that, you know what I mean?

SUSAN: Yeah that's right. A very very slow start.

LORNA: I remember with him when it suddenly clicked that I was doing a PhD, and suddenly he started asking very very intelligent questions like how do you do your chapters, how often do you see your 'boss', how long will it be, and I think I realised then that there was a real untapped sense of, what's going on here

SUSAN: Yeah yeah, whose class is he in now?

TIM: He's in ((name of teacher's class)). That's the final class, isn't it. It must be R2 upper. He was in the reading and writing group but then he went to R2 lower, that was last time and now this time he's[into

SUSAN: [And he's quite young isn't he
LORNA: I think he was born in 77. Two kids.
LORNA: What about Alina.
TIM: She'd be another one to follow
SUSAN: Yeah, again, she's got that quiet reserved nature like Eduardo, quite happy to put her head down and quietly get on with it, do the work, do the homework
TIM: Do extra homework
SUSAN: Extra homework, and sort herself out with library books and all sorts of things you know
TIM: And her husband, both the same
SUSAN: Really?
TIM: Really two people who are just highly self-motivated and they want to build a life for themselves in Ireland and they are going to pull the stops out, do you know what I mean? And he came back the other day, but anyway, we're getting off the point let's stick to Alina
LORNA: Oh, was he studying here as well?
TIM: Yeah, that's right, and now he's in Ballsbridge College doing English and business studies, I think, with a view to, I don't know if he is doing English and Business Studies or if he got directly into the Accounting Technician course, but I think both of them obviously made the decision that they are going to go forward and build a life for themselves in Ireland and they are doing what has to be done. The first rung on that ladder is getting the language skills, so there is a strong motivation there, and a natural intelligence because for example her partner, he worked in a sheet metal factory, but you talk to the man, and you'd think he was an engineer or something, do you know what I mean. I mean to be a sheet metal worker, I don't think his capacity, was. Very clued in about lots of things, very easy to talk to.
LORNA: And Alina, just six years of secondary education, but yet her study skills
SUSAN: Yeah, they were pretty good. Do you remember the day when I made her cry? Do you remember that day?
LORNA: That was quite a turning point
SUSAN: That was a turning point for her
TIM: Why did she cry?
SUSAN: She was sitting in a corner, when we were in a plenary, she was always sort of sitting in corner, with three Russian speakers. She's Romanian, but they were trying to, they were translating whatever I was saying into Russian and she speaks some Russian I think, so using her third language or whatever, to translate whatever I'm saying, even though what I'm saying is quite straightforward. And this was going on, and she actually was getting frustrated with the two lads and was getting caught up in this three way battle, and then she was missing the next thing that was going on, and there was this one day, we were just doing the answers to some work and question number eight, she was supposed to answer, and she didn't have a clue where we were on the worksheet and it was really straightforward questions and answers. But she was completely lost because she was in this discussion in Russian at the time, and I said something like you should keep in English, and she started crying, and it was just so, oh it was awful, and of course Lorna was in watching, and
TIM: She left ((name of teacher)) class in tears
SUSAN: Did she?
TIM: And I said, what did ((name of teacher)) do to you, what did the nasty ((name)) do to you, and it was something similar, it was a similar situation in that wouldn't in any way be major but it just struck her, you know?
LORNA: I don't think she likes it at all being the attention
TIM: Yeah, that's a good point
SUSAN: And I think that day, I think she was desperate to tell me, I'm not doing anything, it's the two boys, but she would never sneak or anything
LORNA: And hankies were being passed along

SUSAN: Yeah, Neda was passing hankies, and all the room were kind of looking at me as if I was some sort of demon person being really really horrible

LORNA: No, I think they just thought you had stopped the class, and said ok, it's ok, well that would have made it even worse because she would have felt she had been singled out and vulnerable, so it was better just to carry on and pretend nothing happened, and then go for a walk

SUSAN: We went for a walk! ((laughter)). We were doing directions so after the break, we all went for a walk ((laughter)) just to kind of get out of that

LORNA: But that was because Musa and Sergei [were

SUSAN: [That's right, that's what I was going to say

LORNA: If you are the only student who is taking it seriously and it means an awful lot to you

SUSAN: That's right, although she wouldn't have come from a formal background of education or whatever, she had certain things in place, naturally she knew she should be speaking English in English class, she didn't need to be told that, she just knew, and was getting quite frustrated with the two lads who didn't seem to think it was that important

LORNA: And then the day she went to the museum with you, she brought her little daughter with her, and she was translating everything into English for her daughter, and you see how serious she is..

SUSAN: Yeah yeah

LORNA: Adrian?

TIM: You know that impression, the smart money is whatever? Adrian is the smart money. Smart. Really really smart. Absolutely. He's too smart, he's an intelligent character and, definitely, he's working out his agenda.

SUSAN: I think he'll do quite well, and he's got quite a good sense of humour as well

TIM: Yeah, that's true, he's a great character,

SUSAN: And he can take it as well as give it

TIM: Yeah

SUSAN: I can see him in the workplace settling in quite quickly, you know, any workplace, drinking his coffee, getting on with the staff

TIM: He's a smart guy

LORNA: Where do you think school fits into his agenda, up until now. Did he defer?

TIM: Yeah, he did

LORNA: I wonder will he come back?

SUSAN: Mm

TIM: I wonder

SUSAN: I was always convinced, I remember at the beginning a couple of weeks of thinking, he's pretending not to speak English because he seemed to have so much cop-on and yet so little spoken skill, his spoken skills were so low, I was convinced he was pretending, absolutely convinced

LORNA: And he had all these questions

SUSAN: All these questions, and these mini jokes. He could tell a joke without a verb, you know? I was convinced at the beginning he was holding a lot back. But I don't think he was, I think he just had a lot of questions, he was just quite interested

LORNA: Do you think he struggled at all with school? I always had the impression he just breezed in

SUSAN: He was lazy

TIM: Yes, he was lazy

SUSAN: He was one of those people you could imagine in primary and secondary school, just passed exams without studying, do you know what I mean? Turned up for the bare minimum, scraped through, wing it, never really excel but always do quite well, do you know what I mean?

TIM: Do you know where he is?

LORNA: Looking after the kids, I think, because his wife got a job

SUSAN: Oh right

TIM: Just wondering

SUSAN: He was very lazy, he didn't have much motivation to say, right, I'm going to go home and learn how to spell these things

TIM: No I couldn't see that, he just pick it up as he goes along
SUSAN: He'd pick it up as he goes along
TIM: And otherwise, that's fine, that's the way I learn it, it has served me thus far, you know, that's the...
SUSAN: And you know, hugely popular in the class, doing whatever he did
LORNA: A ringleader
TIM: A ringleader
SUSAN: Oh yeah ((all laugh)). I don't think he had huge motivation to master the English language, I mean I don't think he was particularly interested as long as he gets work.
LORNA: He'd been here quite a while before he started class
SUSAN: Yeah yeah, in Ireland? A couple of years. Quite a few years
TIM: What is his wife doing, do you know?
LORNA: His wife works...
SUSAN: I can't remember, but her English was very good, wasn't it?
LORNA: She wasn't a hairdresser was she? Something like that, beauty, or in a shop
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: Em, let's talk about Vladimir
TIM: Vladimir yeah, that's a good name
LORNA: Vladimir, our 100% attendance man
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: I didn't think he'd stick it
SUSAN: No
TIM: Really?
LORNA: The first couple of days, I thought, he is
SUSAN: He's this big man
LORNA: Sitting in this tiny desk
TIM: Right
LORNA: With a pencil
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: He looked as if he hadn't held a pencil in twenty years
SUSAN: Yeah
TIM: Yeah, and you know, if there is anything to do with appearances being deceptive, it's the brain in that man, it's just incredible, you know? He'd never really like, well, I got the impression a couple of time s in class, I was teaching stuff, we'd be going about something you know that wasn't directly connected to learning English, and he'd kind of look at me sideways, and he was polite, you know, he didn't press the point, but he did ask a question one time about the organisation. I explained the point, but he didn't accept it, absolutely extremely hardworking
SUSAN: And again, interesting guy in the sense that he was a bricklayer, you know, that was his life, and he came to Ireland and now he is studying English full-time , you know?
LORNA: Coming every day
SUSAN: Coming every day
LORNA: Punctuality incredible
SUSAN: Chatting to people from all over the world in the classroom. It's just kind of a remarkable growth or whatever. That sounds a bit patronising actually, but you know what I mean? I mean, Vladimir, off he goes
LORNA: He reminds me of Obelix with that moustache
TIM: Yeah ((laughs)), big character
LORNA: But also, this is what he is born to do, he's just such an excellent student
SUSAN: Yeah
TIM: Yeah
LORNA: And I don't know whether it's application or
TIM: I think there is
LORNA: He doesn't look as if he's got huge amounts of self-esteem or confidence
SUSAN: No
LORNA: Or being on top of it as a student of English either
LORNA: But yet

