

Discourse and desire in a second  
language classroom

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## CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that this thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of candidate

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## Abstract

*This thesis draws on the theories of Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari to describe some ways in which teacher and student identities are produced and performed in a second language classroom. Three major aspects of identity are considered: cultural identity, teacher professional role identity, and the changing identity of the language learner.*

*The thesis uses poststructuralist perspectives to critique notions of identity current in second language theory and practice. It extends the conception of identity as 'subjectivity' proposed by Bonny Norton Peirce - that is, as multiple, impermanent, fragmented - to include the notion of subjectivity produced in interaction and desire. Through an examination of texts produced in an ethnographic study, the thesis addresses issues of cultural categorisation and stereotyping in second language teaching and learning. It discusses the discursive production of subjectivity in discourses of cultural identity and the extent to which culture is a determining factor in subjectivity in the classroom site of the research. It shows how a homogenising effect of discourse leads to the positioning, both self-imposed and other-imposed, of individuals as members of particular cultural groups with particular characteristics. The thesis also discusses the discursive production of subjectivity through discourses of good teacher and good student, and demonstrates the extent to which these discourses are processes of molarisation. The thesis is thus concerned here with an examination of relatively static, fixed identifications and to demonstrate the power of discourse to determine subjectivities. It is also concerned to look at an excess to discourse, a flow which is beyond signification and identification: desire. Identity change at the discursive level is discussed through discourses of becoming, and is differentiated from movements away from subjectification. These movements of desire are proposed as a new way of conceiving agency.*

*The thesis attempts to show some ways in which these subjectivities, produced in discourse and desire, play out in the classroom, in terms of their production and reception by participants, and the impacts on the teaching/learning context.*

## *Chapter 1: Introduction*

In which I briefly discuss my research questions, the theoretical framework I will be using in the thesis, what I mean by subjectivity and why I consider it to be important, the origins of the research, and the kind of data I'll be dealing with.



This thesis attempts to do a number of things. On the one hand, it seeks to operationalise the term 'subjectivity' in second language pedagogy. A similar notion was first proposed by Peirce (1995) but the concept of subjectivity remains limited in its application in studies in the field. My discussion throughout the thesis, then, looks at the broad question of how teacher and student subjectivities are produced and performed in a second language classroom. I look at the interactions of the subjects of the research, both between and within different cultures, and at the teacher-student, and researcher-researched, relationships themselves. I apply two main conceptual tools - a conception of the subject *produced in discourse* (Foucault, 1978) and a Deleuzian notion of *desire* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) - to throw new light on old topics, to throw light on some elided topics, and to develop a more useful notion of subjectivity. This aspect of the thesis looks at how discursively-produced positioning of self and of other produces certain effects in the pedagogical microcosm and questions the extent to which such discursive production fully determines subjectivity. It seeks to demonstrate that an excess to discourse is always present and that this excess can be accounted for by Deleuze's notion of desire. In so doing, the thesis proposes an alternative conception of agency.

My substantive research questions are thus:

1. How are teacher and student subjectivities produced and performed in a second language classroom?



2. What effects are produced in the interactions of these subject(ive)s?
3. How can agency be understood in this classroom?



The notion of subjectivity used in this thesis derives from a number of poststructuralist thinkers. It leans heavily on two concepts – *discourse* (Foucault, 1977a) and *desire* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). *Discourse* here refers to webs of relatively coherent intersecting beliefs and practices with which subjects identify and which thus structure thought and behaviour. Foucault described the ways subjects self-regulate according to dominant discourses. His concept of governmentality refers to the operation of *technologies of the self* which “permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thought, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom perfection, or immortality” (Foucault, 1988: 18). The modernist belief in selves as individuals capable of rational thought and independent, conscious choices has no place in this view of subjects as produced in discourse. The concept of ‘subjectivity’ thus marks an attempt to depose the term ‘identity’ and to foreground the production of the subject, subject to and subject of discourse. This theoretical discussion is elaborated in *Chapter 2* while *Chapters 4 – 7* apply these concepts to the subjectivities of participants in the research.

Notions of ‘individual’ and ‘identity’, and an accompanying view of the learner as a “completely free-willed subject and language use free of ideological conditions” (Pennycook, 1994: 121) have tended to dominate discussions of learners in the TESOL and second language fields until recently. Such an approach to the learner can be seen as a by-product of a desire for linguistics/applied linguistics to be accepted as a science. The objectivity of science, it is believed, enables us to overcome the limitations of our subjectivity

and to find ultimate truths. However, we are “far more socially constituted, far more historically situated, and far more changeable than objectivism allows” (M. Johnson, 1993: 150). Theory which accounts for our social, historical and changing selves is needed. Such a theoretical transition in second language research from ‘individual’ and ‘identity’ to ‘discourse’, ‘subject’ and ‘subjectivity’ is discussed further, and critiqued, in *Chapter 3*. That chapter then, provides the justification for the use of poststructuralist theory in my research.

The notion of ‘the subject produced in discourse’ is enabling in several ways. Firstly, it highlights the normalising effects of discursive structures. Discourses fix norms, defining what is considered to be true at any point in time and place. Becoming aware of discourses supports us to “think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known” (Foucault, 1992: 9). This, in turn, opens up possibilities for things to be done differently. For example, because it allows a description of how power is working in the classroom and shows how those power relations are a function of discourse, this notion of subjectivity enables a discussion of teaching practices which is not, and cannot be, targeted at individual teachers, since individuals speak the discourses which produce them. By enabling critique, a discursive view can no longer regard teaching practices as techniques or methodologies unconnected to identity or to the larger world. Secondly, the idea of the discursive production of the subject - the notion that, as individuals interact, through spoken and written texts, their subjectivities are produced - highlights the profoundly interactive nature of subjectivity. The notion of the subject produced in discourse is thus highly relevant to language education. Finally, a poststructural notion allows for the complexity of subjectivities which derive from the interaction of factors relating to class, race, gender, power, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, politics, education, age, generation, location and sexuality. In addition, it must allow for the changing nature of subjectivities and for how the subject is situated as a site of struggle within this changing complexity.

In a similar way, Deleuze's concept of 'desire' enables a discussion of the role of affect in the classroom. Desire refers to a "joy" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 100) which operates at a pre-personal level, creating and breaking links between people and their environment. It addresses what is not normally addressed; that is, the energies that underwrite interaction. Desire opens the way for a different kind of pedagogy, resonating with the 'everyday/everynight' (Smith, 1999) experiences of subjects as they see themselves. It thus provides a response to one of the "the hardest current questions in critical applied linguistics" (Pennycook, 2001: 149), the question of agency. Together the concepts of discourse and desire enable a reconceptualisation of subjectivity as performed, as 'becoming', as an 'event'. This is the notion of subjectivity which I attempt to demonstrate in this thesis.



The discourses on which I focus in this thesis are products of the data I collected; that is, they emerged thematically in the statements and behaviours of the participants. The statements were gathered from interviews of students, teachers and senior staff associated with an English language and culture course in one institution, a university in a large Australian city. Through the use of a multi-perspectival approach, these statements were then related to statements made by other research participants and to classroom observation and recordings. A discussion of my research methodology, my attempt to do holistic research by including the voices of both teachers and students, and a discussion of the researcher's role within a poststructuralist framework form the content of *Chapter 4*.

In addition to employing the concept of desire to discuss events relating to the classroom, I take several other theoretical notions from the work of Deleuze & Guattari to further discuss those events and to suggest new possibilities. These

concepts allow what could be considered a more 'ecological' (Van Lier, 1998) view of classroom life. These concepts are theoretically elaborated in *Chapter 2* and discussed, as relevant, in the context of the research in *Chapters 5, 6 and 7*.



The concerns of the thesis originated in my experiences teaching international students in English language courses at university level in Australia. There I had observed gulfs in understanding between teachers and students, and what might commonly be described as 'resistance' by students. I began to query the impact of cultural identities in the classroom and our tendencies as teachers to be "hermetically sealed in a radical cultural subjectivity in which we see only what we have already seen and know only what we have already learned" (Shumway, 1995: 258). A body of educational research indicates that there is, in fact, often limited knowledge on the part of lecturers about the impact of cultural values on the identities of their students and, that at the same time, assumptions are made by lecturers about the naturalness of the beliefs and values of Western culture (see for example, C. Jones et al., 1999; Matelene, 1985; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Thesen, 1997). Indeed a wall of assumptions did seem to exist between the students, most of whom were Japanese, and their Anglo-Saxon Australian teachers, of whom I was one (Ellwood, 2001).

In order to investigate my initial belief that the "projections of the European psyche have been, and remain, fundamental impediments to cultural encounter and understanding" (Robins, 1996: 64), I sought an understanding of how identities of students and teachers impacted on, and were impacted by, events and interactions in a classroom. I wished to understand the extent to which culture - a dimension of phenomena reflecting "situated and embodied difference" (Appadurai, 1996: 13) - was a key factor in producing identities in the classroom, and what other factors, such as age, might be relevant. I thus sought to question some of the practices seen in the classroom as well as to

question the absence of those not seen. My research attempted to address the call for “a critical examination of how cultural labels that distinguish one culture from another are produced in discourses and relations of power” (Kubota, 1999: 27). In response to this, a discussion of what I am calling the *discourses of cultural identity* provides the content of *Chapter 5*. In that discussion, I attempt to show how the operation of these discourses impacted on the teaching and learning which occurred in the classroom which provided the site of my research. *Chapter 5* provides a partial response to the first two of my research questions: ‘How are teacher and student subjectivities produced/performed in an ESL classroom?’ and, ‘What effects are produced in the interactions of these subject(ivity)s?’ In discussing my data here, I draw on a notion of difference (Deleuze, 1994a) which is suggestive of a new approach to the problem of cultural ‘labelling’ and which thus responds to an ongoing debate in the field (Carson, 1998; Harklau, 1999, 2000; Nelson, 1998; Spack, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b), also discussed in that chapter.

Another initial concern which had arisen in my teaching was that a form of ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) was occurring in the classroom. This term refers to the way a class or group manages to establish its way of life, or culture, as the norm, enabling it to benefit from its complicity with that norm (Hage, 2002). Questions about the extent to which the international students experienced the Australian cultural norms promulgated in the classroom as a kind of symbolic violence were of greatest concern to me in the initial stages of the research. The operation of *discourses of cultural identity* discussed in *Chapter 5* demonstrates the continuing need to recognise, understand and teach “meanings that are not sanctioned in our society” (Kramsch, 1995b: xix).

Additionally, however, as the thesis progressed into the data collection stage, I began to see symbolic violence impacting on both students and teachers,

because of the nature of schooling itself. I was thus struck by Deleuze's statement: "If the protests of children were heard in kindergarten, if their questions were attended to, it would be enough to explode the entire educational system" (Deleuze & Foucault, 1977: 209). However, it seemed to me that these comments should equally be applied to the almost always unspoken, even unthought, 'protests' of teachers. *Chapter 6*, then, focuses on the various ways in which the subjectivities of teachers and students are governed to form subjects who produce, to a greater or lesser degree, the normative practices associated with teaching and learning; those considered 'true' or 'right' at this time and in this location. I have grouped these discussions respectively under two complementary discourses: the *discourses of the good teacher* and *the good student*, and together these formed another response to my first research question: 'How are teacher and student identities produced/performed in an ESL classroom?'

In relation to my second research question regarding the effects produced in the interactions of these subject(ivitie)s, I was struck by the mismatch occurring between how teachers believed they, and students, ought to behave - that is, the extent to which teachers had learned to self-govern in terms of these discourses, and the extent to which they expected the same of students - versus the somewhat different concerns of the students. The use of Deleuze & Guattari's concepts - particularly, molarisation and desire - to describe teacher versus student practices enables a move forward to "new possibilities of life" (Deleuze, 1983: 101). These theoretical concepts will be elaborated in *Chapter 2* and applied to the research in *Chapter 6*.

The discussion in *Chapter 6* links to two debates in the TESOL field. The first concerns motivation or, as Peirce (1995) suggests, 'investment', in language learning. My discussion problematises both notions - motivation and investment - and suggests Deleuze's notion of desire as an alternative. The

second is with a somewhat newer debate, summarised by Leki (2000), and refers to the dimness of student voices in research in the field. One strength of my discussion in this chapter, I believe, is the juxtaposition of both teacher and student voices in relation to classroom events.

*Chapter 7* seeks to address questions around 'motivation' which were problematised in the previous chapter. To this end, I discuss the discourses which emerged from the research as being of greater relevance to students, namely, *discourses of becoming*, and I show how these discourses relate to Deleuze's notions of becoming and desire. Thus while continuing to respond to my first two research questions, this chapter also addresses the third: 'How can agency be understood in this classroom?' Additionally, this chapter adds to research which allows for greater explanation of student experiences in the classroom.



In addition to its major role of attempting to operationalise a notion of subjectivity in language learning contexts, this thesis also seeks to address some gaps in classroom research by taking a holistic view and looking at teachers, students and their institutional context. Clearly if we are to accept meaning as intersubjectively realised in discourses, then it is important to take both teacher and learner identity into account. In this sense then, my study takes up Vollmer's (2000) call to extend studies, like her own on teachers' constructions of the 'typical' ESL student, to include the responses of students to such positioning. A number of studies (Duff, 2002; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Kubota, 1999; McKay & Wong, 1996; Vollmer, 2000) have looked at what are effectively the discursive constructions<sup>1</sup> of either teacher or student subjectivities. None of these studies looked at the complex interplay between the teachers, the students

and the institutional site. Through looking at this interplay of discourses which impacted sometimes on students, sometimes on teachers, sometimes on both, I aim to build up a more detailed picture of the ways in which discursive constructions impacted in a particular site and thus to extend the understandings provided by existing studies.

In relation to students, the studies mentioned above focused, for example, on immigrant ESL students (McKay & Wong, 1996; Vollmer, 2000) or on the applied linguistics literature which impacts on such students (Kubota, 1999). The present study however focuses on 'international exchange students', also known as 'study abroad'; that is, students who undergo a relatively short, temporary period of residence at a university in the target language country. As I discuss in later chapters, these students position themselves and are positioned differently both from immigrant ESL students and from EFL students. My study contributes to knowledge (see also Freed, 1995; Polanyi, 1995) about study abroad students but focuses, specifically, on discursive construction. To my knowledge there is no existing literature which looks specifically at the discursive constructions of international exchange students in language learning classrooms<sup>2</sup> although studies such as that by Polanyi (1995) demonstrate what is effectively the impact of discursive construction on study abroad students.

I turn now to a theoretical elaboration of the notions of subjectivity which I seek to operationalise in this thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> Although, these studies may use different terminology - Vollmer refers to "teacher's constructions" and Kubota to "ideological assumptions" - I see myself as part of this lineage because of a common reference to a Foucauldian inspired heritage.

<sup>2</sup> For an exception relating to international students generally; that is, students who complete a full degree in Australia, see Devos (2003).





## ***Chapter 2: Beyond identity: poststructuralist notions of the subject***

In which I discuss conceptions of subjectivity as influenced by several strands of thought that are seen as being situated within a broad notion of poststructuralism. These conceptions of subjectivity will be used, in Chapters 4-7, as tools to think about the practices and statements of research participants.

*Some force impels us to keep the show on the road.*

- Michael Taussig



In the first section of this chapter, I briefly discuss understandings of the subject as they have been presented by some feminist poststructuralists, and in the philosophical writing of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari. These understandings contribute to the conception of subjectivity I wish to employ in this thesis. The second section focuses on one of the major tools deriving from the work of Foucault which bears on subjectivity, the notion of 'discourse'. Discourse is a key conceptual tool throughout my discussions of practices in the classroom which was the focus of my research. In the third section of this chapter, I relate the notion of discourse to a number of concepts from the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, in particular, the concept of desire, which I propose will be useful to extend the understanding of subjectivity most commonly seen as poststructuralist, and to further think classroom practices. This extended notion of subjectivity is the one I seek to operationalise in *Chapters 4-7*.

### ***Section a: Beyond the Cartesian subject***

Poststructuralist thought encompasses particular understandings of knowledge, truth, power and language. Since these understandings are integral to a discussion of any poststructuralist subject, my discussion will attempt to

clarify them. The consequences of attempting to work within this broadly poststructuralist framework will be returned to in *Chapter 4*, particularly in relation to impacts on data collection and interpretation, and the writing and conceptualising of the thesis.

Poststructuralism encompasses work which is regarded as post-humanist, post-essentialist, post-Nietzschean and, of course, post-structuralist. Broadly speaking, it can be seen as originating in a rejection of the traditional Cartesian subject who is understood as being transparently rational and autonomous, and of the Hegelian notions of dialectic, totality, and the unified subject (Peters, 1996). The very existence of the humanist notion of 'individual', as exemplified in Descartes' phrase "*Cogito ergo sum*", is called into question by poststructuralism. This phrase, "I am thinking, therefore I am", implies a rational and conscious being, capable of self-knowledge, mastery and autonomous action who exists as an indivisible entity, separate from all other entities, and privileged over non-human entities. Such a conception of the subject is rejected in a poststructuralist view.