TIM: He does the work, and, eh, another intelligent character, you know? He has a life outside, like Alina's partner, Daniel. Might have been working in a job where you wouldn't be classed as an intellectual giant, but he used to go travelling around, and generally have a lot of interests, a sign of somebody with a wide range of interests, a sign of intelligence I think anyway

LORNA: And natural enthusiasm

TIM: Ah yeah, that's right ((laughs))

LORNA: And his descriptions of barbeques and stuff, big big parties in the hills around, roasting pigs on a spit

TIM: Hence the Obelix!

LORNA: Yeah that's right

TIM: No, and such a good-natured man, you know

SUSAN: Yeah, yeah. He used to impress me, he was one of the keenest students you've ever since. You used to walk into the class and he'd be ready, and would be looking over homework or work

LORNA: And that came naturally?

SUSAN: That came just naturally. I'm sitting here, I'm just waiting for Susan to come in, oh, I'll just check over something. It was just a natural thing, something he just did.

LORNA: Ok, Nicolae. I just saw him actually, so he's still here

SUSAN: Yeah actually, I saw him the other day, I covered for a class the other day. It can work the other way, Nicolae was the sort of person, I thought six months in the system and out there working. I would have thought at the beginning, ok, he's a linguist, he speaks what five languages, he just needs a bit of orientation, or a bit of a breathing space as he sorts out his other stuff, and he'll be out of here in six months. But he's still here, studying away, with ((name of teacher))

TIM: Really?

SUSAN: Yeah, he's in ((name of teacher's class)). I took the class the other day, and ok, it was a bit weird

TIM: Right

SUSAN: He's been straight through. I was just surprised, he's obviously come to a bit of [a

LORNA: [Plateau

SUSAN: Yeah, or I don't know what's happened. It's just, eh, he just seems (.) he's highly motivated, he came in, he seemed to be halfway on the road already, you know,

TIM: Yeah, very robust student, you know, I'm willing to put my back into this, most of the time anyway

LORNA: But I had a very interesting conversation, between him and Rose, about whether, money from the welfare state essentially

SUSAN: Ok

LORNA: Whether you are here in Ireland to take it, and he was very much, I'll just take the money, I just need a bit of English, and Rose was, no no no, whatever you do, you need good language, in any job, and if you want to be part of society. But he was like, yeah, I don't like this country, maybe I'll just go to France. It sounded really like the typical argument about are you a parasite of society or are you going to produce a [constructive

SUSAN: [If his long term plans are to go to France, or to get his passport and go to somewhere else, then perhaps that's where his long term plans are

LORNA: I think it's Ireland, the weather's bad

TIM: Yeah, he's making ( ) He's no fool, you know what I mean?

SUSAN: God no

TIM: So yeah, maybe

SUSAN: Because yeah, I'm just surprised he's still hanging around. This was a year ago, wasn't it, when he was here first? I had him in my class, so it's almost a year ago?

LORNA: Maybe he's just marking time

SUSAN: Or maybe he's not, maybe other things have happened. But I'm just surprised that he's still around. He didn't seem to have improved hugely either

LORNA: No. It's hard to tell but his writing was absolutely abysmal.
TIM: Yeah it was bad
LORNA: Right, em, Ivan
SUSAN: Lovely Ivan
TIM: Absolute star
SUSAN: He's taking a bit of time out, he's back now in the afternoons
LORNA: Wasn't the baby sick?
SUSAN: Yeah, I think they were both sick for a little while so he took a term out
LORNA: He's back now?
SUSAN: Yeah, and I saw him the other day in Tanja's class
TIM: Right
LORNA: Because Ivan, he really struggled when he changed class
TIM: Yeah it was tough, it was a jump up in levels. Yeah, em, after initially, like that time he was working with Neda, and who was the other lady? Somebody who was a Russian teacher or someone from Eastern Europe who had been a teacher, I think, and the level was quite high in that group, and he was, he had a bad day that day, and that was indicative. And after that, he was very very resistent to, eh, being told anything after that, or being helped. I had to basically help Nicolae, who he worked quite closely with him after that, and eh, so that he would see what you are doing. Do you know what I mean?
SUSAN: Yeah yeah
TIM: He was, em, he was just, he was
LORNA: His comprehension was quite poor as well
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: Like, on a group level. I think he was ok at one-to-one conversation, but he just, he found instructions to the class really hard to follow
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: And his writing
SUSAN: His writing was poor as well
TIM: It wasn't very...what level is ((name of teacher)) teaching?
SUSAN: Well that was what I was just thinking, I think it's all mixed up. I think ((name of teacher)) was teaching transition, but I don't think she is now. So he might be still transition level, but if he took a term out that would be, almost, because when he first came in, definitely, he would have been one of the weakest ones in the group, because he came in in September and there were a few new people like Nicolae, Ivan, I think that was it, Vladimir as well, and the others would have been from the term before. He would have been one of the weakest ones but kind of just held on, you know?
LORNA: And again was one of the weakest when he moved up as well
SUSAN: Yeah
TIM: And R1 transition is quite a leap compared to what happens beforehand
SUSAN: He, I don't know what he's, his motivation is kind of, because he goes back and forth to Moldova quite a lot, doesn't he? I mean, he'd take trips and drive back to Moldova, sort of two or three weeks. Perhaps he's not quite fully committed to Ireland, and you know, maybe he thinks he'll be going back, I don't know
LORNA: Yes. And I always wondered if school perhaps hemmed him in, because he always talked about how he liked to be out and about, being outside, he doesn't like being stuck in
SUSAN: Yeah
LORNA: And I just wondering how the classroom was conducive to someone like that, he's a bit of a roamer. How was his punctuality?
SUSAN: He was a good attender, good punctuality as well. When he was in the class you had his full attention
TIM: Yeah, that's right, he would be working. There was a kind of edge of frustration there though, you know? If it didn't work out initially, he could get frustrated, there was a danger with him out of all the people in that group, he'd be the one you'd have to watch because there would be that kind of, I'm going to throw my hat at this now, you know?