If the traditional Cartesian/Hegelian subject has been rejected, what alternative is postulated? In its critique of the subject as 'individual', poststructuralism posits a 'decentred' subject which is "not a locus of authorial intentions or natural attributes or even a privileged, separate consciousness" (Alcoff, 1988: 415). Thus Nietzsche writes "there is no 'being' behind doing [...] the 'doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed..." (Nietzsche, 1967/1887: 45). Butler describes the notion of the individual subject as "a seduction of grammar" (1997a:138); Hall as a "fantasy of incorporation" (1996b: 3). Massumi speaks of "the person as empty category" (1992: 82); and Deleuze states that "fluid becoming is opposed to static being" (1995: 186). All the disparate points and processes with which individuals identify merge into the fantasy of a stable, individual self marked by the symbolic boundary of the grammatical 'I'. This

leads, as Weedon states, to a situation in which the subject 'misrecognises' herself as "the true author of her thoughts, speech and writing" (1987: 105). As will be discussed in greater detail in this chapter, this misrecognition comes about through a form of power which "makes individuals subjects" (Foucault, 1983b: 212) and through processes of 'molarisation' which fix subjectivities and constrain action (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). It is in these ways that the subject is viewed as a 'production' in a poststructuralist framework.

This notion of the subject as a production challenges established 'self-perceptions' and underlies the difficulties in coming to grips with the consequences of the loss of an individual self. Sawicki's lament, in the early 1990s, for "an illusion or 'fiction' of unity to stave off complete loss of identity" (1991: 307) remains an issue for many. Indeed, as a subject produced in a world strongly influenced by such Cartesian notions, my own drive for certainty and stability is difficult to overcome. Similarly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to leave behind the structures of thought which are constitutive of the relatively normalised selves which we believe ourselves to be. Binary thinking, categorisations, notions of progress, unities and hierarchy are all habitual and entrenched representations which prevent us from conceiving of ourselves as 'empty categories'.

Some of the reductionist slippages to which we are subject in attempting to think differently can be explained in light of the difficulties inherent in applying a poststructuralist reading in which key concepts are put 'under erasure' (Derrida, 1976); because there is nothing else to think with, we must continue to think with the concepts we know. This means effectively that elements of other paradigms remain attached to the use of old terms, terms which are both a limit and a resource. There are repercussions of this for my own use of language in this thesis; a problem common to those who question the modernist notion of

'an integral and unified identity': we are hampered by the real impossibility of what Hall (1996a) following Derrida (1981) calls 'thinking at the limit'. Even for Deleuze and Guattari, whose proliferation of new concepts is extreme, there are limits to thought. In order to leave behind habitual structures of thought, they too are nevertheless obliged to travel familiar paths. As they state, "[w]e employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualism we had no wish to construct but through which we pass" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 20).

The writing of this thesis within a poststructuralist framework therefore necessarily requires a process of self-erasure on my part, a continual vigilance to avoid the slippages and reductionist thinking which I seek to critique and to go beyond. In this discussion then, I will use 'I', as I am doing in this sentence, as the locus of actions taken by an apparently conscious subject, but in *Chapter 4*, in particular, I will attempt to problematise the writing of this thesis and show how the desire to write it is not a transparent action and that 'I' is a fiction inspiring continual deconstruction, a case of "double writing" (Derrida, 1982: 329).

Thus, it seems that one aspect of my subjectivity sees an 'emancipatory' purpose for my project, 'believing' that a better coming to grips with the notion of ourselves as 'doers merely added to the deed', as 'fluid becomings', is a necessary move if we are to construct this world as 'the best of all possible worlds', both in the classroom and outside it. If this is the case, my project, then, might be interpreted as a humanist or critical one since I seek to improve pedagogy in second language classrooms. From certain poststructuralist viewpoints, such a project may be critiqued for the very thing which it itself seeks to critique. At the very least then, I seek to follow Ellsworth's call to teachers to turn and face "the shadows of our own practices", in order to "find

ourselves and our practices unsettled by the paradoxes of teaching” (1997: 195). I align myself, therefore, with the following aims: to “free thought from what it silently thinks and so enable it to think differently instead of legitimating what is already known” (Foucault, 1992: 9) and to discover “thought that would *affirm* life instead of a knowledge that is opposed to life... thinking would then mean *discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*” (Deleuze, 1983: 101)<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile, as Taussig points out, “our practice of practices is one of actively forgetting” (1993: xv-xvi), and we have no other option than to continue to live the fiction of a self, and to continually identify with ‘our’ emotions, ‘our’ bodies and ‘our’ possessions. Even though we know that no centred self exists, “we nevertheless get on with living, pretending [...] that we live facts, not fictions” (page xvii). And so, if this ‘I’ is to ‘get on with’ life and living, then a project which seeks a new way is perhaps all she can undertake.

In any case, the humanism which is rejected by poststructuralism is dependent on a “certainty about life and apparent access to truth” (Weedon, 1987: 83) such that problems arise when the belief in truth induces certainty with particular consequences; as, for example, when certain terms become pre-eminent and invested with truth, and their counterparts are excluded and marginalised. Certainty about life and access to truth is in systematic solidarity with notions of language as capable of transmitting transparent representations of fixed meanings. This ‘logic of representation’ - notions of language as communication and reference - seeks to structure meanings and position persons in stable, fixed categories (Spivak, 1976: lix). One aspect of this can be found in the oppositional concepts which mark language - nature/culture, sensible/intelligible, passivity/activity - and effectively determine the way the world is ‘understood’. This is what Veyne refers to as hiding heterogeneity behind reifications (1997b: 167) and what Deleuze calls getting “the truths we

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<sup>3</sup> All emphases within direct quotations are given in the original, unless otherwise stated.

deserve" (1983: 104). It is the logic deconstructed by Derrida who has shown that meaning is always the effect of the trace of the other (Derrida, 1981). Therefore in this, 'my' 'emancipatory' project, I strive to avoid certainty and truth claims in order to deconstruct some of the certainties of the classroom. The deconstruction process disrupts the "apparent stability of the logocentric system of binaries" and "searches for the remainder, the excess, the 'stormy' overflow that cannot be contained or ac/counted for in a binary structure" (Davis, 2000: 89).

Another consequence of my attempt to apply a poststructuralist framework is the need to address questions of terminology – whether to use the term *individual, person, subject, subjectivity* or *self*. As has occurred in the joint work of Deleuze and Guattari, thinking and talking about 'identity' and 'the subject' may ultimately require a new lexicon and a new grammar. Indeed, in this thesis, I have found most of the terms available to me to be limited or inadequate in some way. For example, the term 'individual' is associated with the Cartesian notion of the subject and is defined as 'one in substance or essence; unified; forming an indivisible entity' (OED, 2003). Similarly the term 'identity' refers to 'the quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute or essential sameness; oneness' or 'the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else' (OED, 2003). Since the subject can no longer be considered unified or coherent, these terms have become redundant unless referring to a concept of a subject which is believed to be a unity. Like the term 'person' in Massumi's 'person as empty category', 'individual' is a term which is under erasure; we still use it but do so knowing it not to be what it was. However, Foucault's term *l'individu* has been translated, logically enough, as individual, and I continue that usage. Additionally, 'identity' is the term others

use about themselves, therefore when used here, it refers to the commonsense conceptions which I am attempting to critique.

The term *subject* captures the sense of 'subject to', which will be elaborated in my discussion below and relates to one of Foucault's two meanings of the word: "subject to someone else by control and dependence" (Foucault, 1983b: 212). Therefore I have retained use of this term here, when speaking of the subject of discourse, and in other instances where 'being subject to' is relevant. However, the term continues to suggest a centering, which can be seen in its grammatical associations. The subject of a sentence - this "little changeling, 'the subject' " (Nietzsche, 1967/1887: 45) - in English and many European languages at least, is 'what the sentence or topic is about' or what enacts or effects the act; it is often seen as a causal mover. Therefore I avoid it when referring to a subject who believes itself to be the centre of its own universe and use instead the term *subjectivity*. This relates to Foucault's second meaning of the word 'subject': "tied to his own identity by conscience or self-knowledge" (Foucault, 1983b: 212). The term *subjectivity*, offered as an alternative term to identity, refers to "conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions, which can account for the relationship between the individual and the social" (Weedon, 1987: 3). I use it in this sense, referring to how the subject thinks her or himself with the assumption that these "feelings, intentions, motivations" (Rose, 1999a: xviii) are produced in the subject through the social. It is in this sense too that the term 'self' will arise, usually in reflexive pronominal forms such as 'itself', 'herself'.



If subjectivity is a production, how then is it produced? How does the misrecognition of oneself occur? And what are some of the consequences? Arguing that an 'I' does not exist in any essential way is not meant to suggest that this 'I' can be replaced by other certainties but rather that the 'I' exists



discursively. In the next section, I will use concepts from Foucault, or concepts derived from his work, to discuss the ways in which the subject is produced in discourse. This section will include discussion of the notions of *discursive formations, power, governmentality* and *performativity*.

### ***Section b: Discourse and the subject***

For Foucault, the disparate points of attachment with which we identify are provided by the discourses which are part of larger discursive formations (Foucault, 1972). Foucault's use of these terms - 'discourse' and 'discursive' - has been recognised as inconsistent both by himself (Foucault, 1972: 80) and others (among them, Hook, 2001; Sawyer, 2002). My use of the terms draws on a number of sources and seeks to follow Deleuze's suggestion regarding ideas put forward by another that "all you should ever do is explore [them], play around with the terms, add something, relate it to something else, never argue about it" (Deleuze, 1995: 139, translation modified).

'Discourse' refers, on the one hand, to specific language use in written and/or spoken interchanges and in thought; that is, to statements/speech acts/acts of language. Foucault's claim is that such statements "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1972: 49 ) and are thus taken to be 'true' at any point in time or place (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983). Thus, discourse is not merely "a surface of inscription, but something that brings about effects" (Foucault cited in Davidson, 1997: 5). It is this productive effect of language which is of interest for thinking the subject.

The concept of 'discursive' is not limited to 'discourse as language' since it extends across both language and material reality; the 'extra-discursive' is "the material level of discursive practices" (Hook, 2001: 537). The apparent collapse of the notion of 'extra-discursive' into the term 'discursive' can be seen as an intentional move by Foucault since any discursive utterance can be linked to

corresponding practices, actions or events (Hook, 2001: 537). This means that the importance of language should not be overemphasised when thinking about discourse and discursive formations. The use of Foucault's notion of discourse in the discourse analysis of social constructionists such as Potter and Wetherell (1987) with their focus on text, for example, demonstrates a failure to take account of the "bases of power that underpin, motivate and benefit from the truth-claims of the discourse in question" (Hook, 2001: 525). As Rose reiterates, language is no more than one of the ways which form the subject; "[r]elations to the self are not merely a matter of language, but of truths, norms, techniques - techniques of the self" (Rose, 1999a: xix).

Another way of viewing the non-discursive is to consider how, in a particular time and place, material effects will impact on discourse, while at the same time, discourse enables and justifies certain material effects; discourse is both effect and instrument of power. Thus it is through the discourses occurring in the context of a complex, historical interplay of factors that discursive formations - meanings, social practices, power relations and forms of subjectivity - are produced, as well as maintained or altered.

Discourse is characterised by a 'delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts or theories" (Foucault, 1977b:199). Discourses or groups of statements relate to each other "in a certain constant manner" (Foucault, 1972: 33) to form 'discursive formations', relatively bounded areas of culturally and historically determined social knowledge which "exhibit regularities in presuppositions, thematic choices, values" (McKay & Wong, 1996: 579). These regularities may be in evidence in both individual and institutional practices. At any time in history, innumerable discourses circulate and articulate in a complex, ever-changing, indeterminate interplay which, over time, produces newer discourses alongside older ones. Across space, in

different locations, other discourses circulate in their own complex interplay. Thus, there may or may not be similarities between the discourses in different locations. Global movements, such as colonialism and globalisation, transpose certain discourses between locations which, impacted by local discourses and local material conditions, can result in new discursive combinations. “[M]any discourses wash through a local site at any time, setting up dynamic interactions that are both productive and reproductive in effect” (Farrell, 2000: 21-22). Importantly, because of this constant interplay, discourses have only transitory stability.

Discourses are manifest in the beliefs and practices which run through and across different groups and institutions in a society. Equally importantly, discourses function to determine what is not thought or done. This “function of exclusion” (Mills, 1997: 56) is one of discourse’s most important effects.

Each ‘person’ can be thus said to be a discursive construct, “subject *to* and subject *of*” (Mansfield, 2000: 3) discursive practices, which are themselves an infrangible part of the wider network of social practices. An effect of discourse, then, is to define and create us, “our minds, bodies and emotions” (Weedon, 1987: 112). Foucault shows, for example, the role of certain technologies in the constitution of the sexuality of the subject in different historical periods. He shows how, from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, discourses on sex “multiplied in the space of power and as a means of power’s exercise” (1978:32). The creation of these discourses enabled populations to be policed, partly through subjectification; that is, subjects were constituted by the discourses; and partly through objectification, wherein they were made ‘subject’ to the procedures of the discourses. Similarly Rose (1999a) discusses the psychological techniques of the ‘psy sciences’ which, since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, have functioned to produce and regulate subjects in terms of an inner life. He shows how ‘governmentality’ - the government of subjects by

themselves through “techniques of the self” (Rose, 1999a: xix) - takes place through institutional and technical practices - spiritual, medical, political, economic - through which forms of ‘individuality’ are specified and governed. He writes, “[t]he history of the self should be written at this ‘technological’ level, in terms of the techniques and evaluations for developing, evaluating, perfecting, managing the self, the ways it is rendered into words, made visible, inspected, judged, and reformed” (Rose, 1999a: 218). Discourses thus function to produce certain modes of subjectivity, aligning these modes with institutional goals while at the same time constraining subjects from behaviours which are considered undesirable. The notion of governmentality thus refers to the production of the emotional, mental, psychic and physical capacities of the subject which enables, importantly, not only the government of others but also the government of subjects by themselves.

In the sense in which persons are ‘subject to’ discourses, subjects are ‘positioned’; that is, they are cast in certain roles because of the effects of the discursive formations operating in a particular site. “[I]dentities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (S. Hall, 1990: 225). Identities are what we impose on others, and what others impose on us, whether or not we or they are aware of it. As Butler says, “one may well imagine oneself in ways that are quite to the contrary of how one is socially constituted ... One need not know about or register a way of being constituted for that constitution to work in an efficacious way” (Butler, 1997a: 31). This notion of positioning is a key tool in my discussion in *Chapters 5 and 6*. As I hope to show, discursive positioning operates to limit the ways others are understood and thus to affect behaviour in ways which are not under the conscious control of the actor. It is important to note that particular statements and acts of discursive positioning cannot be attributed to individuals, since individuals themselves are, in an infinitely

recursive series, the products of discursive positioning and are the agents through which discursive formations take effect.

In the other sense of subject given by Mansfield, 'subject of', discourses can be seen to provide 'positions' which subjects 'take up' or with which they 'identify'. This is the sense in which I use the term 'subjectivity'. The complex historical interplay of discourses means there is not a single subject position with which to identify but rather a variety of relatively inexact subject positions. The notion of discourses thus helps to explain how differing and contradictory beliefs can co-exist in a subject since at any one moment, a number of discourses may be competing for dominance. This demonstrates the importance of discourse "as site of struggle" (Orner, 1992:80), as that which is not simply something which "translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle" (Foucault, 1981: 52-53). In other words, previous discursive formations have laid down ways of thinking and behaving which are challenged by new or subsequent ones in a process which can involve, in the subjectivity of the person, all kinds of conscious and unconscious acceptances and resistances.

My discussion thus far has attempted to make clear the relationship between statements as discourse and the discursive production of subjectivity. It has shown how language contributes to the shaping of subjectivity through the meanings which derive from discursive formations; that is, both subjectivities and meanings are constructed in and through social interaction. Discursive meanings interact in and through subjects, constructing, producing and positioning them in multiple ways, and the complex interplay of numerous discourses creates sites of struggle in which identifications and subjectivities take form. Since discourses are relatively bounded, transitory and unstable, never final or closed, this is not a straightforward construction of particular culturally prescribed identities, but a highly complex process in which

subjectivities and the discourses expressed through them mediate each other in unpredictable and fluid ways. The importance of *interaction* is key here and refers primarily to the interaction of discourses, but since discourses are expressed, it is the interaction of subjects which allows this interaction of discourses. As subjects interact, they position each other according to the discourses operating in that site. In this complex interplay, subjects are effectively agents of discourse. This point will be returned to throughout my discussion.

While an interplay of discourses provides positions with which individuals may identify, for Hall, what is needed is a way of explaining how individuals take up particular positions. He calls for a theory of the mechanisms by which individuals accept or resist their positioning, how “they fashion, stylize, produce and ‘perform’ these positions, and why they never do so completely, for once and all time, and some never do, or are in a constant agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative and regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves” (S. Hall, 1996b:14).

The metaphor of a “magic writing pad” (Bjerrum Nielsen, 1996) offers some response to this call. This metaphor sees the subject as like a writing pad consisting of two layers: a soft wax slate covered by a thin transparent sheet of paper: permanent traces of previous perceptions are inscribed in the body, which, at the same time, is capable of both the continual reception of new perceptions and the alteration of old ones. Old inscriptions are not erased with the inscription of new ones but may be no longer clearly apparent or are difficult to ‘read’; that is, we are “a product of the historical process to date which has deposited an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory” (Gramsci, 1988: 326). In some sense then, the extent and form of identifications with a particular discourse are a function of earlier discursive influences. This

point will be taken up in *Chapter 5*. In addition, as I discuss in *Chapter 6*, extra-discursive material conditions also play a part. Additionally, the drive for a unified identity means we 'identify' with certain conceptions of ourselves and not at all with others which might disrupt our sense of stability. This need for stability is itself a discourse, the "discourse of a unified subjectivity" (Pratt, 1987: 59) and the notion of a unity of identity is no more than a "naturalized, overdetermined process of 'closure'" (Rutherford, 1990: 5). In the next section, I will suggest Deleuze's notion of desire as being a mechanism which directly addresses this question of discursive interpellation.

Subject positions are thus inhabited "precariously" (Mills, 1997: 32) with varying levels of conscious awareness, and the subject's rational control over and self-knowledge of the discourses which produce her or him are limited, particularly in the light of the drive for certainty and stability which the Cartesian subject requires. Veyne uses the analogy of speaking to elucidate this relationship to discourse. Although when we speak we are conscious that we are speaking, we are normally not conscious of the restrictive rules of grammar we are applying in order to make meaning. People "think they are speaking broadly and freely, whereas unwittingly what they are saying is narrow, limited by an incongruous grammar" (Veyne, 1997b: 157). In a similar way, we are blind to the limitations of the discourses which produce us. Hollway's (1984) discussion of the practices and meanings which reproduce gender differences highlights this non-rational nature of the subject. Her discussion of the ways in which expressed and suppressed significations co-exist 'inconsistently' in male-female relationships demonstrates that "positions which are available in discourses do not determine people's subjectivity in any unitary way" (1984: 251). This process of subject formation means that subjectivity becomes something which is "precarious, easily disrupted and open to change" (Weedon, 1987: 112). This leads to the conception of the poststructuralist subject as 'multiple, impermanent, fragmented and a site of

struggle' which has been taken up in some second language teaching and learning contexts and which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. Additionally, this conception of the subject will, I hope, become clearer in my discussion in *Chapters 4-7*, where I show that any attempt to know others or oneself is not only limited by available discourses but is also inconsistent and incomplete.

This picture of the subject produced in discourse demonstrates that Cartesian/Hegelian notions of a stable, autonomous, self-knowing, universal and unified individual are no longer tenable. Such an individual was considered to be, through an application of rational consciousness, on the path of inevitable progression "towards a telos of 'emancipation' and 'self-realisation'" (Soper, 1990: 11). In this respect, the history of the Enlightenment has been seen as development which allowed "a gradual liberation of the individual from communal practices and beliefs, a liberation that allowed individuals to be 'themselves' " (R. Jones, 1990: 81). Take, for example, Abraham Maslow when he asks "What do we mean by the discovery of identity? We mean finding out what your real desires and characteristics are and being able to live in a way that expresses them" (Maslow, 1971: 190). As Rose shows (1996b; 1999a), what we may once have thought of as 'our real desires and characteristics' can be shown to be discursive productions dependent on particular historical and geographical conditions.

Truth is thus "a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint" (Foucault, 1980b: 131). The consequences of this for language learning and language teaching will be discussed in *Chapters 5-7*. In these chapters, I hope to demonstrate how the behaviours and statements of teachers and students, rather than being self-conscious and self-willed acts, are discursive productions operating at a particular moment/historical period/geographical location and that what is considered in this site to be



knowledge or truth is no more than “an emergent property of what is essentially a discursive situation”(Alcoff, 1991: 14). Notions of ‘common sense’ are reified objectifications which arise from discursive effects and differ according to which discourses are hegemonic in particular places and at particular times. Thus, an individual’s attempt to act or speak outside of the hegemonic discursive practices which are operative in a particular place may not be recognised as meaningful. As well as providing truths and naming ‘what is’, discourses and discursive formations function to delimit what it is possible to speak of, or think, at any given moment or in any given place; they provide “the conditions of possibility of knowing” (McHoul, 1993: 944).

It is therefore the truth value given to statements, discourses and discursive formations which brings the notion of power into the equation, since discourses are “structured by assumptions within which any speaker must operate in order to be heard as meaningful” (Ball, 1990:3); that is, only those who speak what is considered to be true are ‘heard as meaningful’. Thus “[t]o speak is to assume a subject position within discourse and to become *subjected* to the power and regulation of the discourse” (Weedon, 1987:119). In this way “discursive practices produce, maintain or play out power relations” (Henriques et al., 1998: 117), making the subject an effect of power. As I will discuss below in *Chapter 5*, the discursive constructions of other cultures displayed in the behaviours and statements of teachers and students will be seen to demonstrate a failure to see meaning in another’s practices.

Discourses thus draw our attention to the power relationships to which persons are subjected since power is manifested and exercised through discourse and knowledge and its practices. In the liberal humanist tradition, power is regarded as something which is exercised either lawfully, or unlawfully, through the code of juridico-political discourse; that is, deriving from the “system of right and the form of law” (Foucault, 1978: 90). In fact, Foucault

shows there are new modes of power which are “not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalisation, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus” (Foucault, 1978: 89). For Foucault, power is not imposed from above by particular groups or individuals but rather “comes from everywhere” (Foucault, 1978: 93); it is a “multiple and mobile field of force relations where far-reaching, but never completely stable effects of domination are produced” (Foucault, 1980a: 102). Thus power is not something people possess and wield at will but is rather a “dynamic network of non-centralised forces [which] are not random or haphazard but configure to assume particular historical forms” (Bordo, 1993: 191).

Power, for Foucault, is therefore productive and positive - it “produces reality” (1977a: 194) - rather than being simply repressive. Power and knowledge are each implicit in the other. “[T]here is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (Foucault, 1977a): 27). In other words, any statement, as part of a discursive formation and as representative of a field of knowledge, functions as a technique of power, and it is through the constitutive effects on subjects that power makes its mark. This will be taken up further in *Chapter 4* in relation to my role as researcher in this study.

Foucault has been criticised for leaving no room in his account of power for agency. A number of responses have been formulated to overcome this perceived limitation. Interestingly for my purposes, all these responses equate agency with resistance. But as I will begin to elaborate in the next section, a Deleuzian notion of desire offers a way to think agency which does not confine it to resistance.

For Weedon, it is the complex interplay of discourses which provides the matrix within which subjects are produced which allows for the possibilities of resistance. The very organisation of a discourse implies “the possibility of reversal” (Weedon, 1987: 109) since the relative boundedness of discourses implies interstices between them. Thus any subject, in the face of contradictory discourses, is also capable of resisting some of the productive effects and of producing new meanings from the conflict; that is, a subject has some means to contest and resist hegemonic discourses.

For Butler, agency occurs in the ‘misrepetition’ (1997a) of the performance of the subject. The process of being a subject involves “a kind of discursive performativity that is not a discrete series of speech acts, but a ritual chain of resignifications whose origin and end remain unfixed and unfixable. In this sense, ‘an act’ is the condensation of an iterability that exceeds the moment it occasions” (Butler, 1997a: 14). In other words, each time an act occurs it is partially a repetition of a previous act, but by virtue of it being a different act, not the original one, it is already different; it goes beyond its prototype into something new. Thus for Butler, “[s]ubjection consists precisely in this fundamental dependency on a discourse we never chose but that, paradoxically, initiates and sustains our agency” (Butler, 1997b: 2). Importantly, discourses can neither contain the identities they produce nor can these identities be determined in any fixed way. Subjects materialise as *effects* of discursive interpellation. However this ‘materialisation’, as Butler points out, “while far from artificial is not fully stable. Identity terms, ‘I-slots’, do not fully hold steady and are not exhaustive”..[and are]...“troubled by the failure of discursive performativity to finally and fully establish the identity to which it refers” (1993: 188). As such there is always a remainder or excess to discourse. Deleuze’s notion of desire, discussed in the next section, is able to take account of this excess.

For Rose, we should actually expect resistance as part of being a subject, since only a theory of a unified individual would question the possibility of resistance or be concerned that resistance should be free to arise; “[w]e need no theory of resistance to account for contestation” (Rose, 1999b: 279). In this sense, resistance is “a technical feature of Foucault’s definition of power” (Burgmann, 1998: 77). Rose moves away from the question of individual agency in his analytics of government (1999b). For Rose, the aim of an analytics is to identify “where thought might insert itself in order to make a difference” (1999b: 277) but to do this is not a question of the assertion of individual or even collective agency. Rather it is about examining “the ways in which creativity arises out of the situation of human beings engaged in particular relations of force and meaning, and what is made out of the possibilities of that location” (Rose, 1999b: 279). This again links to Deleuzian notions and to the importance, discussed below, which Deleuze gives to what an assemblage does, “the affects of which they are capable” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 60). It also supports the notion of identity as performed, as ‘becoming’, as an ‘event’ and may be similar to what Mignolo intends when he gives precedence to “the realm of enactments rather than the realm of representations” (1995: 331).

Another criticism of Foucault is that he offers only a bleak and determined view of existence since the types of agency discussed above nevertheless remain produced by discourses. Indeed Foucault has referred to himself as a “hyperactive pessimist” (cited in Sawicki, 1991: 293) while feminists consider the “notable absence of attention to the logics of desire and feeling” in his work (Sawicki, 1991: 307) an important oversight. The ideas of Deleuze and Guattari on the other hand, seem to have inspired a great deal of optimism, particularly among feminists (see, for example, Gatens, 1996; Grosz, 1994b, 1995). In a number of ways their work appears to address some of the questions about agency and resistance produced by feminism and it also provides some kind of response to the concern expressed by Sawicki, above, that, in the face of the

person as empty category there nevertheless remains a need for a fiction of unity. Additionally, they do address the question of feeling, albeit in an entirely unpredictable way.

The notion of subjectivities as discursively produced is a key conceptual tool throughout my discussion in *Chapters 4 - 7* of the practices and statements made by participants in my research. I turn now to the work of Deleuze and Guattari for a number of concepts which I see as extending the notion of subjectivity so far expounded and thus allowing the discovery and invention of “new possibilities of life” (Deleuze, 1983: 101).

### *Section c: Desire and becoming*

The work of Deleuze and Guattari is inspired by, among others, the philosophers Spinoza, Hume, Bergson, Leibniz and Nietzsche whose interest in “the critique of negativity, the cultivation of joy, the hatred of interiority, the exteriority of forces and relations, the denunciation of power” (Deleuze, 1977: 112) forms a marginalised tendency in Western thought (Grosz, 1995). Most relevant for my purposes here, their work seeks also the “the invention of new forms of subjectivity” (Patton, 2000: 8). My selection of their concepts responds directly to Guattari’s offer: “Just as an artist borrows elements that suit him from his precursors and contemporaries, we invite our readers to freely take and leave the concepts we advance” (Guattari, 1996b: 198).

In this section I begin with some reasons for employing concepts from Deleuze and Guattari in conjunction with Foucault’s notion of discourse. A mutuality of concepts, their joint grounding in the rejection of a founding subject, and their concern with an immanent philosophy of the particular are some of the things

which will be discussed briefly. The section then discusses the Deleuzian<sup>4</sup> concepts which I am suggesting are useful both as tools for looking at practices and events in the classroom site in my research and for thinking the subject. Throughout this discussion, I will continue to relate these tools, where possible, to Foucault's ideas, and will show how Deleuze and Guattari's concepts address some of the gaps in Foucault's thinking. I will also begin to address the relevance of these poststructuralist notions of the subject to second language teaching and learning. Whereas the relevance of these concepts are merely suggested in *Chapters 4 and 5*, I will discuss their relevance to the classroom in greater detail in *Chapters 6 and 7*.



As contemporaries in historical time, responding to predecessors such as Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx and Freud, the work of Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault can be seen to overlap and to offer mutual inspiration. In terms of inspiration, Foucault, in his essay *Theatrum Philosophicum* (1977b: 165) suggests that "one day, this century will be known as Deleuzian". Although Deleuze's direct response was to say that Foucault was "a terrible joker" (Deleuze, 1995: 88), Deleuze's own admiration for Foucault had already resulted in the book, *Foucault* (Deleuze, 1988).

Common to their thinking is a refusal of "lofty eternal notions" (Veyne, 1997b: 154) - God, truth, consciousness, etc - which oppose a transcendent, organising force to the chaos of disordered nature. Thus, for example, human nature and, as Foucault has shown, notions of sexuality, have "no content apart from what history provides" (Veyne, 1997a: 163) and are the outside folded into the inside (Deleuze, 1988). This implies a concern with the particular, a focus on practices, events and actions and on the ways these shift and form in relation to other

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<sup>4</sup> My discussion refers to both the joint and the individual work of Deleuze & Guattari and at

practices, rather than a focus on objects and causes. They look therefore at the most obvious, apparently self-evident things. Foucault's "banal facts" (1983b: 220) draw our attention to "people's practices *as they really are*" (1997b: 156); that is, to what people say or do, statements and practices evident in discourse. In a similar way, Deleuze and Guattari claim that desire, discussed further below, is "the most obvious thing in the world, so much so that it is virtually invisible" (1997a: 163). Their focus on the practices which arise from actualisations of the potentialities of desire addresses my second research question regarding the impacts on pedagogy which result from the interaction of subjectivities in the classroom. Deleuze's statement that "[p]hilosophy must constitute itself as the theory of what we are doing, not as a theory of what there is" (Deleuze, 1991) parallels Foucault's (1970: xi) aim to "bring to light the *positive unconscious* of knowledge" by showing how the multiple objectivisations which make up our lives are "the incarnation of the idealist illusion" (Veyne, 1997b: 157) and by demonstrating that we need to look at the practices rather than at the objectivisations which are projections of those practices. This view accords with my attempt in this thesis to look at the impacts and interrelations of actual classroom practices.

In terms of political practice, both Deleuze and Foucault are equally concerned with what Deleuze calls " 'minor' knowledges" (1997: 192) and what Foucault refers to as "particular, local, regional knowledges" or "naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy" (Foucault, 1980c: 82). This means they seek to work against the "tyranny of globalising discourses" (Foucault, 1980c: 83) and seek to expose the political usefulness of the mechanisms which they study - for example, the mechanisms of infantile sexuality for Foucault, the mechanisms of psychoanalysis for Deleuze and Guattari - all the while refusing to offer solutions, because "the role of the intellectual today is not that of establishing laws or proposing solutions or prophesying, since by doing that

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times openly collapses them into one.

one can only contribute to the functioning of a determinate situation of power that to my mind must be criticised" (Foucault & Trombadori, 1991). Similarly, I do not seek here to offer solutions but rather to describe the classroom as I saw it, and to make those observations available through this thesis.

The three thinkers also have in common the concern to develop "a world in which relation is primary" (Veyne, 1997b: 177) and their philosophies constitute a recognition that "everything depends on everything else" (Veyne, 1997b: 170). Hence Foucault demonstrates the complex phenomena in which power/knowledge constellations which are enacted through subjects form other subjects - "subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts, etc" (Foucault, 1980c: 97); and Deleuze and Guattari describe the intensive interrelationships of parts of 'machines' between which there are continual connections, breakages and flows. This interrelationship is a key factor in my project.



In the following section I look in more detail at some key notions from the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari which I see as being relevant to the classroom site of my research and as building on Foucault's notion of discourse in useful ways. I limit myself to the following concepts: *assemblage (agencement)*, *multiplicities*, *desiring machines*, *desire*, *deterritorialisation*, *reterritorialisation*, *molarisation*, *becoming* and *lines of flight*.

It is important, at the outset, to recognise the kind of world which Deleuze and Guattari see as primary. In place of the subjects/individuals and objects of the human world, they see "subatomic and submolecular particles, pure intensities, pre-vital and pre-physical free singularities" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 43). These singularities interact as events marked by intensities and speeds. "You



are a longitude and a latitude, a set of speeds and slownesses between unformed particles, a set of nonsubjectified affects" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 262 ). Thinking of subjectivity in these ways foregrounds the interrelationships of the assemblage which make up human persons and draws attention to the intensities, connections and disjunctions which, as I discuss below, are integral to actual classroom events.

Singularities are synthesised, connected in a series which converges with other series. "To be actualised means to extend over a series of ordinary points: in other words, to be selected according to a rule of convergence, to be incarnated in a body; to become the state of this body, and to be renewed locally for the sake of limited new actualisations and extensions" (Boundas, 1994: 107). There are echoes in this notion of 'renewal' of Butler's notion of performativity as repetition, already mentioned. Here the notion of a rational, bounded individual capable of reflection and self-knowledge has been completely subsumed into the idea of a "relation of limits" (quoted in Badiou, 1994: 67) and by a focus on energies and intensities which pass over, couple, and disjunct in any one moment or place. This concept of condensed and prolonged singularities, this "unfolding of predicates" (Badiou, 1994: 62) is called *agencement*<sup>5</sup> by Deleuze and Guattari, and is, according to Patton (2000), the most important concept in their book, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), allowing us to conceptualise both persons and social groupings - "the capitalist machine"(Deleuze & Guattari, 1983) or "the little scholastic writing machine" (Guattari, 1996a : 209) - as aggregates of movement and intensities<sup>6</sup>. The notion of machine is meant literally not metaphorically, and refers to any aggregate of

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<sup>5</sup> Deleuze and Guattari's key term, *agencement*, is difficult to translate, as several translators point out - Joughin (in Deleuze, 1995), Hand (in Deleuze, 1988) and Smith (in Deleuze, 1997) - and has been translated variously as 'arrangement' or 'assemblage'. However it is important to note that, while these terms imply a sense of the multiple nature of the assemblage, they convey "neither the sense of preparation or orientation toward action nor that of reconfiguration" contained in the original term (Joughin, 'Translator's Notes' in Deleuze, 1995: 196).

<sup>6</sup> The terms *desiring machine*, *machinic assemblage*, *multiplicity* and *agencement* are used relatively interchangeably by Deleuze & Guattari to refer to these aggregates.

parts, each specialised in function, which transmits movement. Indeed, as Massumi comments “any object we care to interrogate, however humble, proves to be a multilayered formation of staggering complexity” (Massumi, 1992: 52). This ‘multilayered complexity’ bespeaks the discursive complexity of subjects discussed in the preceding section. It also clearly does away with the foundationalist notion of the human body as an organic unity, organised by its own personal consciousness.