SUSAN: I think probably when I had him, he was quite lucky that there was Chen, so he would have been at the bottom. It's a vicious thing to say, but I think pyschologically sometimes it's quite nice to have somebody who is clearly
TIM: Who takes the ( ) off you
SUSAN: Who is clearly a lot worse than you.
LORNA: And Chen was quite happy to assume the role of, I know
SUSAN: I know nothing, I am here to collect coffee money, you know?
TIM: Yeah, yeah I remember covering for you in that class, and Chen was just there, I don't know anything, you know?
SUSAN: Yeah, quite happy, just smiling. And actually one of the most autonomous students you have ever met in your life, because as soon as he didn't understand, he was very happy to do a little bit of work on his letters, get his dictionary out. I don't know if that was a kind of safety net for Ivan as well. Perhaps he could hold on a little bit
LORNA: Yeah, it's tough being the bottom, isn't it? And knowing you are the bottom of the class
TIM: Yeah, that's, eh, that's quite tough
SUSAN: Especially in these classes as well when they can be really harsh, do you know what I mean? Some of the students here are much harsher than students I've ever been in classes with, about saying something is crap, and, I don't understand you
TIM: Yeah yeah, you don't speak English. I've heard that a few times, you don't speak English. I mean that's fairly damning, you know? ((all laugh)). I mean
SUSAN: Yeah, I've been in a class where
TIM: Or, learn English first or something like this, you know?
SUSAN: Your pronunciation, I don't understand you, you know?
LORNA: And all these regional accents, you know? They've never heard an African accent before,
TIM: Yes, exactly, yeah
LORNA: Or a Russian accent
SUSAN: Yeah. So anyway, perhaps it doesn't happen so much when you are in the class, but at break time, you know that all the slagging is going on ((all laugh)), you do!
LORNA: What about Pin?
SUSAN: Yeah, really
LORNA: He's still here?
TIM: He's still here, he's still battling away . His writing was, like out of all the people in the class, who would be, let's say, not in the top third, his writing was lovely, beautiful, correct, simple sentences, beautifully written, you know. He really got the grammar points, you know, but spoke production was a different kettle of fish completely. It was, pronunciation-wise also, em, just the willingness to speak. I mean, he was a kind of a very very reticent character. Remember he told me one story one time, we were doing, I can't remember what it was, the law came up, and there was something he wanted to know, so he spoke about that, you know? He wanted to know how many years you'd get if you killed somebody, and he didn't understand, if I beat him for thirty minutes, I'd kill him. Obviously somebody in Clondalkin is giving him hassle, you know? You've seen the picture in his wallet?
SUSAN: Yeah yeah, with Wanted underneath! ((all laugh))
TIM: Such a lovely character, but the reticence there. Just a, I think, in Pin's case, let's say if you contrast it with Tomasz's progress. Tomasz was in the school, and he learned to learn, we taught him how to learn. And then somewhere along the line, he put his learning to learn and his education together into a wider context, I think that wider context was absent in Pin's case, and I think a lot of it would be, I think pronunciation is such a big thing for student because instantly, that's how you get feedback from people, that's your reinforcement, that's how your self-identity is produced, so Pin would have had a very negative perception of himself. Like a lot of the time in class, trying to just overcome this, you know? And eh, and go through his pronunciation, like take him out of the class, spend x amount of time going through

pronunciation with him. And you know, I made up a tape that he listened religiously on a walkman with just the thing with all the different phonemes, the vocabulary we had done in class

SUSAN: Yeah, and

TIM: But you know, you know what I mean?

SUSAN: It must be so frustrating

TIM: I really

LORNA: That's what his report card said, needs to work on pronunciation, reticence, low self-esteem as a speaker of English

SUSAN: Well like you remember in the class, he would hardly ever look somebody in the eye and speak to them, he'd speak through you to the person. If they were in groups or whatever, he'd try and get you as close to him as possible because he knew that the person wouldn't actually get what he was saying unless he

LORNA: Always liked working with the teacher

SUSAN: Yeah, or he'd get someone who would know, you know, or he'd be writing things down for the person, you know? Absolutely no self-confidence in speaking.

LORNA: No confidence in speaking

SUSAN: Yeah, no self-worth or self-confidence. It must be the most frustrating thing...

LORNA: Yet he's still here. I mean, he seems to be learning English for the sake of learning English. He must see, you know, he must have some sort of purpose

SUSAN: Yeah, well

TIM: Well this is, I don't think that would true of him. I think he's here because, em, not even to learn English, but it's what he does, he's going to come, and he's another student with almost perfect attendance. Because that's what he does. Like Vladimir. Vladimir, you know, a good tradesman shows up every day, you know, and tries his best. This is just what he does, it's an innate work ethic, to come and learn English

LORNA: But yet there's not that wider context, what I am going to do with this knowledge

TIM: Yeah, and em, I can't remember what happened, you know in the assessments we broach this, what do you want to do. I mean, in Vietnam he just worked, he just worked hard, that's what he did in Vietnam, you know?

LORNA: Did he work in gas?

TIM: Can't remember

SUSAN: He used to say businessman, that covers everything

LORNA: Businessman ((laughs)), always sounds dodgy!

TIM: Yeah! Businessman, yeah

SUSAN: But it's so true though, that his writing, he could kind of work, if you could find something where attention to detail, precision, is highly valued, that would be his area, using his writing. The hours of homework he would put in, you know, hours and hours. And like, he'd have all those, did you see those books he used to get out of the library, bizarre Vietnamese/English grammar books from 1952 or whatever. He'd have sentences like "I do believe that's my martini"! ((laughter))

LORNA: And he'd show you them

SUSAN: But hours of work and back and forth to the library all the time. I don't know what's going to happen, will he have a breakthrough, will he suddenly one day wake up and his pronunciation's a bit clearer? That's all he wants.

TIM: After he finished in my class, he went into ((name of teacher)) class, because ((name of teacher)) puts a lot of emphasis on pronunciation. I should have a chat with ((name of teacher)) to see how he is doing, you know? I think he is making some progress all right.

LORNA: Good. And finally, what about, I know she wasn't in your class Tim, but what about Rose?

SUSAN: Ah yeah. What, is she president of Ireland yet? She's lovely, great, just actually great. Far too good really for the level, but her reading and writing needed a bit of work so in a way we still had something to offer, but she was ready to go, wasn't she?

LORNA: she's off to do a FÁS course now
SUSAN: is she, where is doing it, in Jervis Street? Oh, a FÁS course, she not doing English with computers
LORNA: I don't think so. I must find out where she is going. Just a real, "I want to make money, I want to work"
TIM: really?
LORNA: When we had the interviews, "I want to speak perfect English like an Irish woman. And they were all saying, it's impossible, but she was "I don't care, I want to do it.
TIM: I love that, it's a great attitude, isn't it?
SUSAN: yeah, very focussed, very sort of
TIM: where was she from
SUSAN: Congo. Her daugher lives in Paris, doesn't she, with sister?
LORNA: yes, in Brussels. So she tries to go over as often as possible, she tries to save up to go
SUSAN: that's difficult
TIM: what does she look like?
LORNA: her hair changes regularly
TIM: oh right, yeah, course
LORNA: she's quite tall
SUSAN: big
LORNA: they called her J-Lo, which she didn't particularly like
SUSAN: no she didn't, did she? She's just great, absolutely great. All set up, knew what she had to do, spoken interaction and production absolutely faultless, needed a little bit of grammar here and there, a little bit of reading and writing. She jumped two levels didn't she? To R2 Lower and then to ((name of teacher)), so she went through the system in three courses, four months, four months, four months then Jervis Street or FÁS. Fast-track basically. Very interesting woman, very tough woman
TIM: just knows what she wants and is going for it
SUSAN: yeah
LORNA: that sort of, oh sorry
SUSAN: no, just some of her discussions, totally on to the like, if anyone would criticise Ireland, like the weather or the traffic or the smoking on the buses, she'd be straight to the "you're a guest in this country, this is a good life let's make the most of it".
LORNA: Yeah, and Adrian talking about taking the money from the Welfare State, she really laid into him. Tough, and a real feminist as well. "You don't know what is lie for a woman!". She really stood up for herself. But I'm just wondering, how does that, I did that questionnaire about enjoyment of English, the effort they put in, the challenge, whether they were just learning English for a job, whether they speak in English inside their heads sometimes, whether they felt comfortable speaking English in front of the class, so basically interest/enjoyment, optimal challenge, belief in self or self-esteem. Would you see patterns in those students in terms of self-esteem? Or belief that you can get the job done? Interest/enjoyment, optimum challenge. Do you think any of them fit into those sort of
SUSAN: well certainly Rose, I don't think anyone, you know. I think Neda had a fair amount of self-belief you know, very comfortable
TIM: absolutely, absolutely
SUSAN: and if it was wrong, no problem, "you understand, it's ok" and she'd always write, it wasn't always right but you'd always understand
LORNA: and like, that is what happened for Tomasz, that sort of optimal challenge, because suddenly he was challenged about week 5 and he cast aside his shrugs of boredom and it only became the occasional shrug. But yet Ivan, it was just, the transition to your class was just, I don't know how long that lasted, but at the beginning that was not an optimal challenge. It was just one step beyond
TIM: yeah, it was just beyond his reach, yeah

SUSAN: I don't know I'd say that any of them would say they learn English because they are interested in learning English, you know? Objective you know, oh, I have an interest in learning English

LORNA: no I think there was interest more in class, an enjoyment of coming to class

SUSAN: yeah, ok coming to the class

LORNA: coming to the class was enjoyable like

SUSAN: give them something to do

LORNA: more like an activity. And then you have like Pin and Vladimir who as you say come as tradespeople. They've signed up for this course, they are going to

TIM: yeah, they are going to do what's put in front of them to the best of their ability, you know. And Alina also, something similar. This is what has to be done.

LORNA: can I ask you, because in terms of understanding motivation, ups and downs though the year, due to perhaps challenges which are simply to much, or it doesn't apply to their life outside school, or they are just finding it dull, but that can be mediated by things, things that can prop it up or help it as it carries on, can you think of things that helped or hindered, not for everybody, but things that you think have really boosted someone's motivation, or things, activities or situations that have really hindered them, not as motivated as usual.

TIM: well as regards becoming motivated, that whole thing of getting the class to define the content syllabus, what do you want to learn, is motivating, where is it difficult, what do you want to learn that's motivating. Because it's practical. Particularly in something like health or government officials because that's, we had this problem yesterday, I had this problem last week, and then you go outside and you get reinforcement, do you know what I mean? And it's extremely practical and for that reason, that's something that motivates. It's a situation which can be as much as possible replicated in the class. I think the getting a routine of doing the, maybe for students who, I don't know why I have Tomasz in mind, I think it's because he has enjoyed it so much on Fridays doing the descriptors, I can do this, I can do this. That is, and I'm going back to your idea of self-belief, it's affirming for you to do. To have a little victory. When victory becomes a habit, that's what we want to inculcate. In students, success becomes a habit, you know, and success becomes a habit, half the time the challenge is increased if at all possible you know even small victories, doing that sometimes is just a drop in the ocean but anyway, what were we talking about? ((laughter)) Sorry, I was just venting

SUSAN: I like the appetite thing actually, because actually I was just thinking about this time last year, when we were in the 'space' I remember that Neda strikes me as because she had a particularly bad couple of weeks then but almost everybody else, there was something about being able to tell me, well we've got four weeks here, what are we going to do in four weeks? It became a very real time-frame. This kind of week 1, week 17, doesn't always make a lot of sense. Right, we've got four real weeks, they are called Monday to Friday, you know, in the real world, and we move into our new stuff, what are we going to do. It's got to be quiet, because we are sharing a room with ((names of two teachers)), and I found that you know what, two thirds through the term there is usually a drop in motivation. The fun has worn off, the novelty for you is starting to wear a bit thin thank you very much, and suddenly you start to be a little bit harsher, and the language in the class and dictionaries and all that stuff. And I found that a really good prop in a way because it was so real, the one time that we set targets where I felt that everybody truly believes this, not just where you have five or six of them going over it, and someone doesn't want to telephones because I never speak English on the telephone. And there was one time when the whole group were kind of right, it was very effective, it was a period of time you could actually see because we were actually in a different building, that was a prop.

LORNA: sometimes I wonder about the target and to what extent are they just coming up with this just to please you

SUSAN: but when you have fifteen people and you try to have a democratic system you are never going to please you know, if you've got two thirds of the group you are doing well in fairness

TIM: yeah yeah absolutely

SUSAN: and you can't have fifteen different targets, you can't, unless you want a nervous breakdown before the Christmas holidays

LORNA: yes, because one of your students was saying, these targets are going to take us two weeks to get through, not one. And I remember him telling everybody, we are going to need a full day for each of these things

SUSAN: that's great though. But a hindrance to that motivation sometimes is the way students move up and down the school. Like Alina took a real big knock when she didn't leave my first class and stayed with me for a second one, and although I was moving up a level, that was kind of academic, we had four months at A0 and then we had A1, and telling her that, oh, it's ok, I'm moving up as well, I don't think she actually believed me, you know, because we were staying in the same group, same classroom, and I think her motivation dropped then a little bit

LORNA: because she thought that she'd been kept behind

SUSAN: I think she'd thought she'd been left behind, and she wouldn't have minded a change of teacher, a change of scenery, four months is quite a long time

LORNA: whereas Adrian was absolutely outraged that he was going to have to change and not have you! I think he wanted to have you the whole time

SUSAN: yeah, and actually I wouldn't have minded but I think Alina definitely went back a couple of steps there in her own feelings, things outside the classroom you don't want to talk about those. The neverending,

LORNA: yes, but in a way it is neverending, once you start to talk about childcare and home situations and buses and how far away you are from school

SUSAN: and social welfare, racism,

LORNA: you think where do you start?

TIM: that's it, but the learning environment is a positive place, that's really really important, it's, and I've learned this with subsequent classes, it's a time when you can leave everything outside the door and then subjects, objects, this is an adjective, just the actual nuts and bolts of learning a language and doing classes and the other stuff is just left outside, you know, and that's a

SUSAN: left outside the class but you are there with them, and it's not left out the class for the 20 hours, and for students you think that have huge intrinsic motivation, a year and a half on, Nicolae is still hanging on, you know, things are still, things must be going on. How can you reconcile that? Huge motivation, pretty good learning skills, fantastic teachers ((laughter)) yet it doesn't always catch, what is the cement?

LORNA: because it's a comfort zone, the fact that the next step is too big

TIM: that's a good point the next step being too big, there is a lot of fear, what am I going to do next? Tomasz's pal Alexander was saying that, what am I going to do next? There is an awful lot of fear about that, and this is what I know, I know this and I know what the next bit is, and that's, and so, I always try and sell FAS after this, it's set up, it's for IILT students generally, you get clear guidance, it's good to look around now, have an idea of this is what you can do, this is the way it goes because there is a lot of fear about that, an awful lot of fear. And actually one of the things, there was this student who could write perfectly in her own language but who was dyslexic, chronically dyslexic in English, and I was just wondering, how can that be? I know you have to be a specialist to know about this, but I was just wondering about trauma and the case of some of the UN refugees, as opposed to parents of Irish born children. Because there is a certain amount of trauma there, and learning skills, when there is is trauma learning is going to go to the wall, one of the first things to do, your attributes, your ability to learn, your head's too wrecked you know, I assume. Chronically dyslexic in English but able to write in her own language. Maybe it was just the level of skills she picked up, I don't know, I really don't.

SUSAN: but you do, you get a level of insight into these things. The other day, one of the students in the class had a bit of a problem with his bus ticket on Monday, there was a bit of a shenanigans about bus tickets on Monday and he basically said that you know, he hates getting on the bus and using the ticket, and if it doesn't work on the last day, because then you have to get your money out and you hold up the whole queue. And even when he was explaining this, I was starting to get a bit sweaty myself, oh my god, my bus ticket is not working now do I have money and is it one twenty or one thirty oh the bus driver is waiting for me oh somebody is shouting at me. That kind of panic, that feeling of fear that you, you just assume that everybody brings their rucksack and their apple for break and they go home and do their homework diligently. It's just not the case, it's just not the case with our learners.