Thus, what we refer to as self or subject, family, sex, gender, class, culture, etc. can all be seen to be *agencements* - assemblages whose parts overlap; the self is not entirely discrete from the family, likewise the family is not a discrete entity apart from class, and so on. Such categories “can be thought of as unstable but enduring strata of organizations of molecular relations and dynamic effects”(Gatens, 1996: 171). In addition, a social machine may create a synergy of persons in combination with technical machines which extend those persons’ capacities; a classroom can be thought of as a machine, as can a teacher, a student or an educational system. “The same machine can be both technical and social, but only when viewed from different perspectives: for example, the clock as a technical machine for measuring uniform time, and as a social machine for reproducing canonic hours and for assuring order in the city” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 141). Subjectivity, then, is the effect of the experiencing of the aggregate of intensities and a human being can be described as a “repertoire of conduct” or “webs of tension across a space that accord[s] human beings capacities and powers to the extent that they catch them up in hybrid assemblages of knowledges, instruments, vocabularies, systems of judgement and technique artefacts” (Rose, 1996a: 144).

Another importance of the notion of machines or assemblages is that it refers above all to the arrangement and connection of flows in which it “undertakes a variety of interventions” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 141). “Machines arrange

and connect flows. They do not recognise distinctions between persons, organs, material flows and semiotic flows" (Guattari, 1996a: 205). A 'body', such as a human body or a classroom body, like other corporeal and non-corporeal machines, is an assemblage of intensities and movements which is in a state of continual transformation, of decomposition and recomposition. It is a "discontinuous and non-totalized series of processes, organs, flows, energies, corporeal substances and incorporeal events, intensities and durations, a body of affects, not will, yet defined by what it can do" (Boundas & Olkowski, 1994: 13). This notion of a body of affects, intensities, movement and duration will be taken up later in this section and in later chapters as a key tool for my discussion of interactions of participants in my research. The view of "relations of movement and rest, speeds and slowness between unformed elements..., [and of] subjectless individuations" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:266) is referred to variously as a 'plane of immanence', 'plane of existence' or 'plane of consistency'. The notion of immanence underlies the remainder of the concepts which I make use of here.

Deleuze and Guattari's notion of a plane of immanence is an attempt to resist notions of transcendence, or of any external organising factor. The plane of transcendence, or plane of organisation, refers to many ways in which the primary relations, flows and movements of existence are subjected to different kinds of organising processes. Deleuze and Guattari call these processes 'molarisation' or 'stratification'; that is, "phenomena constituting an overcoding [...], phenomena of centering, unification, totalization, integration, hierarchization, and finalization" (1987: 41). Such organisation blocks movement and solidifies subjects. "When you invoke something transcendent you arrest movement, introducing interpretations instead of experimenting...an interpretation is always carried out with reference to something that's supposed to be missing" (Deleuze, 1995: 146).

Processes of molarisation and stratification equate, then, in Foucauldian terminology, to processes of subjection to discursive formations, or operations of discourse and power. It is these processes of overcoding and organisation, operating through discourses, which form the subject. As with the Foucauldian notion of discursive production, these processes of molarisation operate unevenly; “No body can *be* molar. Bodies are *made* molar with varying degrees of success” (Massumi, 1992: 64). I will return to this notion of variations in ‘successful molarisation’ in *Chapter 6*.

As I hope to show in this thesis, the distinction between immanence and organisation/molarisation has important implications for notions of the subject and subjectivity in several ways. Notions of molarisation and stratification provide pragmatic tools for reflecting on practices and subjectivities in the classroom. Like discourse, these concepts allow us “to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects” (Foucault, 1980c: 97). In fact, molarisation processes, as I will suggest in *Chapter 6*, appeared to have a greater hold on teachers in the classroom site of this research, particularly in their assemblage as teaching-machines. In addition, thinking in terms of immanence has potential for pedagogical change since, if concepts exist on the same plane as the problems to which they relate (Burgmann, 1998: 12), then teacher practices in the classroom can emerge from within the classroom site and are immanent to the moment itself. Such a move constitutes a rethinking of teaching practices and will be returned to in *Chapters 6* and *8*.

The notion of a plane of consistency or immanence provides a basic ground - singularities, intensities and pre-personal affects - on which discourses and constraints operate to constitute subjects. On the plane of immanence there are always movements which resist the rigid structures which are a result of molarisation, and break with constrictions and repressions; that is, which ‘deterritorialise’ and follow ‘lines of flight’. Lines of flight are moves to escape

the molarisation processes inimical to discursive production. They are the deterritorialisation which flees from the territorialising/reterritorialising effects of discourse. "The plane of organization is constantly working away at the plane of consistency, always trying to plug the lines of flight, stop or interrupt the movements of deterritorialisation, weigh them down, restratify them, reconstitute forms and subjects in a dimension of depth. Conversely, the plane of consistency is constantly extricating itself from the plane of organization, causing particles to spin off the strata, scrambling forms by dint of speed or slowness, breaking down functions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 270). This notion of a plane of immanence thus allows for a theorisation of processes of desire which operate at this molecular level, but, significantly, not at the level of a controlling subject.

*Desire*, like the related notions of *lines of flight*, *deterritorialisation* and *becoming*, is a key concept in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, and refers to a certain kind of process or event which "make[s] us vibrate" (Guattari, 1996a: 214). The pre-personal, pre-subjective nature of desire allows us to continue to see the subject as 'empty'. Desire is "everything that exists *before* the opposition between subject and object, *before* representation and production. It's everything whereby the world and affects constitute us outside of ourselves, in spite of ourselves. It's everything that overflows from us" (Guattari, 1996a: 205). This notion of desire differs markedly from earlier understandings, from Plato through to Freud and Lacan, in that it is not 'lack' (Grosz, 1995: 176).

Desire is not interior to subjects, and subjects cannot be thought of as 'having' or of 'not having' desires. Rather, desire is intensities, fluxes, and emissions of particles on the plane of consistency; in some sense, it **is** the plane of immanence itself. "[D]esire implies no lack; neither is it a natural given. It is an assemblage of heterogeneous elements that function; it is process as opposed to structure or genesis; it is affect as opposed to sentiment; it is "haec-eity" (the

individuality of a day, a season, a life) as opposed to subjectivity; it is an event as opposed to a thing or person. And above all, it implies the constitution of a plane of immanence or a 'body without organs', which is defined solely by zones of intensity, thresholds, gradients, flows" (Deleuze, 1997: 189).

Deleuze also describes desire by referring to what it is not; desire is neither equivalent to sexual pleasure, which is just "one flux among others" (2002:101), nor to any form of pleasure which reterritorialises desire by organising it. Deleuze differentiates between *desire* and "signifying desire [which] is associated with dominated subjects" (1987: 22). This distinction will be clarified in *Chapter 7* in my discussion of the ways students' desires for a global identity are at one and the same time, desire in the Deleuzian sense, and 'signifying desire' which produces subjectivity.

In fact, desire is too often used to refer only to sex; "trapped, specifically limited to human sex" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 323), and the result is that it "enters into forms of particularized power" (Guattari, 1996a: 204) in which struggles for liberation contain as much repression as social forms of constraint. Thus the mechanism of sexuality which Foucault discusses (1978) operates reductively, according to Deleuze, reducing sexuality to sex, sealing off the lines of flight and breaking the potential of "the cutting edges of deterritorialisation, flux, and combinations" which should be part of the historically variable assemblage of desire (Deleuze, 1997: 187). Unlike more conventional notions of it as lack, desire does not seek to attain a particular object, but, in fact, "is revolutionary in its own right" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 116) and thus seeks only its own expansion. In keeping with Deleuze and Guattari's idea of concepts as "intellectually mobile" (1995: 122), desire "does not provide blueprints, models, ideals or goals. Rather it experiments; it makes; it is fundamentally aleatory, inventive" (Grosz, 1995: 180).

The role of many of the institutional structures of capitalism and, in particular, of psychoanalysis - hence Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) attack on it - has been to consolidate the blocking of desire. Indeed, the process of being constituted as a subject involves "a historically specific fixation of desire, brought about by the action of social codes, family structures and behaviour towards the child" (Patton, 2000: 71). As Mansfield says, this fixing or blocking results in a "massive reduction in potential and possibility" (2000: 142). Most attempts to escape normalising processes, or to escape the surveillance and government of social structures in order to allow desire to flow have been met with a re-fixing through the re/imposition of rigid, organisational structures, involving a re-ordering, and a 'restratification' in Deleuzian terminology. Thus there is a recognisably discursive 'abstract machine of overcoding' which is linked to institutions such as the State, but is not reducible to them, and which lays out "a divisible homogenous space striated in all directions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 223). This relates to Foucault's 'repressive hypothesis' (Foucault, 1978) in which the notion of repression serves as an overcoding such that the belief that sex and sexuality have been repressed leads some persons to seek to liberate themselves from that repression. This sense of 'liberation' amounts to no more than a resignification and a continual fixing of desire. This abstract machine of overcoding also refers to the kinds of hierarchical structures found in the bureaucracies of, say, State education systems, where rigid structures allocate subjects places and behaviours at particular levels in the system. This kind of bureaucratized institution is what Deleuze and Guattari call 'an arborescent system': "hierarchical systems with centres of signification and subjectification" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 16).

The concept of arborescent systems is opposed to the rhizomatic. The rhizome refers to a heterogeneous network of connected branches which gives off shoots and branches in every direction, but has no central operator, and no hierarchical positioning. It "connects any point to any other point,...is composed of

...directions in motion...has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overflows...it is an acentred, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an organising memory..." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 21). Where arborescent logic is "a logic of tracing and reproduction [...] on the basis of an over-coding structure" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 12), rhizomic systems, on the other hand, are "fuzzy or indeterminate objects" (Patton, 2000: 43). The rhizome, say Deleuze & Guattari, "is altogether different, a map and not a tracing [...] entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real" (1987: 12).

In discussing arborescence, Deleuze and Guattari show how tree-like structures dominate our thinking and our ways of categorising and organising knowledge and experience. The metaphor of the tree contains all sorts of uninterrogated "assumptions and investments" (Mansfield, 2000: 141) but above all it is a hierarchical structure in which the truth or value of something is given either a subordinate or a superordinate position in the tree structure. Truth and value become abstract qualities of things relative to each other, but not relative to their context, the relevance of which is ignored.

Such systems work to solidify the notion of 'a subject', cutting off desire and reapplying transcendent notions, which entail a split between 'thing represented' and 'its representation', and between 'subject' and 'object'. Indeed any organisation of the plane of immanence results in notions of unity and of unified subjects or individuals. This is the process in which we come to believe in ourselves as individuals, capable of authentic self-representation. However, Deleuze and Guattari argue, subjectivity is, like Weedon's notion of misrecognition, a product of subjectification proceedings rather than a result of individual being. Psychoanalysis in particular is considered by Deleuze and Guattari to misrepresent desire and to "make patients believe they would produce individual, personal statements, and would finally speak in their own



name" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:38). Thus as Guattari writes, "everything that's written in refusing the connection with the referent, with reality, implies a politics of individuation of the subject and of the object ... and by that puts itself into the service of all hierarchies (Guattari, 1996a: 210-211).

To liberate desire from constraint and limit is, in a way, the goal of existence for Deleuze and Guattari. Lines of flight refer therefore to movements away from the molar and are thus a seeking for freedom, but a freedom which cannot be understood as the liberal democratic notion of the freedom to be one's authentic self in the name of one's own interests. Instead, it is "not so much a form of subjectivity as a form of non-subjectivity" (Burgmann, 1998: 90); that is, rather a freedom to 'become' but towards something which is "asignifying, asubjective, and faceless" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 187). "Far from presupposing a subject, desire cannot be attained except at the point where someone is deprived of the power of saying 'I' " (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 89). This liberation of desire enables 'becoming'. Importantly, this amounts to the liberation of the concept of affect/desire as a force which works in, through and between subjects (Albrecht-Crane, 2003a). These notions of desire, becomings, and lines of flight as movements away from subjectivity enable a new way of thinking agency.

As with some misreadings of Butler's notion of performativity which invite a conscious and creative re-styling of the self, this notion of becoming can be easily misunderstood as a conscious act of a self-knowing subject to 'be different', as in the suggestion that we let go of the "introverted self-policing" of self-governance (Mansfield, 2000: 146) or in the belief that we can "enhance our life or power by 'mutating' or 'varying' in as many ways as possible" (Colebrook, 2002: 133). However, rather than merely attempting to be a different kind of individual, or to extend personality into new forms, or to depend upon "egological forms of subjectivity" (Cadava, 1994: 5), we need to

think in terms of “exposing [...] in every form one’s own amorphousness and in every act one’s own inactuality” (Agamben, 1993: 44).

As I will discuss in the next chapter, one problem with conceptualisations of agency in the second language teaching/learning field has been a fundamental inability to let go of the notion of a controlling subject in understandings of agency. Deleuze and Guattari’s emphasis on the non-subjectified and the asignifying is an important move.

Just as power works to form subjects, so too desire effects subjectivity. The links are clear between Foucault’s statement that “one of the prime effects of power [is] that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires come to be identified and constituted as individuals” (Foucault, 1980c: 98) and Deleuze and Guattari’s statement that desire “is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from microformations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc.... [it] results from a highly developed, engineered set-up rich in interactions” (1987: 215). In both cases, this formation of subjectivities, through power or through desire, takes place at the micropolitical level on an immanent plane and is a matter of “relations between bodies, their configurations within specific assemblages, and the dynamic of the interrelation of their intensive capacities” (Gatens, 1996: 170).

A consideration of this dynamic of interrelations is a key way in which I seek to discuss the classroom site of my research. I stated above that I would be concerned with the notion of a body of affects, intensities, etc. The importance of this is that there is always interrelation. Any body, assemblage or *agencement* has, in any particular conjunction, disjunction or interaction, certain capacities to affect and to be affected. Deleuze’s interest in the idea of capacities to affect and to be affected can be traced back to his responses to the work of Spinoza

and Nietzsche. In this process an assemblage may undergo or create modification and the intensity and the dynamism of the modification is a product of what Nietzsche (1973/1885) called the 'will to power'; that is, the capacities for interaction. Another way of expressing this is in terms of becomings: any interaction involves a becoming and any becoming involves interaction. In this context of affecting and being affected, the active and the affirmative are privileged over stasis: "the power to affect other forces (spontaneity) and to be affected by others (receptivity)" (Deleuze, 1988: 101). The idea of becomings as affect refers to the "intermingling of bodies in a society including all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds in their relations to one another" (1987: 90).

Gallop's (1992) pedagogic encounter elucidates the effects on affects actualised by desire and processes of becoming. Talking of her experience with her student of "being good together" (1992: 215), Gallop describes the encounter as erotic, reducing it to sexual desire. However, in line with Guattari's comment above, this reductive view can be attributed to a simple unavailability of alternative discourses to describe the experience (Albrecht-Crane, 2003a). Indeed the event seems to reflect a particular kind of becoming, in this case, in the form of attraction and sympathy.

One importance, for my study, of this notion of affect in relation to assemblages is the focus on what an assemblage can do. "What matters is the manner in which we act upon the actions of others and the kinds of assemblage in which and through which we desire" (Patton, 2000: 77). Machines can thus be moves towards deterritorialisation, towards becoming, or they can be moves towards reterritorialisation and 'restratification'. The questions to ask are what links can be made, what can be actualised, what transformations can be undergone? *Agencements* and bodies "are not defined by their genus or species, by their organs and functions, but by what they can do, by the affects of which they are

capable - in passion as well as in action" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 60). Thus, in terms of processes of becoming, what are of interest in the classroom are the processes of linking, actualisation and transformation within and between assemblages. This focus on what something 'does' is key in my approach since it correlates with a notion of identity as performed, as 'becoming', as an 'event'.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the legacy of the Enlightenment is that one aspect of this founding self is that it was considered to be a discrete entity, able to function independently of other discrete entities. This conception of the self as separate from others underlies many assumptions in education and fails to see the way co-construction processes operate between and within assemblages. In the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages are, by definition, always in a relation with other assemblages since "[e]verything is simply an encounter in the universe, a good or a bad encounter" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 60). This echoes Heidegger's term 'dasein', used to invoke an inescapable connection and involvement/'conjoinment' between the self and the world (Mansfield, 2000). These relations, with their conjunctions and disjunctions, breakages and flows are "inherently connective in nature" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 5) and what is of interest is the extent to which these associations, encounters and interactions enhance or appropriate the capacities of other assemblages. This concern in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy with connections and disconnections - virtual/possible and actual - provides a new way of thinking about difference and is the source of the ethical aspect in their work. In terms of bodies and persons, this concern must lead to a reconceptualisation of difference and Otherness. Indeed according to Ronell, 'let's talk' should mean 'let's listen', and this acknowledges "the irreducible precedence of the Other to the self" (1994: 265). This notion of affect will be a major concern of *Chapter 7*.

Deleuze and Guattari 's conceptualisation of difference allows new ways of thinking by going beyond "the 'four' illusions of representation: identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance"(Grosz, 1994a: 192). The concept of multiplicity allows a world in which difference is primary and no longer thought of in terms of opposition to a hegemonic identity. It involves a recognition that there is "an *infinity of loose ends*, a fluidity that will not have been under our control [and which is] always churning out an inappropriate overflow"(Davis, 2000: 185). As Foucault says, difference is "generally assumed to be difference *from* or *within* something [...] but as its support, its site, its delimitation, and consequently as its source of mastery" is always the concept of "the unity of the group and its breakdown into species in the operation of difference" (1977b: 181-2). Instead, the notion of multiplicity amounts to "a defence of the particular against all forms of universalisation or representation"(Patton, 2000: 46). This means that in keeping with Deleuze's view, it is always that which stays the same or becomes fixed which needs explanation; it is sameness which needs explanation, not difference. It is this which I attempt to take up in *Chapter 5*.