TIM: you are in another culture you know, in a lot of cases it is very very different and a lot of the students here as opposed to migrants who are coming to Ireland with an education and x amount of generally speaking, knowledge and expectation about what they are getting themselves into, a lot of our students don't have that same level of knowledge. And it's going to be something that gets built up as the population diversifies and there is more subcultures, knowledge within particularly groups, you get this kind of tacit knowledge-sharing. That's a huge thing.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix C: closed-format questionnaire

Questions for Lorna

No ☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺ Yes

1 I like speaking English in class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

2 I like the weekly review on Friday_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

3 Sometimes I think in English in my head_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

4 I think choosing targets is difficult_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

5 It is a good idea to have targets in English class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

6 I am happy to speak English in front of the others in class__☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

7 I study better when I have targets_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

8 The weekly review on Friday is a good idea_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

9 I like working on my targets_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

10. I like studying new things in class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

11. My English is better since coming to class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

12. The weekly review on Friday is boring _____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

13. I like when we do easy things in class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

14. I am confident when I speak English in class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

15. I think setting targets is boring_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

16. I like learning English in class_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

17. I like things in class when I think a lot _____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

18. Learning English often makes me feel happy_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

19. Learning English is easy for me_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

20. I just learn English to get a job_____☹ 1 2 3 4 5 ☺

Thank you very much!

Appendix D: Data from open-ended questionnaires

Administered: 19th April 2004

Completed by: EDUARDO
IVAN
NICOLAE
PIN
TOMASZ
VLADIMIR

Spelling has been corrected where it seriously impeded understanding

List of questions, open-ended questionnaire:

1. Do you generally feel motivated in class?
2. When you are motivated, how do you feel?
3. What you are not motivated, how do you feel?
4. How do you make yourself more motivated?
5. Do you feel in control of (in charge of) your learning?
6. Are you learning what you want to learn?
7. What things make you feel better (happy, more comfortable) in class?
8. What do you think of the Friday review and the targets in the folder?
9. Is it easy or difficult to choose these targets?
10. Do you think these targets in the folder help you learn English?
11. Can you tell me about some of your personal targets in class this year?
12. Can you tell me about your personal targets after you leave school?
13. In this past year, do you think you have changed?
14. How is this class different to other language classes you have had?

1. Sometimes I feel motivated in class, sometime not
2. When I'm motivated I feel more comfortable in class
3. When I'm not motivated I feel unhappy in class
4. I can make myself more motivated if I speak with colleagues or study more
5. I feel control of my learning
6. I want to learn more grammar, vocabulary, understand and answer question and give additional information in an interview situation
7. Grammar and speech are the things make me happy in class
8. The Friday review and the targets in the folder are good idea
9. Is not difficult to choose targets
10. Yes the targets in the folder help me to learn English
11. My personal targets in class this year are learn more grammar and work hard
12. After leaved school I want going to FAS
13. Yes in this past year I have more changed
14. The different are now I can speak, write and understand English.

D:1 Responses, EDUARDO

1. I don't felt motivated in class
2. When I was motivated, I left my problems. When I am happy I describe some words.
3. When I'm unhappy, I told to teacher I don't understood, please repeat.
4. I think with teacher is easy to learn English
5. Yes I learn some English
6. Yes I learning some percentages I want to learn more long time for me to understand English
7. When I understand maybe 50-80% English
8. I think is very good idea
9. For choose targets is easy for learn is difficult
10. Yes I think those targets help me to learn English
11. grammar
12. I want to learn some English after that I want to start the job
13. I'm changed I learn many words in English
14. For me is heavy, is easy for peoples how *understand* (undertend) English

D:2 Responses, IVAN

1. I didn't have a motivated in generally but only one problem for me it is a very small desk.
2. When I had motivated, I could use a good words to describe yourself when I was happy in class.
3. When I am not motivated, I felt very good. I don't like to describe yourself when I was unhappy in class.
4. When I make *myself* (yourself) more motivated when I want to learn what I want.
5. I feelt in control of learning, I can choose what target I want to learn.
6. Not everything what I want to learn, for example, I want to learn more about construction.
7. The things who feld me better is when all class speak about very interestings thinks.
8. I think the review on Friday helpt me to remember what I learn last weks.
9. Is not easy to choose targets, because many students have a different idea about this.
10. Yes I think the targets in the folder help me to learn English.
11. For me personaly, I want to learn two targets, about construction and new words from Driving Theory Test to get Driver Licence.
12. I want to learn more about computer.
13. In this past year, I learn many new words, and I anderstend *much* (mathe) better English
14. I don't sea a diferants bot I like to learn withe you.

D:3 Responses, NICOLAE

1. I don't feel motivated in class.
2. I haven't motivated, I feel many words, no I can't remember. I always happy in class.
3. I sometime unhappy in class because I don't understand and always forget words.
4. I think study in school more time, I can understand some English.
5. I think program derive from teacher.
6. I think everything learning teacher in the class.
7. I think make feel better be my teacher teach 50/50 not many 100%. Student not remember.
8. I think Friday review good, and the targets in the folder, that ok!
9. It's sometime easy, sometime difficult, I don't no why.
10. I think my teacher help everybody to learn English
11. No I can't not
12. I don't know, everything dependent on teacher
13. I don't think so
14. I think this class same.

D:4 Responses, PIN

1. Do you generally feel motivated in class? YES
2. When you are motivated, how do you feel? GRAMMAR
3. What you are not motivated, how do you feel? SPELING
4. How do you make yourself more motivated?
5. Do you feel in control of (in charge of) your learning? YES
6. Are you learning what you want to learn? YES
7. What things make you feel better (happy, more comfortable) in class? WHEN WE SPEAK
8. What do you think of the Friday review and the targets in the folder? THE REVIEW IS BORING
9. Is it easy or difficult to choose these targets? NO
10. Do you think these targets in the folder help you learn English? YES
11. Can you tell me about some of your personal targets in class this year? ALL ARE OK
12. Can you tell me about your personal targets after you leave school? I'M GOING TO LEARN COMPUTER
13. In this past year, do you think you have changed? YES
14. How is this class different to other language classes you have had? THIS CLASS IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN ANOTHER CLASS

D:5 Responses, TOMASZ

(only student not to write responses on a separate sheet)

1. In generally I am happy wet may English class
2. I am happy use and could learning about present futur past and put into *correct* (coret) order *with* (wet) coret *sentences* (sates) and my speling
3. I am unhappy when I am therd and my *brain* (breyn) *didn't* (dedent) work
4. I think targeds motivated *teacher* (thecer) and student wot is *easy* (isi) to lern
5. Yes I am feelt charge in my learning in class
6. I want to learn in class read and *write* (roit) al student and thecer will control
7. I think make more feel better ask of students how to by a work
8. I am very hapy wet computer extras and review is a not to bad
9. For my is a difficult to choose these targets, becus I am a bad student *lazy* (leisi)
10. I will think these targets help my learn English
11. Write about myself and my dily life (family, school, hobbies)
12. I want going to work
13. I think mor changed is my Englis language
14. Is a more have to learn English for my *because* (bicous) I don't work.

D:6 Responses, VLADIMIR

Appendix E: Student records

Adrian, 09-12-1973	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** none given
R1 Middle, Sept 2003 (R1 Lower Aug)	
R1 Transition, Jan 2004	
R2 Transition, May 2004	**Marital status:** Married, 2 children
Deferring till Sept as on holiday in summer.	
Wife got new job, deferred till Jan 2005 to look after son.	**Education**: Professional footballer, 9 years. Secondary education.
Report 02-09-2003 -> 23-12-2003	
Attendance: 89%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment:	
Progress report: Massive progress over the term. He started with very few words but a natural ability – all I did was hand him some worksheets. His grasp of grammar is astonishing, and he gets new stuff about 20 seconds before I've taught it. He's fantastic and has such a thirst. He keeps me on my toes and is a pleasure to teach.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 92%	**Punctuality:** Fair
Teacher's comment:	
Progress report: Adrian is a self-motivated student who enjoys his classes and is continually self improving his knowledge. R2 Transition will not be a huge challenge to him. **Recommendation:** R2 Transition.	

E:1 Progress report ADRIAN

Alina 13-09-1974	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** Maybe hairdresser.
May 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003 R1 Middle	
Jan 2004, R1 Transition	**Marital status:** married with one girl
April 2004, deferred until Sept 2004. Husband has place on FAS course, childcare problems	
Offered place R2 Lower, don't know if she has started yet.	**Education**: secondary education, worked in shop for 4 years. No English at all on entry, never studied it at school.
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 91%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: You show hard work, kindness to other students and careful attention to your English	
Progress report: Great. I would like to see her take more risks but she's come a long way. Her writing is so meticulous, very careful. Her spoken production is lovely but interaction still needs a lot of work.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 90%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Very well done Alina! Your work this term was excellent!	
Progress report: Alina is a very strong, self-motivated student. She does extra homework regularly. Her only area for improvement is her spoken production – practice will improve her fluency. She would like to go to R2 Upper and her skills and work ethic are up to this.	

E:2 Progress report ALINA

Eduardo, 27-04-1960	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:**
May 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003, R1 Middle	
Jan 2004, R1 Transition, TIM	**Marital status:** Married with children
May 2004, R2 Lower	
Is to start R2 Upper Jan 2005, deferred as wife has place on course and childcare problems.	**Education**: Third level education (architect). Speaks Portuguese, Kikongo, French.
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 94%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: A gentleman! Kind, considerate and diligent. Eduardo, congratulations on a wonderful course.	
Progress report: Much more confident now – a very funny student who has really blossomed this term. Works exceptionally well in small groups, still finds pair work too intense though. A lovely man and an excellent student.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 88%	**Punctuality:** Very good
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your work this term. Please practice speaking as much as possible in your next class. Good luck!	
Progress report: Eduardo's written and spoken production are above average for the end of R1Transition. He has few problems with comprehension and communication. His fluency will improve with more practice. It was a pleasure to have Eduardo in the class.	

E:3 Progress report EDUARDO

Ivan, 11-09-1976	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** English course then a training course for driving
Sept 2003, R1 Middle	
Jan 2004, R1 Transition	
May 2004, R2 Lower	**Marital status:** married with 2 children
May 2004, wants to defer due to health issues, newborn baby unwell. Deferred till Jan 2005.	
	Education: Secondary education, 3 years of vocational college education, mechanics. Lorry driver previously.
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 91%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Well done Ivan. Keep working as hard as you are now and you will achieve everything you hope for.	
Progress report: Great stuff. Ivan was an absolute beginner and now can communicate easily and with confidence. He's a pleasure. Needs to improve his writing – needs to learn a few more study skills but he's come a long way. Excellent.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 94%	**Punctuality:** good
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your hard work. Please review your corrections and spellings and this will help you improve your English.	
Progress report: Ivan is an effective communicator. He tends to make persistent errors in written and spoken production so it is important that he reviews his corrections. Ivan found the class tough in both the effort and the hours. I was happy with his work.	

E:4 Progress report IVAN

Mina, 02-06-1971	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:**
May 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003, R1 Middle Warning letter twice in Sept	
end of Sept 2003 R1 Transition	**Marital status:** Married
Jan 2004, R2 Lower	
May 2004, R2 Upper, no show	**Education**: No 3rd level study. Speaks Kurdish and Arabic.
Report 30-09-2003 ->19-12-2003	
Attendance: 80%	**Punctuality:** good
Teacher's comment: Great student. Hard-working and always asking questions which will help you to continue improving!	
Progress report: Mina is an eager and hard-working student, co-operative, friendly and a team worker.	

E:5 Progress report MINA

Neda, 08-03-1974	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** English, and training
May 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003, R1 Middle	
Jan 2004, R1 Transition	**Marital status:** married (husband doctor, speaks fluent English)
Started, but postponing till May as moving house. No news.	
	Education: Almost no English, had learned a little in school, but knows alphabet. Had worked in Inst of Economics govt dept as book-keeper for 3 yrs.
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 76%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Neda is a delight to teach	
Progress report: She's come a long long way. She actually makes sense when she speaks English now. Her writing needs some more attention and spelling too. She thinks vowels are illegal. A great all-rounder though, always happy, always committed. Can't wait to see her progress in the future. *Comment by office: 76% attendance not good enough, class will be suspended unless drastic improvement.*	

E:6 Progress report NEDA

Nicolae, 13-01-1973 (1758)	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** maybe building, maybe truck driver.
R1Middle, Sept 2003 Warning letter 05-09-2003	
R1 Transition, Jan 2004	
R2 Lower, May 2004 Offered place but deferred until Sept 2004, trip to Moldova for medical treatment	**Marital status:** Married with one boy
R2 Lower, Sept 2004	**Other languages:** speaks Russian, French.
	Education: College education 3 years, engineering/construction
Report 02-09-2003 -> 23-12-2003	
Attendance: 91%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Well done Nicolae, you have come a long way. Thank you for everything and best of luck.	
Progress report: Brilliant –started course reserved and a bit moody. Got into the mood and started joining in more. Spoken stuff really improved but needs to concentrate on writing. A lovely student. **Recommendation:** After R1Tr, TIM's reading and writing class.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 90%	**Punctuality:** good
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your hard work and for asking questions in class. To improve your English, review your corrections.	
Progress report: Nicolae has strong reading, comprehension and communication skills. He completes class tasks with determination and will always clarify anything he doesn't understand. He is an intelligent student and a pleasure to have in the class. Small grammatical errors hamper written and spoken production, as I think communication is perceived as more important than accuracy.	

E:7 Progress report NICOLAE

Pin, 05-06-1963	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** Improve English
R1 Middle, May 2003	
Repeat R1 Middle Sept 2003	
R1 Transition, Jan 2004	**Marital status:** Married no children.
R1 Transition, May 2004	
R2 Lower, Sept 2004	**Education**: School until 17. Worked for gas company
Report 12-05-2003 -> 29-08-2003	
Attendance: 95%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Pin is a very pleasant man. He works extremely hard, co-operates well in class and is very attentive always.	
Progress report: Pin has progressed a little over the last few months but not much. He's extremely timid and shy so doesn't push himself very much in class. He works at home though. His Vietnamese language background gives him the usual impossible difficulties to deal with when learning English. His writing and spelling are excellent but his spoken production and pronunciation are dire. His understanding is pretty weak also. He's definitely not ready for a transition class.	
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 98%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Progress report: Lovely, has worked so hard. Needs to put in a lot of work on pronunciation. His writing is beautiful. He's a lot of fun – especially in role plays. Always in a good mood.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 92%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your hard work in class. Please continue to work on your pronunciation with the tape of exercises. You must do this everyday.	
Progress report: Pin's reading comprehension is better than his listening and speaking. His pronunciation hampers his intelligibility and so he does homework around this which is slowly yielding results. His written production is sufficient for R1Transition level. Pin's attendance reflects his efforts inside and outside the class. Despite encouragement he still lapses into reticience when he doesn't understand something.	
Report 05-05-2004 -> 27-08-2004	
Attendance: 89%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Pin is a very good student who has worked hard this term and is very respectful in class. **Progress report:** Pin has done very well this term. His pronunciation has improved greatly but he will need to continue working on it. His writing skills are very good and he has been consistent in filling in his Irish Diary. Reading has improved although he is quite slow. Three areas for attention: reading, speaking, listening with particular focus on speaking and pronunciation. A particular point of interest is that Pin has become more confident with his improvement in pronunciation.	

E:8 Progress report PIN

Rose, 26-10-70	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** receptionist in a hotel or something similar
Sept 2003, R1 Middle	
Jan 2004, R2 Lower (moved up 2 levels) warning letter 03-04	*Had moved from Dundalk for place in school.*
May 2004, R2 Upper	**Marital status:** not married, 2 children
Warning letters May, June, July.	
Completed Aug 2004 - FAS	**Education**:
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 80%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your amazing energy and humour	
Progress report: Amazing – this woman gets involved with every theme, activity, discussion. So full of energy and opinion. As a result she has progressed at such speed. I hardly recognise her these days. Fully committed to her learning and has a lovely loyalty to her classmates and her teacher. **Recommendation:** R2 lower, needs that kind of extra challenge.	