The idea that change and difference should be the expected and therefore need no explanation relates to Mouffe's statement that "the illusion of consensus and unanimity [...] should be recognised as being fatal for democracy and therefore abandoned" (1993: 5) and to the notion of *differend* (Lyotard, 1988), discussed by Davis, who defines it as "the differences, unresolvable though litigation, between two parties who do not share the same rules of cognition. The differend manifests itself as chasm between interlocutors, a gap where the lines of communication are not *down* so much as they are not direct, not clear. There is an obnoxious static, a fuzzy noise that *invites* the *refusal* to connect at any level. But a determination to tune into the static on the line, a capacity to affirm it may well send us beyond the differend proper" (2000: 114).

The concept of multiplicity is vital in thinking through the ramifications of this notion. Multiplicity, as something which has only dimensions and magnitudes and which undergoes transformations, is an attempt to avoid thinking in terms of totalised unities, of wholes which are equivalent to themselves. Indeed the “notion of unity (*unité*) appears only when there is a power takeover in the multiplicity by the signifier or a corresponding subjectification proceeding” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 8). There is a danger in thinking in terms of totalised unities because “there is always an unrepresented singularity who does not recognise [the matter in hand] precisely because it is not everyone or the universal” (Deleuze, 1994a: 52). The concept of multiplicity was therefore “created precisely in order to escape the abstract opposition between the multiple and the one, to escape dialectics, to succeed in conceiving the multiple in the pure state, to cease treating it as a numerical fragment of a lost Unity or Totality or as the organic element of a Unity or Totality yet to come, and instead distinguish between different types of multiplicity” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 32). The concept of multiplicity draws to our attention that “the rhizomatic potentialities of Being will remain unexhausted by any interpellation into subjecthood” (Davis, 2000: 160).

Thus, we need to keep in mind “life’s proliferating impulse” (Davis, 2000:18) and, when confronted by opposition or limitation, should look for the differences which are necessarily present in the situation rather than thinking that the problem lies in the failure of difference to assimilate itself to the hegemonic identity. “It is not difference which presupposes opposition but opposition which presupposes difference” (Deleuze, 1994a: 51). As Butler has commented, “[t]he language of appropriation, instrumentality and distancing germane to the epistemological mode also belongs to a strategy of domination that pits the ‘I’ against the ‘Other’ and, once that separation is effected, creates an artificial set of questions about the knowability and recoverability of the Other” (Butler, 1990: 147).

On the basis of these ideas of difference, Grosz discusses notions of the Other and of difference in relation to sexuality and the male-female divide which can be usefully applied to thinking about notions of the Other and of difference in an intercultural, pedagogic site such as in this study. In the notion of desire as lack, the coming together of the two sexes is posed as a complementary act, each filling the lack in the other (Grosz, 1995: 177) with the additional proviso that it is always the woman who is the object of the man's desire, the subject's desire; there is no position in this model for the woman to be the subject who desires the man, or who desires at all. The woman thus becomes the Other to the man. In a similar way, in the encounter between the overgeneralised West and East, the East becomes the Other, the object, whereas the West takes the subject position, seeing the embodiment of its lack in the Other; that is, in the East. The idea that the East might see the West as the Other never occurs to the West; the West presumes it has everything to offer the East<sup>7</sup>. This conception directly addresses my concern, expressed in *Chapter 1*, with the perpetration of symbolic violence in the classroom and will be discussed further in *Chapter 5*. Similarly, in teacher-student encounters, the student is viewed as other to the teacher and is presumed to have little or nothing to offer, but is rather an empty slate. As Pratt comments (1991:38) "Teacher-pupil language [...] tends to be described almost entirely from the point of view of the teacher and teaching, not from the point of view of pupils and pupiling (the word doesn't even exist, though the thing certainly does)". This is addressed in my concern to include the silenced voices of students in this research project.

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<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, Deleuze leaves unanswered the question of whether this production of subjectivity is the same for "the Orient": "The appearance of a folding of the outside can seem unique to Western development" (Deleuze, 1988: 106).

The conception of subjectivity which I am therefore attempting to 'operationalise' in this thesis draws heavily on this notion of multiplicity - "[w]here we thought there was only One Thing, there exists a wild multiplicity" (Davis, 2000: 23) - and on the notion of desire as overflow. The aim in deploying these notions is "to make another way of knowing circulate" ... "[a]nother way of producing, communicating, where each is always far more than one" (Davis, 2000: 108).



In this chapter I have discussed the theoretical tools which I employ in later chapters to explore discourse and desire in the classroom. The chapter began with an extensive discussion of the notion of discourse and the discursive production of the subject. This theoretical tool will be employed in subsequent chapters to question the practices which took place in the classroom and to attempt to "free thought from what it silently thinks and so enable it to think differently" (Foucault, 1992: 9). The Deleuzian concepts of assemblage, desire and becoming also allow a description of the classroom site which reflects on practices and occurrences which are often not adequately accounted for. These concepts directly address several of my research questions which relate to notions of difference and provide new ways of thinking subjectivity and agency. In *Chapter 5*, I use a discussion of the impact of discourses of cultural identity to open the way to a Deleuzian conception of difference. In *Chapter 6*, I show how the operation of discourses which impact on teacher and student subjectivities are processes of molarisation which accompany the capture of desire. In *Chapter 7*, I seek to investigate desire and agency in the production of students' subjectivities.

In the next chapter I discuss the conceptions of identity and subjectivity - both foundationalist and poststructuralist - which have been employed in applied linguistics and in second language teaching and learning to date. This brief



history will provide a foundation for my discussion in *Chapters 4-7* which attempts to operationalise the notion of subjectivity discussed in this chapter.

### *Chapter 3: Identities and subjectivities in second language teaching and learning*

In which I discuss some conceptions of identity in the fields of second language acquisition and applied linguistics in the light of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. In particular I elaborate some of the ways in which modernist conceptions of the subject are inadequate for the purposes of these fields; I discuss some more recent studies which respond to this inadequacy, or which respond to responses to it; and I critique some of these responses in terms of the notion of subjectivity I seek to operationalise in this thesis.

*We are looking for the pedagogical arts of the contact zone.*

- Mary Louise Pratt



In recent decades, both learner and teacher identities have increasingly been foregrounded in second language contexts. Second language scholars and applied linguists have turned to theoretical work from such disciplines as critical psychology, anthropology and cultural studies to question dominant conceptions of identity. This research has felt the impacts of the 'linguistic turn' which recognises that language practices are socially constituted and that social beings are discursively produced. This hybrid research seeks to respond to the pervasiveness of the "orthodox social psychological hegemony" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 288) which underlies much research in applied linguistics. Rather than seeking to progressively build up an ultimate store of knowledge about the fixed cognitive and affective traits of learners with the stated goal of developing effective learning models and implementing effective teaching methods, this newer research aims to show the limitations of that approach and seeks understandings to some of the issues which arise in language classrooms but which historically have been either ignored or relegated to the 'too hard'

basket, such as student resistance, cultural difference, and unequal power relations. Influences from poststructuralist frameworks are evident in a number of these studies.

My discussion in this chapter seeks to discuss, albeit somewhat selectively, notions of identity and subjectivity assumed in the second language and applied linguistics fields. These notions are reconsidered in the light of the theoretical framework provided by poststructuralism which I am suggesting as one productive way to think through the issues which mainstream second language acquisition has largely ignored.

Thus far in this thesis, I have employed terms which derive, in the main, from poststructuralist thought. Now I bring together these fields - poststructuralism and second language studies/applied linguistics and I seek to read them within and across each other. Throughout this discussion I will attempt to continue to build up a picture of the epistemological and ontological understandings which underlie my approach. In this discussion a focus on the inter-constitution of language and the social is fundamental.

♦

This chapter consists of two sections. In *Section a*, I will focus on the consequences of modernist notions of identity - notions of founding, free-willed, rational and transparent subjects - which have been hegemonic in the second language field and which continue to underlie much research in second language acquisition and applied linguistics. Closely related to these notions of identity are particular conceptions of language and language learning. I will focus on a selection of issues in second language education and research which demonstrate clearly the problems which arise from the use of this modernist subject.

A critical review of the work of those scholars who have directly tackled notions of identity and have critiqued this conception of a transparent and free-willed subject provides the content for *Section b*. The seminal work of Bonny Norton Peirce (Norton, 2000; Peirce, 1995) questioned the impact of this concept of the subject since it leads to a dichotomisation of the learner and the language learning context. Norton Peirce attempted to use a poststructuralist notion of the subject - as fragmented, multiple, and subject to change - to explore how inequitable power relations limit opportunities for second language learners to speak the target language and how identities of language learners are constructed within power relationships. Following her work, and often in direct response to it, a number of studies have applied her notion of social identity to learners and teachers in second language contexts. I join those scholars (Angélil-Carter, 1997; Canagarajah, 1996; McKay & Wong, 1996; S. Price, 1996, 1999; Thesen, 1997) who seek to extend Norton Peirce's work. I argue that the notion of a poststructuralist subject remains to be more helpfully theorised and indeed that its continuing undertheorisation perpetuates the problems which arise from notions of a self-knowing subject. In particular, I seek to retheorise the subject in the light of recent Deleuzian influences on pedagogy. This retheorisation is the task of *Chapters 5-7*.

*Section a: Modernist notions and their impact on conceptions of identity in second language learning*

Applied linguistics has been described as the discipline which mediates the theory and practice of language teaching and learning (Stern, 1983: 35) but a number of scholars (among them Angélil-Carter, 1997; Breen, 1985; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Pennycook, 1990; Phillipson, 1992) have commented on the need for applied linguists to take into account factors which are highly relevant to the real world of pedagogy. This section continues this critique, put forward over a decade ago, of applied linguistics as continuing "blithely on with its continued faith in objectivity, in models and methods, in

positivism, in an apolitical, ahistorical view of language, in a clear divide between subject and object, in thought and experience prior to language, and in the applicability of its theories to the rest of the world” (Pennycook, 1990: 20). The section thus foregrounds the importance of notions of discursive impacts on the (co)construction of meaning and on the production of subjectivities. It also seeks to show the limitations of the modernist approaches which underlie particular understandings in language teaching and learning.

Modernist understandings of learner identities in the second language field derive from notions of identity which have been dominant in positivist thinking more generally. As discussed in *Chapter 2*, in a modernist<sup>8</sup> view, the individual is regarded as a coherent, consistent and conscious being, one who is capable of rational decision, of self-knowledge - unconscious aspects are ultimately knowable as conscious ones - and thus of being known by others. This is the individual - “tied to his own identity by conscience or self-knowledge” (Foucault, 1983b: 212) - whose identity is seen as unified, stable, transparent, fully knowable and expressible.

Dominant modernist understandings, although hegemonic, are not exclusivist and have coexisted with other approaches which can be regarded as within the paradigm which I seek to develop. Thus the ideas of Dewey (1916), for instance, who saw that knowledge could not be regarded as self-contained but is always linked to its context and to the ideas around it, can be seen to be in keeping with the notions of subjectivity discussed here. Nevertheless a particular approach to identity, with implications for language and knowledge, has tended to dominate the field, leading to certain consequences for second language research and pedagogy.

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<sup>8</sup> In what follows, I use the term modernist as a catch-all to cover the positivist, essentialist and humanist views which I seek to critique. Similarly I use the term poststructuralist subject as a catch-all to name the kind of subject which I am proposing, as discussed in *Chapter 2*.

The following section discusses some of the foundational aspects of applied linguistics: conceptions of language, communication and language learning. It then turns to more recent work in the field to discuss the relevance of notions of subjectivity to the role of theory and practice in the field, the role of context and culture, and to teacher identity. My discussion on a number of these aspects will be taken up in greater detail in later chapters.



Poststructuralist understandings highlight the way subjectivities are produced in language and discourse. Modernist notions see language and identity as separate. Notions of autonomous individuals and of meaning as prior to language, underlie dominant modernist conceptions of communication as a process of information transfer, sometimes referred to as the *conduit metaphor* (Reddy, 1979); that is, of communication as “an individual phenomenon consisting of private thoughts ... transferred from brain to brain” (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 290). As a result, conceptions of language learning have been understood as involving individual cognitive processes of “perceiving, analyzing, classifying, relating, storing, retrieving, and constructing a language output” (Naiman et al., 1978: 3). In this ‘input-output’ model, language is seen as a fixed and finite, ultimately definable, body of linguistic facts, which through processes of reification and metonymy, has come to be endowed with causal attributes and agency (Kramsch, 1995a). Knowledge of language, as with all knowledge, is seen as external to and independent of human beings, just waiting for teachers to ‘deliver’ or ‘insert’ into the minds of the learners who will then ‘know’ it (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1993). Such notions are expressed in metaphors of computers or containers, both of which, as Ellis (2001) indicates, position the learner as passive recipients lacking control over their own learning.

This notion of language presumes that linguistic items transparently convey meaning - that what you mean by a word is what I mean - and it underlies assumptions in the classroom that communication is transparent. Research cited by Kumaravadivelu (2003: 78-91) reveals clearly the error in this assumption. He discusses a number of studies in learner perceptions (Barkhuizen, 1998; Block, 1994, 1996; Kumaravadivelu, 1989, 1991; Slimani, 1989, 1992) which confirmed mismatches between teaching agenda and learning outcomes, as well as between teacher and learner perceptions of learning purpose and of classroom events.

Also underlying these earlier notions of language learning is a metaphor of acquisition. As Hall (1995) suggests, the effect of the term 'acquisition' in the phrase 'second language acquisition' can now be seen to be restrictive because of its associations with failure to acquire and notions of incompetence<sup>9</sup>. The term 'participation' has been suggested (Sfard, 1998) as complementing the notion of acquisition in the language learning process and it is a useful move in thinking the subject. The difference between acquisition and participation can be flagged by pointing to the differences between 'having' and 'doing', respectively. Whereas acquisition is about gains in knowledge of rules and codes, participation involves 'doing' and the ability to 'perform' as a part of new discourse communities (Pavlenko, 2000). This difference between 'having' and 'doing' is key in my approach since it seeks to build up a notion of identity as performed and as an 'event' which happens.

Another problem with an input-output model of language and communication is that it supports the institutional authority of teachers and native speakers as experts because they are the ones who supposedly have access to 'correct' input (Kramsch, 1995a). Thus, in the classroom there is a hierarchy of knowledge; the teacher exercises a kind of top-down power; and, power, in the form of

knowledge of the target language, is solely the province of the teacher. There are two main consequences of this.

Firstly, this notion of native speakers as providing fixed ideal models of language use results in a view of non-native speakers and learners as lacking and in want of communication skills (Amin, 1997) even though, clearly, much so-called 'incorrect' interaction nevertheless communicates meaning. This has led to a research focus on the learner's "linguistic deficiencies and communicative problems" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 289). It has led also to a rigid view of language correctness which has been supported by notions of languages as fixed, knowable and definable entities. Even those scholars who stress the importance of a focus on meaning remain tied to notions of ideals and perfection. Thus Long states: "Whether or not the explanation is biological, it is certainly the case that very few, if any, older learners achieve even near-native abilities, so at least when advanced proficiency is important, *something will be needed to compensate for the loss*" (Long & Robinson, 1998: 20, emphasis added).

The second consequence, as Van Lier points out, is that a belief in the necessity of expert input is fundamental to much thinking in second language education including that influenced by Vygotsky (Van Lier, 1998: 140). However, if this static notion of top-down power is replaced, following Foucault, with "a strategic one in which power is conceptualised as circulating throughout social relations so that individuals both enact and undergo the effects of power" (Genishi, 1999: 289), it can be seen that, as Breen suggests, the way a lesson evolves is a function of the "explicit and implicit negotiation" (1985: 148) which occurs as a result of the multi-directional dynamics of the interactions of all group members in which no single person is attributed with expert status. Van Lier, for instance, in his discussion of consciousness in language learning (1998),

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<sup>9</sup> In this thesis I have chosen where possible to avoid using the term SLA (second language acquisition) because of these associations.



shows that learning can and does occur in interaction without the presence of experts.

The term 'co-construction' referring to meaning as negotiated in interaction is a key term in socio-cultural approaches (Lantolf, 2000). My discussion does not reference that notion since I seek to avoid the requirement for the presence of an expert and the consequent implications of mastery associated with the use of the term in that paradigm.

The co-construction process, as I use the term here, belies the notion of fixed identities and has consequences for many aspects of language learning and teaching as well as for identity construction since, in interaction "there is a distributed responsibility among interlocutors for the creation of [...] identities, meaning and events" (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995: 177). An acceptance of the importance of negotiated meaning leads McNamara (1997), for instance, to question language testing interviews which assume that the test measures the student's ability to use the language and which fail to acknowledge the way the test interview is a co-construction between examiner and testee. It also implies a different approach to teaching which acknowledges the extent to which students could participate, were they given the chance. Thus Kumaravadivelu (2003: 49) suggests, teachers should "seriously 'listen' when language learners speak, and build on what they say. In other words, the learner's voice in the classroom should not be treated merely as language practice". At the same time Van Lier seeks to "reduce the imposition of teaching... and to allow learners to be the perceiving, thinking, acting and interacting person that they have the right to be" (1998: 142).

Another consequence of this input-output model of communication and the learner as a container for transparent knowledge is a false understanding of what makes a language learning setting optimal. A supposed characteristic of successful language learners is the employment of strategies which enable them

to interact with native speakers (Naiman et al., 1978). Indeed Schumann's Acculturation Model, states that "the learner will acquire the second language only to the degree that he acculturates" (Schumann, 1978: 29) and that acculturation occurs best in natural settings when social and psychological integration takes place. Such interactions are then seen as occasions in which linguistic input occurs and undergoes processing by the learner. However, the presumption that "the more students are exposed to the target language the more language they will acquire" (Blyth, 1995: 164) fails to take into account, as Peirce (1995) has shown, the complexities of social context, culture and power which impact on the learner's employment of such strategies in actual contexts. The concern, she states, should be to question "how language shapes the subjectivities of [...] students and how it is implicated in power and dominance" (Peirce, 1989: 14). In other words, there is no recognition that, during 'transmission', meanings can and do shift and that, in fact, meaning is co-constructed and is rather "a social and negotiable product of interaction, transcending individual intentions and behaviours" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 291).

A major problem with modernist models, from the point of view of a poststructuralist model of the subject, is their psychologism. Rather than seeing 'choices' as being produced in competing discourses, importance is given to the internal cognitive processes of the individual and control of those processes is presumed. Thus, in the modernist model, much importance is given to the individual learner in determining his or her own learning outcomes. This can be seen in the models developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972), Gardner and MacIntyre (1992a; 1992b), Gardner et al (1997) and MacIntyre et al (1998) which emphasise "the learner's contribution to second language learning" (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992a: 211) by focusing on cognitive variables such as intelligence and language aptitude, or individual differences such as motivation, anxiety and self-confidence, or on "the linguistic, communicative and social

psychological variables that might affect one's willingness to communicate" (Macintyre et al., 1998:545). Similarly, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985) refers to a failure to learn effectively because of an affective block to learning. While factors such as anxiety, poor motivation or low levels of confidence are said to block learning, an affect such as the desire to assimilate is believed to overcome such blocks. Thus, it is the relatively fixed nature of these individual traits of students, and the fact that they can be more or less consciously exercised, which are seen as ultimately determining success or failure in language learning. Issues of power and positioning are ignored in that the discursive production of these differences is not recognised. Furthermore, an assumption is made in language classrooms that learners are there to learn the language, and that if they fail to learn, it is likely to be their motivation which is at fault. However, students' goals have been shown to be more complex (Gillette, 1994; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). As my research also shows, students in language classrooms are not always there because of a transparent desire to learn the language. In addition, in rethinking the subject, we are led to consider the role of governmentality in the production of the subject's goals and self awareness.

This rethinking also applies to the subject's 'capacity' to determine the outcomes of their own learning by 'controlling' their own motivation. Definitions of motivation normally refer to affective factors (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991: 470) and their impact on learning. In the model of motivation developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) a distinction was made between integrative and instrumental types. The former, which conveyed the desire to integrate into the target language community because of positive feelings towards it, was seen to have a more significant impact on language learning than the latter, which referred to the desire to achieve certain goals: educational, financial or professional. In an attempt to deal with the shortcomings of this model, a number of scholars sought to broaden its terms. Thus, Dörnyei states

that motivation is much too complex for such a simple model: "So much is going on in a classroom at the same time that no single motivational principle can possibly capture this complexity" (Dörnyei, 2001: 13). However, even his understanding of motivation, which allows for complexity and exhibits a reassuring cynicism towards the reliability of the rational (2001), remains tied to individual factors and ignores the impact of social context. Similarly, Brown's definition of motivation as "the extent to which you will make choices about (1) goals to pursue, and (2) the effort you will devote to that pursuit" (1990: 384) clearly loses its relevance in the poststructuralist framework applied here since, as discussed in *Chapter 2*, both goals and effort are discursively produced as part of techniques of the self and are profoundly impacted by context and power. In these models, then, not only is there little recognition of the impermanence and instability of attitudes and motivation, but even those scholars who show evidence of a wariness towards some of the overriding canonical assumptions of applied linguistics research, such as Dörnyei, fail to account for the impact of social context (Blyth, 1995 ; Breen, 1985).

Although a limited acknowledgement of context is evident in some scholars, the notion of the learner which came to predominate in second language theory and research is of an individual who operates within a fundamentally apolitical and ahistorical context. Even when context is mentioned it tends above all to refer to the factors which contribute to learners' internal processes or to learner production of language, and we find ourselves back with individual variables. Thus for Larsen-Freeman (1991: 24), context refers to the impact of formal versus informal learning contexts on acquisition; while for Brown it refers basically to what standards are to be considered correct and appropriate (1994: 120). However, such understandings fail to acknowledge the impact of the complex power relationships present in any interaction. Indeed, as Norton Peirce points out, learner success is "at least partially determined by the structure and practices in ...[the] ... classroom and the social relationships

permitted and negotiated therein" (2001: 314). The predominance of mainstream SLA understandings of context has meant that the individual/social divide has continued and that "social, discursive approaches to the nature of mind, as well as competence and knowledge ... are beyond the scope of SLA" (Firth & Wagner, 1997: 287).

In fact, as Breen points out (2001) an adequately sophisticated notion of context remains to be developed in second language acquisition research. Such a notion must be seen as indivisible from culture (Kramersch, 1993), glossed earlier as a dimension of phenomena reflecting "situated and embodied difference" (Appadurai, 1996: 13), and must be able to take account of multiplicity and complexity. While Kramersch (1996) has observed teacher reluctance to teach something as relative and shifting as culture, clearly cultural effects are operative in the interactions in which subjectivities are produced. If all human subjectivities derive from a specific cultural locus, as they do, then all classroom behaviours "are cultural phenomena, not 'natural' in any sense" (Cazden, 1988: 67). Thus, Harklau (1999), for instance, has shown how representations of culture are implicit in the curriculum, in classroom practices and in textbooks in college classrooms in the US.

In spite of a growth of interest in cultural identity in other fields, the impact of different cultures within the student body is an area which has received minimal attention in research in the second language field although there have been some attempts in the field to theorise culture (Atkinson, 1999; Holliday, 1999). Indeed, 'culture' was significant in my research in that 'problems' in the classroom were attributed, by teachers, to cultural difference, in 'the Other'. An ongoing debate about cultural representations in language teaching classrooms and the need for a "destabilization of one's own subject position" (Kramersch & von Hoene, 1995: 333) in dealing with cultural difference will be developed further in *Chapter 5*.

The need for a more sophisticated notion of context can be seen in the problem of methods and the ongoing debates regarding which method is best (Kramsch, 1993; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Language learning is normatively regarded as a process in which the teacher mediates the knowledge acquisition of the learner through an application of particular instructional strategies or methods. However, a narrow focus on methods in language teaching cannot succeed, as Kumaravadivelu points out, because it fails to acknowledge “that the success or failure of classroom instruction depends to a large extent on the unstated and unstable interaction of multiple factors such as teacher cognition, learner perception, societal needs, cultural contexts, political exigencies, economic imperatives, and institutional constraints, all of which are inextricably interwoven” (2003: 29). In fact, the term context needs to account for this myriad of factors which are outside the learner, as well as those so-called internal ones which, as discussed in *Chapter 2*, are in fact the outside folded into the inside (Deleuze, 1988: 96-7) in the processes of governmentality.



As mentioned in *Chapter 1*, this study focuses on the identities of both teachers and students in the belief that it would be neglectful of important contextual factors to focus on one group only. I want now to turn to a problematisation of some of the above in terms of conceptions of teachers.

The notion of ‘founding, free-willed, rational and transparent subjects’ has been applied to teachers no less than to students but it is played out in a different way. In fact, research in second language teaching and learning has tended to focus on student identity; only recently has it begun to focus on teacher identity (see for example Amin, 1997; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Johnston, 1997; Vollmer, 2000). In this way, identities of teachers, insofar as they have elicited little

comment, have been presumed to be even more fixed (normalised) than those of students.

In many studies, teachers are almost transparent, merely the means by which students become speakers/writers of the new language. Following the input-output model, the teacher's role becomes one of maximising input. Thus Breen refers to mainstream second language acquisition assumptions that "the teacher *must* facilitate comprehension [...] or the teacher *should* endeavor to shape individual learning behaviors" (1985: 137, emphasis added). While on the face of it, this may seem self-evidently to be what teaching is about, the lack of attention to the complexities of contextualised identities in teachers and assumptions that teachers operate as "surrogate experimental psychologist[s]" (Breen, 1985: 137) positions them in particular ways. Even when a somewhat poststructuralist conception of the learner is applied and notions of changing identities are accepted, the teacher remains little more than a tool in the process. Thus Ullman refers to the fact that teachers can "support" the identity re-creation of students in the classroom (1997). The fact that Dörnyei sees the issue as "the question of how to *motivate* students" (1994: 274, emphasis added) again demonstrates this normative elision of the teacher.

Although some recognition is given to the immensely complex roles which teachers play - for example, that they "must constantly balance the demands of their roles as teachers, their grasp of the language they teach, the learners they serve and the social context in which they teach" (McGroarty, 1995: 92) - this recognition is inadequate. Quite apart from the effects of their personal histories, concomitant unconscious assumptions and institutionally imposed norms of professional behaviour, teachers, like students, are subject to a myriad of daily factors which impact on their professional lives. Particular daily life events, both short-term and on-going, impact on teachers' classroom actions and statements (Vandrick, 1997). The pressure on teachers who "...*must* find

ways to..." and "...*must* make it possible for..." (McGroarty, 1995: 99, emphasis added) not only continues to de-privilege the knowledge and skills which students bring to the classroom but also reifies the notion of teacher while failing to take into account their complexities as contextualised subjects.

One of the consequences of this is, for example, the imposition of teaching methods by researchers onto teachers and a gap between researchers' views of those methods and what actually happens in the classroom. Kumaravadivelu (2003: 29) cites numerous studies demonstrating this gap which he contends has been institutionalised to the extent that teachers accept this dichotomy uncritically. It is still not uncommon to find research, even that which critiques mainstream second language acquisition, in which the relationship between researcher and learner is foregrounded, whilst the role of the teacher is elided. Ellis for example, asks "to what extent the metaphorical constructions of researchers and learners are the same or different" (2001: 83). In this way, second language acquisition and applied linguistics research generally fail to recognise the multiplicity which is the teacher.

A second consequence is an assumption that teachers are capable of, and will carry out, reflection on their practice. Although reflection is undeniably an important tool, it is nevertheless limited by construction within particular discourses. Subjects may be able to articulate what they are doing as well as give an explanation for why they chose to do it, but such articulations and explanations are always mediated by and limited to the discourses available to them at that time. As such, they may remain unconscious of particular discourses which would usefully elucidate their reflections. But perhaps more importantly, as Foucault says, "what they don't know is what what they do does" (1983a: 187).



What is called for then is a conception of subjectivity which takes into account a multiplicity of social/historical/contextual factors and that this conception is applied to all the players, not only students but also teachers.

I turn now to a discussion of those scholars who have turned away from modernist notions and who have begun to open up the question of identity.

### *Section b: Notions of the founding subject under question*

As we have seen, a number of problematic issues arise from modernist understandings of identity. These understandings have been questioned (McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 2000; Peirce, 1995; S. Price, 1996, 1999) both through empirical studies and in theoretical work in second language studies. In this section I critically discuss these more recent contributions.

Norton Peirce's work on social identity (Norton, 2000; Peirce, 1995) has opened up the TESOL field to a serious questioning of understandings of identity. Many subsequent writers and teachers are indebted to her for this move. In her work Peirce challenged modernist notions of the subject which have been dominant in the field. Her basic premise was that a split exists in SLA theory between the learner and their social context and she was concerned to develop "a comprehensive theory of social identity which integrates the language learner and the language learning context" (Norton, 2000: 4; Peirce, 1995: 9). Her focus was on the world outside the classroom, which she claimed is not simply a repository of contextual clues for natural language learning but must be considered in the light of the crucial role played by relations of power in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers (Norton, 2000; Peirce, 1995). She succeeded in showing that language learning, rather than being an abstract skill that can be easily transferred from one context to another, must be understood with reference to inequitable power relations. This, she claimed, should lead to new modes of thinking about the

second language learner which do not attribute failure or success to the learner but rather to the impact of aspects of the learner's social context.

A number of other studies (for example, Polanyi, 1995; Siegal, 1996) also looked at the impact of inequitable social relations, in this case, gender relations, on language learning. Siegal (1996), for example, demonstrates how a Western woman, Mary, resists using gendered language when communicating in Japanese in order to be seen as an equal to the Japanese professor with whom she is talking. However what is effectively a misuse of polite forms and omission of honorifics positions her in a possible loss-of-face situation in relation to the professor. Discussing the experiences of female students in Russia, Polanyi shows how discourses of gender impacted negatively on the opportunities for female students to be exposed to, and thereby learn, the language. She states that, over and above their language learning, the students learned to be "women Russians" (1995: 289).

These studies highlight the need to consider the ways in which language learning opportunities and identities are co-constructed in interaction. Of significance for my study are the conjunctions and disjunctions of affect in interaction, and how these relate to the power to affect and be affected by others (Deleuze, 1988: 101), discussed in *Chapter 2*.



In her re-conceptualisation of the subject, Norton Peirce directly challenged modernist notions that each individual "has an essential, unique, fixed and coherent core" (Norton, 2000:124) and "a unified, coherent identity which organises the type and intensity of a language learner's motivation" (Norton, 2000:120). She sought to demonstrate instead, through events in the lives of her immigrant women research participants, a more complex notion of identity;

that is, a poststructuralist notion of the subject as “multiple, a site of struggle and subject to change” (Peirce, 1995: 9).

Norton Peirce’s opening up of the issue of identity was a highly significant move, not only in terms of theoretical work in second language teaching and learning, but also, and perhaps more importantly, in terms of classrooms where her work can be seen to have impacted on teacher practices. In a paper responding to Norton Peirce’s 1995 article, Sharkey, Shi and Thompson describe how their classroom practices changed as a result of a growing awareness of the ways in which student resistance and students’ feelings of inadequacy and powerlessness are produced in social relations and how this impacts on language learning (Sharkey et al., 2003).

As the testimonials of these teachers and teacher educators indicate, Norton Peirce’s contribution is of key importance to thinking and doing identity in second language learning and teaching. Nevertheless, as I discuss below, she has been criticised for ‘essentialising’ her identity categories; that is, of not fully addressing the consequences of a poststructuralist notion of the subject. I deal with this in more detail in my discussion below.

Returns to essentialism are not uncommon in recent thinking; many attempts to apply poststructuralist strategies of identity reveal modernist slippages and a profound and possibly unconscious unwillingness or inability to let go of the notion of the self as unitary, transcendent and self-present. Indeed, Hall (1996b: 10) comments, following McNay (1994), that even in Foucault’s early work “[D]iscursive subject positions become *a priori* categories which individuals seem to occupy in an unproblematic fashion”. In fact, any attempts to rethink subjectivity are hampered by the impossibility of ‘thinking at the limit’ and derive from the limitations which language imposes on thinking, discussed in *Chapter 2*.

One important aspect to thinking the poststructuralist subject is to recognise the importance of discourse in producing subjectivities. In *Chapter 2*, we saw that, while the modernist individual has been regarded as a conscious being who is capable of rational decision and of self-knowledge, in a poststructuralist view the individual is the site of an interplay of often unconscious behaviours which are a product of discursive constructions. There is thus a necessary link between discourse and subjectivity, particularly in terms of thinking through the impact of social relations since subjectivities are co-constructed in interaction. A discursive view illustrates clearly the multiplicity and impermanence of identity as it is produced in interaction. However, although Norton Peirce does use the term discourse, her understanding of it draws on other usages common in applied linguistics; that is, discourse as spoken text (see, for example, Scollon & Scollon, 1995.) Thus, in her example of the Bart Simpson episode, discussed below, the term 'discourse' is used to refer to spoken text "the discourse on Bart Simpson" (1995: 16) relying on a notion of discourse in which social language use has been reduced to individual language competence (S. Price, 1996: 333).



One of the ways in which an omission of discourse from Norton Peirce's discussion gives rise to an essentialised notion of identity relates to the representations of identities of the participants in her research. In her discussion, she relates how the purpose of one, Martina, in coming to Canada was to find "a better life for children" (Peirce, 1995: 20) but Peirce does not consider the discursively constructed nature of this purpose. This would allow us to see how the multiplicity of the subject is produced. Thus, Martina's goal of finding a better life for her children underpins Peirce's argument for the dominance of 'mother' in Martina's social identity formation. That is, Peirce sees Martina's identification with the role of mother forming an essentialised

base or core identity from which she functions in the world and resists being positioned as an immigrant. As Price says, this amounts to “a pre-given Martina, [who] decides between these alternative options according to her own pre-given interests” (1996: 332). However, the static, binary distinction, ‘mother-immigrant’ is too reductionist for a poststructuralist view. Each of these aspects of identity is presented as unitary and their discursive construction from moment to moment in the face of the impact of different social contexts is not acknowledged, preventing Peirce from recognising that both the options and the choices between options are functions of discourse.