E:9 Progress report ROSE

Samira, 01-08-1977	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** Computer Science
Sept 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003, changed to R1 Middle class	
Jan 2004, recommended R2 Lower (skipping level) No show in Jan	**Marital status:** married no children.
Comes Feb 2004,R2 Lower	
May 2004 R2 Upper suspended due to non attendance. Appeal.	**Education**: Secondary education, 6 years.
On waiting list for Sept 2004. Offered place Sept 2004 for R2 Upper, warning letter attendance.	
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 96%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Thank you for a lovely course. Thank you for your full participation during Ramadan. Good luck with your bright future.	
Progress report: A lovely young woman. She's incredible. We've talked about her going to university in Ireland and she's a great candidate for academia eventually. Her spelling is the only thing that let's her down because she's great speaking and always fully engaged. Recommendation skip 2 levels to R2 Lower.	

E:10 Progress report SAMIRA

Tatjana, 31-01-1979	
Class progression:	**Long Term Goal:** Had been hairdresser for 2 years.
May 2003, R1 Lower	
Sept 2003, R1 Transition,	
Dec 2003, postponing as pregnant	**Marital status:** Married, expecting baby.
	Education: Secondary school. No 3rd level. No English at all on entry, never studied it at school.
Report 02-09-2003 ->23-12-2003	
Attendance: 93%	**Punctuality:** Very Good
Teacher's comment: It has been a pleasure teaching you, you are quick to learn new things and I'm sure you will make great improvements if you continue studying.	
Progress report: Great worker, team worker, speaker. She has made lots of progress and picks things up easily. Great attentance and respect for others.	

E:11 Progress report TATJANA

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Tomasz, 30-01-1978</th></tr>
<tr><td>Class progression:</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Long Term Goal: Open own business</td></tr>
<tr><td>R1 Jan 2003 No show; Feb 2003 moved house, no letter, waiting list.</td></tr>
<tr><td>R1 Lower, May 2003, Warning letter 16-07-2003</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>R1 Middle, Sept 2003</td><td colspan="2">Marital status: Married, 2 children</td></tr>
<tr><td>R1 Transition Jan 2004</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>R2 Lower May 2004</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Education: Finished school aged 16. Worked for father's business.</td></tr>
<tr><td>R2 Lower, July & Sept 2004</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Report 12-05-2003 -> 29-08-2003</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Attendance: 91%</td><td>Punctuality: Excellent</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Teacher's comment: A pleasure for any teacher. Tomasz you work so hard and approach every activity with wit, energy and commitment.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Progress report: Brilliant. Suddenly one day in Week 5 Tomasz started speaking English! He's fascinating. His writing has improved and he has much more confidence speaking. Joins in with everything and enjoys his time. Lovely.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Attendance: 90%</td><td>Punctuality: Good</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Teacher's comment: Thank you for your work this term. Please continue to watch your spellings and review your corrections.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Progress report: Tomasz is a self-motivated and fast learner. His core skills are sufficiently strong for his next class. He needs to reread his spelling corrections to improve his spelling however.</td></tr>
</table>

E:12 Progress report TOMASZ

VLADIMIR, 21-04-1968	
Class progression	**Long Term Goal** (on entry to school): Learn English and then work, not sure yet what he'd like do to
R1Middle, Sept 2003	
R1 Transition, Jan 2004	
R2 Lower, May 2004	Married, 2 children
R2 Upper, Sept 2004	
	Education: Finished school at 16
Report 02-09-2003 -> 23-12-2003	
Attendance: 100%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Full participation, humour and careful attention	
Progress report: Brilliant! Speaking and writing hugely improved due to a massive amount of work on his behalf. 100% in a term with so much disruption! Absolutely brilliant. Would like to see him improve more and more throughout the school year.	
Report 19-01-2004 -> 30-04-2004	
Attendance: 98%	**Punctuality:** Excellent
Teacher's comment: Thank you for your hard work. Please remember to practice your speaking as much as possible in your next class.	
Progress report: Vladimir is a fast learner. Despite occasional hiccoughs, his writing has improved. His reading and comprehension skills are sturdy enough for this next class, and more than sufficient for the present one. Vladimir is quite a reticient person which hampers his spoken production. This is the area that will require extra work. It was a pleasure to teach Vladimir as he enjoys a laugh and his classes.	

E:13 Progress report VLADIMIR

Appendix F: Friday review worksheets

Review worksheet, May – August 2003

IILT R1 Module: Dossier

Review of week _____

How many worksheets do you have from the week?

Five sentences from the week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Was the week good, not good, ok or very good?

Now look in your portfolio.

Look at page_____

What can you do?

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Review worksheet, Sept. – Dec. 2003

IILT R1 Module: Dossier

Date

_____

My Personal Attendance Record

Fill in the dates for the week. Put a tick beside the days you came to class (√)

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

What is your percentage for this week? _____

*(e.g. 4 out of 5 days = 80%). Remember the school **expects** you to have 85% or more.*

What is your total percentage for this course?

_____

My personal dictionary

Write 30 key words from this week

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Review of the week

Write five key sentences from the week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

How was the week?

Excellent, very good, ok or not good?

Why?

_____

_____

Now look in your Milestone Portfolio at page _____

What can you do?

This is my target	I can now do this with help	I can now do this without help

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Appendix G: example of class handout

IILT R1 Module: Everyday Life

Worksheet 1

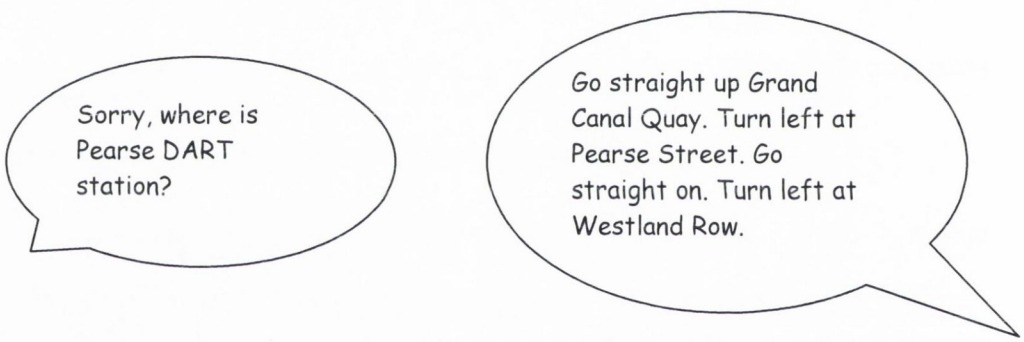
Directions

I can...

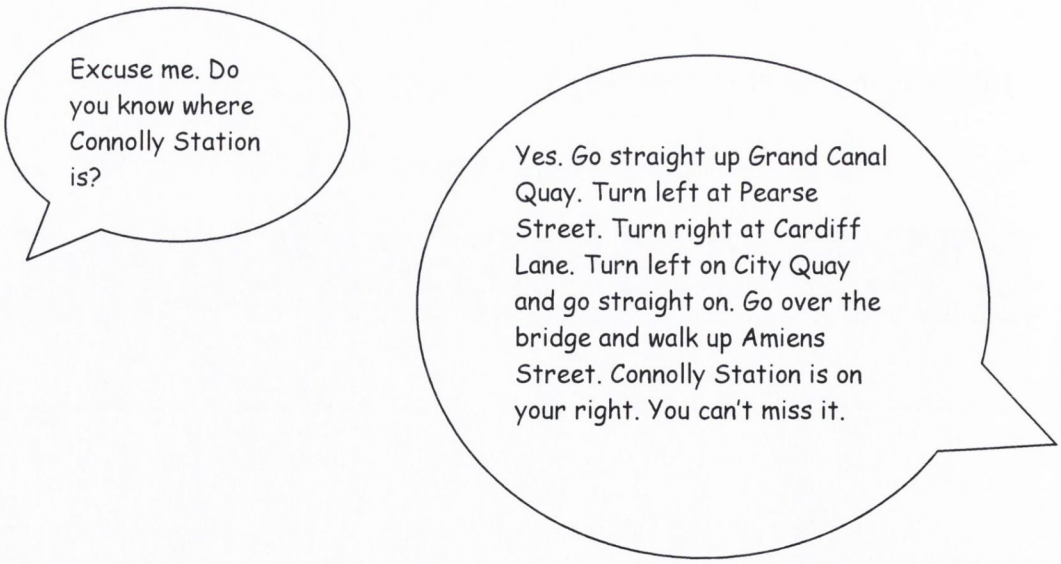
	With a lot of help	With a little help	With no help
...ask for and understand simple directions			