This can also be seen in Norton Peirce’s discussion of the interaction between Eva, a participant in the research, and Gail, a Canadian, in which Gail ‘makes’ Eva feel “strange” (Peirce, 1995: 12) because Eva doesn't know who Bart Simpson is. Peirce states that “it was Gail who was subject of the discourse on Bart Simpson” (page 16). Peirce uses “subject of” to refer to the originator of the discourse, and the one who thereby holds power in an interaction. In her use of “subject of” Peirce seems to have fallen into the trap of misrecognising Gail as a knowing subject. This is a trap which Weedon warns against. The process of misrecognition is one in which there is an assumption that the subject “is the *author* of the ideology which constructs her subjectivity” (Weedon, 1987: 31). However, Gail, and the other Canadians who Peirce criticises for their lack of openness to immigrants, are not necessarily any more or less in control of their positioning of immigrants than the immigrants are themselves; the fact that Gail implies that Eva is strange and the fact that Eva feels strange are part of the same discourse, a discourse which possibly references the marked nature of bilingualism (Pavlenko, 1998:158) and the ongoing marginalisation/Othering of second language learners as ‘foreigners’ (Todorov, 1984). A more discursive view of subjectivity would have allowed an understanding of the ways discursive regularities pervade societies in multifarious ways.

Additionally, Peirce omits consideration of her own discursive construction. As Canagarajah (1996: 328) comments, Peirce “fails to show a reflexive application of this notion [of split, shifting, multiple subjecthood] to the researcher herself or the researcher’s interactions with the subjects”. On the one hand, we have Peirce’s apparent tendency to put words into the mouths of her participants - she can be seen in the interview excerpts to be interpreting their responses - combined with her use of recall rather than tape recording of interview material<sup>10</sup>. This, as Kramsch (1999) points out, results in interpretations of interpretations, Peirce’s interpretations being responses to the women’s written versions of the events, which are themselves interpretations. Kramsch argues that it was the very fact of writing in a diary expressly for the sake of the research which provided Martina with the “public social persona” (Kramsch, 1999: 137) necessary to assert herself in the new society. This mediated version of her experience thus creates a textual identity for Martina. In research which applies a poststructuralist paradigm, such a heavily mediated version of events calls for greater reflexive awareness of the construction of the researcher’s own subjectivity.

Indeed a ‘split, shifting, multiple subjecthood’ is reflected in Norton Peirce’s shifting identifications with poststructuralist notions. Thus her use of poststructuralist tools is marked by an ambivalence which is demonstrated in a number of conflicting statements she has made over the years: the claim that she is not “an apologist for poststructuralist theories” (Peirce, 1996: 338), her initial statement that she is drawing on feminist poststructuralism (Peirce, 1995: 14-15) reiterated in Norton (2000: 124) and her free use of poststructuralist terms throughout her texts. If anything, this alignment and dis-alignment reflects the fragmented and impermanent nature of subjectivity.

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<sup>10</sup> Norton states that she chose to avoid the use of a tape recorder because of student responses to an implied surveillance (2000:32).

As discussed in *Chapter 2*, a poststructuralist subject is one in which “rational consciousness is decentred and subject to the effects of unconscious wishes, desires and processes” (Weedon, 1987: 88). The subject is therefore potentially inconsistent and not-knowable; consciousness is an effect of signification rather than its origin (Belsey, 2002: 66) and effects of actions do not necessarily match intentions (Mills, 1997: 30). Thus, conscious and knowing control of discursive impacts can only be partial and the subject’s autonomy is seriously in question. However, for Norton Peirce, identity appears to be a conscious matter which can be known, consciously named and controlled. This notion of the subject is implied when Norton Peirce speaks of her participants as claiming the right to speak, claiming certain identities over others (Peirce, 1995: 23), negotiating “a sense of self” (page 13) or exercising their agency “in forming and reforming their identities” (Norton, 2000: 318). However, only a modernist subject can be seen as having transparent rights or as being able to so knowingly ‘claim’ or ‘invest in’ an identity. A discourse approach is needed here to adequately show how claiming and negotiating are not rational and autonomous acts but are discursively constructed within dominant discourses.

Thus, in her suggestions for improving pedagogy in the light of a rethinking of identity, Norton Peirce suggests that learners should use systematic research techniques (observations, diary, logbook) to note opportunities to interact; to understand when, how, why and under what conditions they are able to speak; and what results follow. This will allow a development of insight “into the way in which opportunities to speak are socially structured, and how social relations of power are implicated in the process of social interaction” (Norton, 2000:152). Indeed, these techniques were reported by Sharkey et al (2003) to have successfully promoted learner awareness in their classes of the way social relations of power impacted on students’ speaking.

However, while I in no way wish to detract from the successes of these teachers, it is the very multiplicity of identity which may preclude the operation of such a pedagogical technique. On the one hand, it assumes a stable kind of learner who is interested and able to carry out those research techniques and to reflect on the observations made. In my experience, there is often, for example, a gendered rejection of diary-keeping. Interest in reflection can also vary according to the variable impacts of such things as class, gender and culture. Indeed, Sharkey comments in relation to her teacher educator classes that “some students resist [...] critical questioning” (Sharkey et al., 2003: 60). On the other hand, these pedagogical suggestions assume a particular kind of teacher, who is not only willing and able to follow up the ideas but is even interested to know of them in the first place. Indeed Norton herself draws attention to the need to better understand teacher identity and “the sociocultural practices of [the] educational community” (page 72) and to focus on “teachers and the contexts in which they work” (page 73). My project attempts to address this call, through a focus on the discursive production of teachers and on some of the consequences for teaching of a poststructuralist notion of subjectivity.



Although the notion of subjectivity used by Norton Peirce is open to extension, she has unarguably made a vital contribution by opening up the field to questions of identity. Indeed a number of scholars have taken up the mantra of identity as ‘multiple, a site of struggle and subject to change’ or have applied poststructuralist understandings in studies of language learner subjectivity (see for example, Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Pavlenko, 2002; Siegal, 1996; Thesen, 1997).

At the same time, however, some studies, while aligned either implicitly or explicitly with poststructuralist thinking, have cited Norton Peirce in unproblematised ways and have tended to perpetuate some of the problems associated with operationalising a poststructuralist notion of subjectivity (for



example, Brady & Shinohara, 2000; Burnett, 1998; Ellis, 2001; LoCastro, 2001; Ronesi, 2003). Thus Ellis (2001), for example, in discussing metaphorical constructions of learners in a selection of research studies, refers to Norton Peirce's notion of 'sites of struggle'. He states that "[t]he social contexts in which the learners find themselves are 'sites of struggle' (page 77), that "the learners saw learning as a struggle, a view that just one of the researchers (Norton Peirce) shared" (page 83) and that, although Norton Peirce was concerned with the social identity of learners, "there is no evidence that the classroom learners showed much concern with this" (page 84). In his discussion he reveals misunderstanding of the notion of 'sites of struggle' and of the way that social identity, as formed in those sites, is not a matter of conscious, controlled decision making. Such misunderstandings, I would claim, arise not only from a lack of understanding of poststructuralism on the part of Ellis and others, but more importantly for this discussion, from the powerful impact made by Norton Peirce's contribution to the field and from the inconsistencies in her original formulation of identity. Her work thus directs subsequent researchers towards more rigorously theorised notions of identity and the relevant pragmatic outcomes for the second language classroom.



McKay and Wong do extend Norton Peirce's notion of social identity by applying the theoretical notion of discourses in their paper on Chinese adolescent immigrant students in the USA (1996). Their study identifies the discursive constitution of student identities in a small group of high school immigrants and they show how certain discourses - colonialist/racist discourses, a model-minority discourse, Chinese cultural nationalist discourses, social and academic school discourses, and gender discourses - impact on the lives and language learning of the students in their study.

Their discussion demonstrates how these discourses contributed to each student's sense of identity which itself is implicitly linked to the type of 'investment' the student makes in his or her learning. They claim, for example, that while Michael's proficiency in sport enabled him to contradict the 'good student' stereotype of model-minority discourse, the effect of two other discourses - colonialist/racialised discourses and social school discourses, "both of which place a premium on spoken English as an indicator of functionality in U.S. society" (McKay & Wong, 1996: 592) - was to enable Michael's low investment in the acquisition of written English. As a result, Michael's speaking skills outstripped his writing skills. While this is self-evidently not a stated goal of his teachers, Michael's identification with Chinese cultural nationalist discourse, McKay and Wong suggest, enabled him to gain a sense of identity in the face of the loss of identity which was a product of the other discourses discussed. In addition, they claim, he was able to resist the positioning offered by model-minority discourse and academic school discourse by seizing agency.

McKay and Wong's discussion clearly shows how the need for a viable identity determines the behaviour of the students in their study. This relates to the need for a sense of identity stability, discussed here in *Chapter 2*. In addition their discussion claims great validity because it offers some explanation for the variable responses of students to the same contextual setting. However, as with Norton Peirce's essentialisation of identity categories, discussed above, McKay and Wong (1996) have been accused of positing their discourses as *a priori* categories and thereby essentialising them (Angélil-Carter, 1997; Pennycook, 2001; Thesen, 1997: 505). Thus, although they go some way towards detailing "the actual practices of self-production" called for by Price (1996) in his critique of Peirce (1995), their conception of the subject also suffers from difficulties which arise when essentialised labels are applied. They lose sight of the way the subject's intentions are produced in discourse (Alcoff, 1988). Thus, although they suggest that one student, Michael, is positioned by, or subject to, the

discourses, he is nevertheless able to “situate himself in more powerful positions in chosen discourses” (page 593). Thus, they claim, he is able to choose those discourses with which he prefers to identify. Similarly another student, Jeremy, could have had this ‘choice’ but he failed to “mobilize Chinese cultural nationalist discourses to put himself in a superior position” (page 597). However, as argued above, discourses are not things we are necessarily free to choose. Our preferences and choices result from discursive production itself; choosing is not a transparent act but a result of the complex interplay of discourses which mould and shape ‘us’ and in which ‘we’ are complicit. In addition, although we may resist the beliefs and assumptions which are part of a certain discourse, we may nevertheless find ourselves positioned by it, as I will suggest in *Chapter 5* is the case when the contribution to the class of the student, Rie, is not noticed.

Any assumptions of essences thus function to deny both “the unprecedented multiplicity of singular beings and the radical differences among those singular beings” (Davis, 2000: 13). In addition, the deployment of fixed labels for discourses can only be based on a misperception of discourse as having, like the modernist notion of identity, an essential, unique, fixed and coherent core. Rather, the complex interplay of relatively transitory and unstable discourses means that there are constant and dynamic interactions between discourses that are both productive and reproductive in effect.

McKay and Wong’s discursive approach to subjectivity also reveals slippage in the notion of identity. They seem to be unclear about the real meaning of ‘multiple identities’. For example, they say “[m]any of our examples show investment plateauing if not decreasing because of multiple identities” (1996: 603) as if having multiple identities causes a particular problem to investment. In fact, if we are to accept the existence of multiple identities and see them as continually interacting and changing in a ceaseless interplay, then it is not the fact of multiplicity but rather the state of play of the struggle over subjectivity

which determines the nature and focus of investment. On the other hand, and like Norton Peirce, their notion of the subject appears overly rational, self-conscious and autonomous since they also refer to 'seizing' and 'claiming' identities (McKay & Wong, 1996). As such, they fail to really address Hall's call, quoted in the previous chapter, for "a theory of what the mechanisms are by which individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the 'positions' to which they are summoned,[..] why they never do so completely [...] and some never do, or are in a constant agonistic process" (1996b: 14).

In fact, in both studies, the notion of agency appears to be elided with the idea of an act, or the power to act, such that any act or behaviour which is powerful is seen as a sign of agency. The notion of *power* used here is not a Foucauldian one in which "never completely stable effects of domination are produced" (Foucault, 1980a: 102), but rather an individualised notion in which each person grabs what power they can. Thus, in Norton and Toohey (2000) we read that Julie's knowledge and enactment of classroom routines and Eva's knowledge and use of Italian are "intellectual offerings" which "exerted agency" and in turn resulted in "more powerful positions" (page 317) for Eva and Julie. While it may be true that such knowledges amount to forms of intellectual and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1988), it is misleading to refer to them as agency. Classroom routines can be seen as part of a more general discourse of classroom practices and Julie's knowledge of them presents her subjectivity as being produced in that, and other discourses, which produce subjects acquiescent to the norms of schooling. Similarly, Eva's knowledge and use of Italian, and the way her knowledge of European countries is received can be seen as aspects of a discourse which includes privileging of big-C or "large" culture (Holliday, 1999).

The notion of agency discussed above implies a split between subject and discourse. In an effort to avoid this split, Price proposes a relationship between

them which is “a practice in which both discourse and subject are performatively realised” (S. Price, 1999: 582). This allows discourse to be seen as an ‘ongoing social production’. Price sees the ‘transitory stability’ of discourses as being a product of intersubjective production rather than a product of individual intention and in which “[d]iscourse reality and the subject are only enacted at the moment of instantiation” (page 590). This fits well with Hall’s notion of the subject as “points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discourse practices construct for us” (S. Hall & Gay, 1996: 6) and with the notion of co-construction as I use it here. It also indicates a necessity to avoid any nominal constructions at all when talking about subjectivity. Just as power is “not a property but a relationship” (Henriques et al., 1998: 115), so too the subject should not be thought of as a noun but as a verb, something which is performed. Indeed, if subjectivity is nothing but a location or intersection of discourses and the relevance of subjectivity is not *who* someone *is* but *what* occurs/happens and in what *practices* subjectivity is realised, then it may make sense to not think of subjectivity, the noun, but rather ‘subject-ing’, the verb.

In relating his discussion to the classroom, Price claims that “[d]iscourse acquisition must be linked to exploration of the instability disguised by the apparent stability of discourses” (2000: 590). He thus suggests that second language discourse acquisition must include an engagement with the processes of discursive maintenance and change. Such engagement implies a kind of reflexivity on the part of learners which, as previously discussed in the case of the teaching practices of Sharkey et al (2003), cannot be relied on. In addition, Price’s suggestion of an engagement “in the social production of [the] discourse and its apparent rules” (1999: 590) does not appear to differ radically from Norton Peirce’s “development of insight” (Norton, 2000: 152). Both these suggestions continue to imply a subject who engages and an object with which s/he engages.

Indeed, as Rose (1999a) has shown, discourses do not merely constrain subjects, they actually construct their being, and so if one expresses a desire to 'master' or to gain awareness of, a discourse, that expression of desire is itself another discourse. Any attempt to express oneself must be within discourse since "[t]o speak is to assume a subject position within discourse and to become *subjected* to the power and regulation of the discourse" (Weedon, 1987:119). Any metadiscourse merely constructs a new subject position, and the idea that awareness or reflection can provide a tool for critical intervention is suspect since there "can be no self-knowledge without a *stable, knowing subject* and no self-re-presentation without self-knowledge." (Davis, 2000: 152).

Price's view of discourse 'as practice' nevertheless moves away from an individualised conception of agency and permits a view of discourse as, not a simple mirroring of the social but rather, involving the making of new meanings, recognising that meanings can only be 'made' or described or 'languaged' retrospectively following an engagement in the social production of the discourse. In this engagement the individual, although crucial to the actual instantiation of discourse, does not mediate it intentionally. Thus Price says "The force of discourse... may lie in what is performed by it, and this is not determined by what can be said about it or by subject intentions" (1999: 590). Although Price does not yet seem to have resolved the split between subject and discourse, his notion of 'transitory stability', "the contingent convergence of many elements at a unique moment in time and space in which meaning is enacted" (2000: 589), reflects Foucault's understanding of discourses as always a play of resistant and hegemonic, and Deleuze and Guattari's notion of machines in continual states of connection and disjuncture.

Within the TESOL and second language fields, Price's work seems to have taken furthest the question of subjectivity and the 'problem' of agency. However, he fails to show, as Norton Peirce comments, how these

understandings can “inform second language acquisition theory” (Peirce, 1996: 338) and pragmatic suggestions for what might actually occur in the classroom remain unclear.

A major issue which thus remains is the question of how agency is to be understood. According to Pennycook (2001), the question of agency, posed by Hall (1996b) of why individuals take up some discourses and not others, or they do so only partially, remains one of the “hardest current questions in critical applied linguistics” (Pennycook, 2001: 149). Indeed, as I have shown, what is meant by agency in the work of these scholars is sometimes not clear. At times, agency appears to refer to the extent to which subjects are able to enter or reject discourses consciously, but, as discussed, such conscious control over discourses is suspect. At other times agency is used to refer to a top-down notion of power; that is, power over others, made possible by certain kinds of identities. In addition, agency is often taken to mean resistance.

My thesis attempts to build on the work discussed here, and by incorporating the notion of desire, to find a way to think subjectivity and agency differently in order to allow new ways of ‘doing’ pedagogy, “an/other pedagogy that would attend to the excess overflowing any binary opposition, that would attend to the excluded third” (Davis, 2000: 18). This relates specifically to the ways language learning opportunities and identities are co-constructed in interaction. As indicated in *Chapter 2*, in any interaction there is an interrelation of capacities to affect and to be affected. The comments of Sharkey et al (2003) concerning the co-construction of identities in classroom interactions are relevant here. Thus, Sharkey, Shi and Thompson all comment on the importance of creating spaces in which students feel free to express themselves and/or to reflect on their experiences of being constructed as powerless. Sharkey refers to “a classroom space that helped us acknowledge our contradictions and struggles and also share alternative visions” (page 59); the

'our' in this statement is significant. Shi speaks of how her classroom turned into "a caring and sharing space" (page 64) and Thompson describes how students spoke of finding "patient" (page 67) speakers with whom they could practise English. These comments show the importance of capacities for interaction - "the power to affect other forces (spontaneity) and to be affected by others (receptivity)" (Deleuze, 1988: 101). However, the complexity of discursively constructed subjectivities of both teachers and students in conjunction with movements of desire lead to questions about empowerment and agency: Who is empowered? What kind of agency is produced?