Portfolio page 20

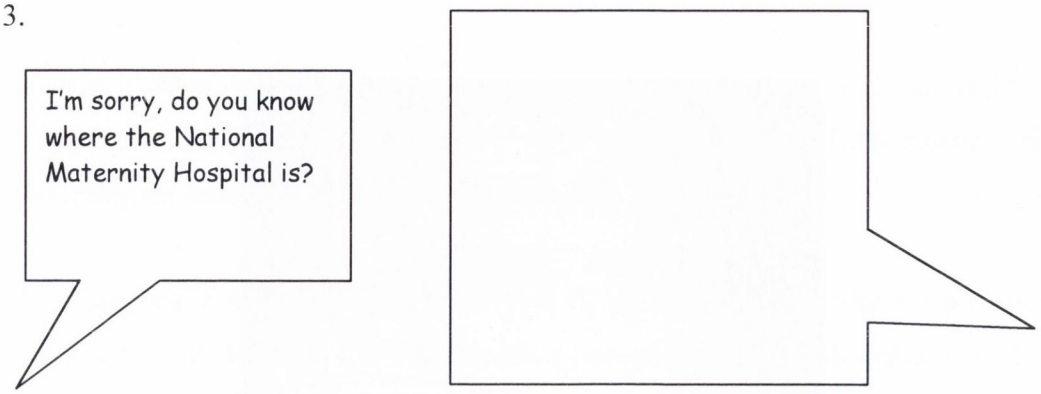
1.



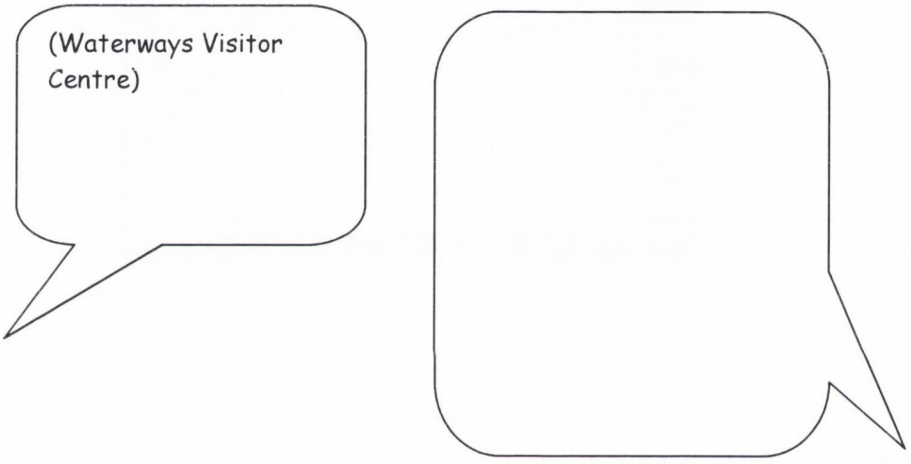
2.



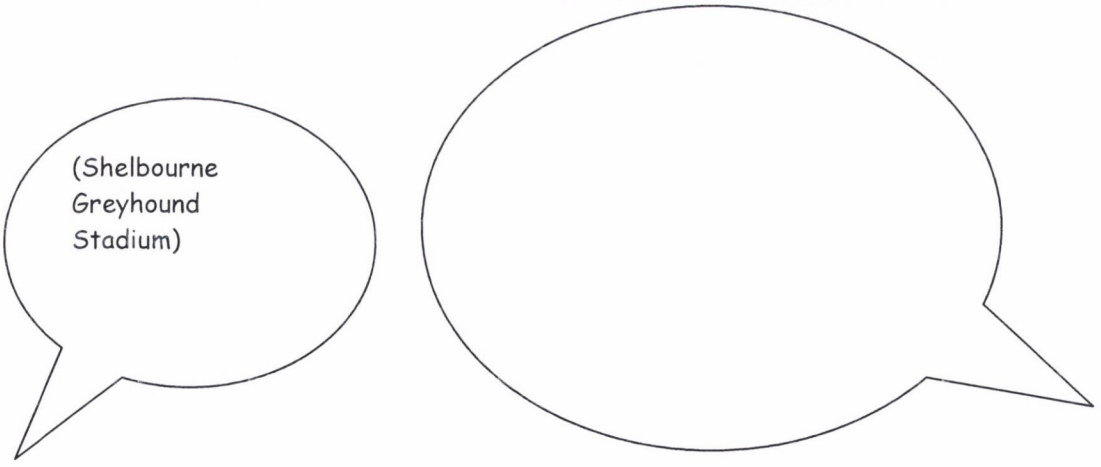
3.



4.



5.



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Appendix H: example of target-setting poster

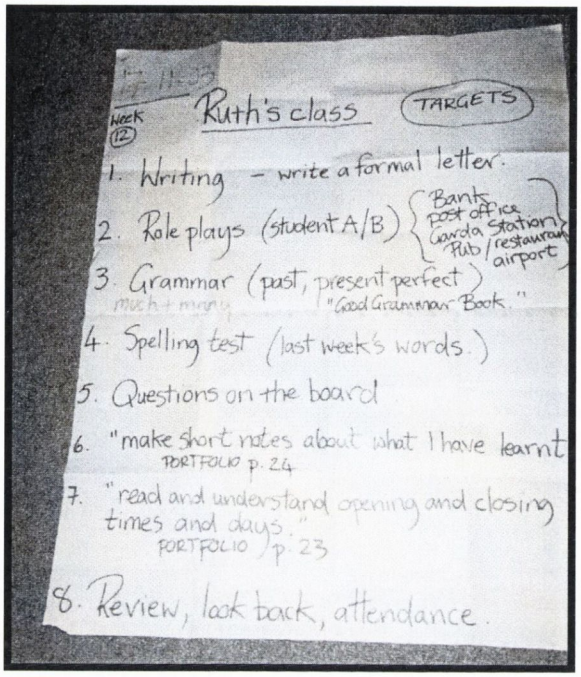

Figure 7: Target-setting poster, Reception 1 Middle (SUSAN's class), 17th November 2003

Appendix I: Political developments since fieldwork

Since my fieldwork in 2003-2004, two major political events have occurred: i) the enlargement of the European Union on 1st May 2004, and ii) the referendum on Irish citizenship on June 11th 2004.

The enlargement of the European Union in 2004 meant that adults who had previously been eligible for classes at IILT, having been granted the Stamp 4 designation and "leave to remain", have subsequently become EU citizens and are thus are no longer eligible for English language training at IILT. This has affected students from Poland, Lithuania and other Eastern European countries, and will eventually affect students of other nationalities such as Romanians. Moreover, Romania has since been designated by the Irish government as a safe country of origin.

The second development was the referendum on Irish citizenship changing legislation which has previously granted Irish passports to those born on Irish soil (*jus solis*). Since 2004, Irish citzenship has been granted as a *jus sanguinis* right, deriving from at least one parent with Irish citizenship. During fieldwork, many students at IILT were parents of children born prior to the 2004 Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, and were granted leave to remain because children born here automatically became Irish citizens. This is no longer the case.

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