In this chapter I have sought to demonstrate how a notion of the subject remains inadequately conceived in second language teaching and learning practice and research. I have critiqued poststructuralist notions of subjectivity in the field as having not yet understood the full consequences of accepting a discursively produced notion of the subject as multiple, fragmented, subject to change, and a site of struggle. In the following chapters I seek to address these notions and issues in greater detail in the light of the classroom practices which were the focus of this research project.

More specifically, in *Chapter 5*, I seek to show how cultural identities impact on the classroom. Thus I demonstrate the discursive construction of participants' beliefs about cultural identity - *discourses of cultural identity* - and I show how these beliefs translate, in the classroom, into particular practices with particular effects. I focus mainly on representations of the cultural identities of students by teachers and, to a lesser extent, of students by students. In this discussion I attempt to maintain on display the radical multiplicity of identity and to show how, in many instances, while cultural 'tendencies' or 'residues' can be discerned, it must necessarily remain unclear whether these are indeed 'facts' or, alternately, 'representations'. Above all, I seek to show that it is more



important to consider what the discernment of these tendencies does, in practice. In an attempt to find a new way of thinking, I counterpose these classroom practices to Deleuze's notion of difference. This chapter links to debates in the field around culture and cultural representation and begins to address my first research question: How are teacher and student subjectivities produced and performed in a second language classroom? It specifically tackles the question of the impact of cultural identity in the classroom which provided an initial stimulus for this research project. However, as mentioned in *Chapter 1*, my early research 'findings' made other discourses salient and a discussion of these forms the content of *Chapter 6* and *Chapter 7*.

Thus, in *Chapter 6*, I show the operations of molarisation and stratification in the classroom through a discussion of representations of teacher and student identity in discourses which produce teachers as teachers – *discourses of the good teacher*, and students as students – *discourses of the good student*. I demonstrate the discursive construction of the beliefs which underlie participants' classroom practices, focusing specially on how 'techniques of the self' produce how they and others 'ought' to behave. In the case of teachers, I demonstrate the impact on classroom practices of discursive pressures to conform to certain norms of teacher behaviour. I also demonstrate that teachers' discursively produced expectations of student behaviour do not always match with student practices. These mismatches highlight the notable absence of desire from the classroom. This chapter then not only provokes a further reconsideration of notions of motivation and a further questioning of understandings of agency in second language learning and teaching but also leads to a consideration of desire in the classroom.

Thus while *Chapter 5* deals, for the most part, with teacher assumptions about and representations of students' cultural identities, *Chapter 6* deals mainly with teacher assumptions about and representations of their own identities. *Chapter 7*

on the other hand, looks at students' self-representations. Unlike the focus in *Chapters 5 and 6* on classroom practices, *Chapter 7* focuses on language learning as identity change. It links previous work in the second language field on self-translation and border-crossing to Deleuze's notion of desire and elaborates on the concept of line of flight to discuss the ways students in this research were seeking the opportunity to 'become' through study overseas. The chapter links *discourses of becoming* with notions of desire to tease out different kinds of becoming. To do this, it elaborates on Deleuze's three kinds of lines – the molar, the molecular and the line of flight. Thus whereas discourses can be said to offer a molar line, 'choice' offers a molecular line, and desire is a line of flight. This enables a new understanding of agency as desire. Additionally the chapter discusses the concept of becoming in the classroom and the ways in which student desires to become are met and/or ignored in classroom practices. In this discussion the concept of affect, its co-construction and the performative nature of subjectivity are brought forward as key.

Throughout these three chapters I seek to demonstrate, through the statements and practices of all the participants in my research, a particular notion of subjectivity: as performed, as discursively constructed and as incorporating desire. In each chapter, I relate this notion to the classroom. Before these discussions however, I turn to a problematisation of the methodology used in this research project.

#### *Chapter 4: Problematizing methodology*

In which I discuss the impact on methodology of the poststructuralist framework and conceptions of subjectivity which I employ in this thesis and I give the material background to the research.

*We do not possess language. On the contrary it is in language that we are  
dispossessed.*

- Eduardo Cadava



This section of a thesis normally aims to explain and describe the methodology and methodological choices made by the researcher in a relatively straightforward way: Who and what was involved? What did the researcher do and why did she do it? However, since I have chosen to operationalise a particular notion of subjectivity in this thesis, which clearly impacts on the 'who' of the participants as well as on the 'who' of the researcher herself, this chapter is therefore required to simultaneously do rather contradictory things. On the one hand it is required to give adequate recognisable details about the material conditions of the research; it therefore describes the research in somewhat familiar terms. On the other hand, as we have seen, in a poststructuralist approach, knowledge, reality and subjectivity are thought in particular ways. This impacts on what is considered to be 'data', on how it is to be 'treated' as well as on the product, the thesis. Additionally, other factors such as the subjectivities of participants, including the researcher, have to be considered for the way they contribute to the 'non-truth' of the 'data'. This chapter therefore problematises the following: the writing of a thesis in *Section a*; the researcher's role in *Section b*; representation in *Section c*; and methodology in *Section d*. *Section e* summarises some approaches and strategies employed in the thesis to deal with the consequences of these problematisations.

This partition into sections is an arbitrary and somewhat misleading act since writing, representation and researcher subjectivity are intimately tied to each other and all are relevant in discussing methodology. Although, as I discuss below, the linearity of writing necessitates an ordering process, nevertheless, the contingency of these categories constantly disrupts any attempt at a linear account.

### *Section a: Problematizing the writing of a thesis*

In many ways, it makes little sense to try to 'use' Deleuze in order to write a thesis. The writing of a thesis requires precisely the kinds of constraints which Deleuze's philosophy works against. This process of knowledge-making depends on representation but the work of Deleuze seeks the 'non-representational'. It seeks to escape the closed systems of "binary either-or logic" ...[and]... "hierarchies of truth" (Mansfield, 2000: 146). Writing a thesis in a Deleuzian sense requires what Lingis calls finding "how not to speak the law of imperial discourse" (cited in Boundas & Olkowski, 1994: 20).

Thus Deleuze seeks to make language 'stutter' (Deleuze, 1994b) by which he means to allow language to display some of the multiplicity and uncertainty which marks reality. However, "[t]heoretical/philosophical discourse [such as this thesis] demands a linear, authoritative, progressive mode of presentation, a structured and orderly *use* of language" (Davis, 2000: 105). Such linearity reduces the real complexity of the ways in which the interactions and shifts between and within discourses intersect to produce apparently individual subjects. Indeed, in writing up my 'data' in *Chapters 5-7*, the linearity of writing was one of the major constraints on capturing the complex interplay of discourses. Additionally, it disguises the actual experience of writing a thesis which is anything but a linear process. As Davis says, "whenever the dust has been made to settle around [...] *any* text, one can be fairly certain that a highly skilled cleanup crew has been at work behind the scenes, domesticating and

processing the language, determined, in the name of Knowledge and/or Truth, to give *writing* the squeeze. ... the UniVersity itself is implicated in this charge" (2000: 97).

Similarly the 'data' itself, the interview or classroom interactions, when turned into transcripts, offers a reduced version of the original event. Transcripts delete gesture, body language, proxemics, eye contact, affect, and more. They are then taken as some kind of 'truth' yet they have "re"-presented the event in a most reductive way (J. Green et al., 1997). This process of molarisation or territorialisation imposes constraints so as to order reality and make it manageable. Similarly, theses, conventionally, become manageable by the omission of other kinds of data – dream data, sensual data and emotional data (Elizabeth St Pierre & Pillow, 2000).

In addition, writing a thesis is a knowledge-making enterprise. It is part of the way we think about the world and our place in it, a teleology of knowing and understanding. "As we learn, analyse and discover, each of us is partaking of this massive collective enterprise, with the goal of total knowledge as its imaginary end" (Mansfield, 2000: 138). Indeed, it is possible that in some future time, this text could be used as a 'technique of power' to police or control populations in ways which are completely against my 'intentions' here. In the light of Rose's discussion of governmentality (1999a), it is clearly possible to see my research as forming yet another case of the documentation and categorisation of fields of subjects – in this case international students and/or their teachers.

Having said all this, perhaps I should stop right now. However, since, as a doctoral student I have accepted the constraints on me which require me to write a thesis, I continue. I am nevertheless caught in a double bind, and seek to do 'a double writing' (Derrida, 1981) at once producing a text which both

resembles and does not resemble a normative thesis. On the one hand, I keep in mind you, my audience, a select group of possibly reluctant readers (Lee & Williams, 1999: 2) who may prefer a normative thesis as easier to categorise and to address. Indeed, a thesis is a form of 'textual collusion' (B. Green & Lee, 1995) with the academy. The textual strategies - language, structure, passive voice, nominalisations, etc - employed by a doctoral thesis are an institutionalised genre, highly molarised, re-produced and re-iterated over time. My continued use of these strategies here, and my 'choice' to avoid a text which is "relentlessly deconstructive, somewhat disjunctive" (Foley, 2002: 480) may be considered by some to contribute to the ongoing hegemony of the traditional thesis form.

At the same time, to paraphrase Rorty (1989: 73)<sup>11</sup>, I have radical and continuing doubts about the final vocabulary I currently use, unfortunately not because I have been impressed by other vocabularies, but rather because of the radical unreliability of both language and subjectivity, and I realise that arguments phrased in my present vocabulary can neither underwrite nor dissolve these doubts. Therefore, I attempt in minor ways to resist those normalising processes and, applying Derrida's notion of *différance*, to continue in the light of "an erasure which allows what it obliterates to be read, violently inscribing within the text that which attempted to govern it from without" (1981: 6).

The current chapter thus attempts to disrupt some of the taken-for-granted notions about language, reality and the subject which are a consequence of operationalising the type of subject I offer in this thesis. Some parts of this chapter are written in a recognisable style, appropriate for a thesis written in a

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<sup>11</sup> The original reads "(1) She has radical and continuing doubts about the final vocabulary she currently uses, because she has been impressed by other vocabularies, vocabularies taken as final by people or books she has encountered; (2) she realises that arguments phrased in her present vocabulary can neither underwrite nor dissolve these doubts" (Rorty, 1989: 73). I am indebted to Dr Carl Rhodes for drawing my attention to this text.

Western-style university in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is particularly so for the sections which describe the actual processes which this material body, me, undertook to gather 'data'. At other times, the problematic of the subject leaks into the text in unsettling ways. This juxtaposition sits uncomfortably but discomfort is precisely one strategy for disrupting taken-for-granted norms. In addition, I am not seeking a 'hygienic writing' (Ronell, 1994) and thus leave unaddressed some of the aporias which necessarily arise when attempting to think within a poststructuralist framework. I return to these issues in *Section e* after discussing some further consequences for research of a poststructuralist approach.

### *Section b: Problematizing the researcher and her reflexivity*

Hornberger claims that "[t]oo much participation by the researcher may change the course of the action studied" (1994: 689). In fact, in a poststructuralist perspective, it is understood that the presence of a researcher does influence the research in some way. This is what Usher calls the reflexive 'problem': "the activity of the knower influences what is known since nothing can be known apart from these activities" (1996: 35). Therefore, it would not be accurate, for example, to claim this research to be a study of participants and their interactions in a classroom. Rather it is a study of a program, its participants and their interactions in a classroom, and a researcher.

Early conceptions of reflexivity, sometimes referred to as 'positional reflexivity' (Macbeth, 2001), sought to avoid what was seen as a weakness of modernist research, the elision of the effects of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, etcetera on the researcher's autobiography. This is a kind of reflexivity in which the researcher is required to self-disclose, stating upfront who she thinks she 'is' in order that the impacts of her subjectivity can be made visible. This kind of reflexivity involves attempting to not only take a critical distance on "upbringing, memories and sensibility" (Mignolo, 1995: 10) but also finding a

way to detach descriptions made as observer from those as participant (Mignolo, 1995: 328). It must include asking questions about the kind of reality and knowledge that I am constructing in carrying out and writing up the research.

This kind of reflexivity, while important, is based on an assumption that there is a reality out there, this time the researcher's, which can ultimately be captured. It is important to acknowledge the real impossibility of achieving the kind of reflexivity required since the notion of self-knowledge is suspect. "Indeed, the drive to re/present even ourselves accurately is a manifestation of the idealistic refusal to acknowledge the posthumanist paradox, an unchallenged faith in the morning mirror-check" (Davis, 2000: 152). Pillow (2003) discusses how the notion of reflexivity has been linked with the possibility of 'more accurate' research and with a call to transcend the limitations imposed by one's own subjectivity. She suggests that self-reflexivity offers "a modernist seduction" (2003: 186) since it releases the researcher from anxieties about being voyeuristic or ethnocentric.

Nevertheless, because they are implicated in the production of 'data', some items of researcher self-disclosure help reveal the kinds of truths that participants provide and go some way to demonstrating the co-constructed nature of subjectivity. I therefore attempt some form of positional reflexivity here in my discussion of 'the insider/outsider dilemma'. Responding to St Pierre's (1997) call for other kinds of data, I use here my private journal data to show how an emotional event impacted to alter the kind of unreflexive positional reflexivity I might have otherwise presented. This account is necessarily partial and incomplete, and remains subject to the limits of subject awareness.



An acknowledgment of emotional states and researcher vulnerability, particularly in feminist research, provides an oppositional gesture in the face of a hegemonic absence of self-representations of male researchers. As Foley comments, “it is hard to imagine grand theorists like Geertz and Bourdieu representing themselves as experiencing cultural others in a vulnerable, emotional and embodied manner” (2002: 475). Nevertheless, for women researchers to flip the binary and present themselves confessionally is risky if they take up a stance, as Foley claims they tend to, of being not able “to get it right” (2002: 480) or of laying out their emotional life in terms of the “ ‘feeling discourse’ of the culture of psychotherapy” (White, 1995: 87).

I stated above that ethnographic methods were used for the research. According to Hornberger (1994), the major limitation of ethnographic methods is the ‘insider/outsider dilemma’. That a researcher can consistently be aligned with one or the other stance needs to be problematised. Indeed, as I attempt to show in the ensuing discussion, these notions, like all representation, are not fixed but rather are unstable and can manifest in a multiplicity of ways.

At the beginning of the research, I strongly identified myself as a teacher. I had had 24 years of mostly adult ESL, and mostly casualised, teaching experience and did not strongly identify as an academic researcher or ‘scholar’ in the making, in part perhaps because of the gendered nature of the academy (Lee & Williams, 1999). I thus identified primarily, as mentioned in *Chapter 1*, as a teacher researching my own practices. In addition, the teachers I interviewed and observed were effectively, from my point of view, colleagues in the sense that they were teaching a course and students very similar to courses and students I had taught in the past. In this sense I saw myself as an *insider* able to immediately take an emic perspective with the teachers on the course. Indeed, it is of great interest to me that, early in the observations, I made comments about

teachers in my fieldnotes such as: “*a model lesson*”, “*very methodical/admirable*”, “*quite lovely. Chat - direct and friendly. quiet and warm*”.

However, as time passed, I began to lose my identification with the subject position ‘teacher’. On the one hand I was responding to the very different impression of the course which I gained from student comments, discussed throughout *Chapters 5 - 7*. Running parallel to this was increasing identification with a student subject position; being enrolled as a full-time PhD student meant that ‘student’ became a major form of identification for me for most of that time. I was ‘assisted’ in this identity change by practices of some teaching staff who positioned me as a student although I had formerly been a colleague.

Before the data-gathering phase began, I was initially concerned that my insider status with teachers may have prevented me from looking analytically at the site, its context, and Australian cultural technologies, all of which were relatively familiar to me. I had queried the extent to which I would be blinded by the very cultural assumptions which I sought to interrogate. While I have no doubt that I remain blinded in unknown ways, my increasing investment in the students’ comments – since they made sense of the mismatches between teachers and students of which I spoke in *Chapter 1* – and my identification with the struggles of teachers provided the analysis presented here.

Whether my status to others was emic or etic, like all aspects of subjectivity, was continually in flux and itself affected the progress and outcomes of the research. Thus one event early in the ‘data’-collection phase clearly impacted on one teacher, Helen, to alter her positioning of me. This interaction occurred in *Week 3* after a period during which I had naïvely scheduled what proved to be an impossible number of observations and interviews. I note in my personal journal that I am:

*Doing too much classroom observation and too many interviews and not having any chance to recoup, to process. The concomitant not eating properly, etc. (jw3)<sup>12</sup>*

I was due to observe Helen's class that day. I quote again from my personal journal:

*Today, burst into tears in the staffroom when I first arrived there. Coming down the stairs, I saw Helen disappear ahead of me, like the white rabbit. I thought I really ought to ask her how things were going and so went kind-of blindly into the staffroom after her. Margaret was there and said "Oh you again! It's Constance always turning up like a bad smell". I asked Helen how she was. She said okay in a kind of 'not so good' way. I don't remember if I then burst forth with my own problems but the next thing I was trying to wipe away my tears and wailing my litany of woes. They were very sympathetic, although I wonder if, in the end, Helen felt disappointed that I may not come into her class again. I will ask her when I recuperate. Margaret, in those circumstances, couldn't say anything but 'of course you can come into mine'. Margaret insisted that I NOT go to Helen's class as planned, that I go somewhere nice to relax instead. X became part of the 'counselling' group too and other heads of people I really don't know appeared over the partitions (jw3).*

As mentioned in the extract, I sensed a change in Helen's attitude towards me, expressed above in my comment that she seemed "disappointed". I subsequently asked her whether this was in fact the case. Her answer was that she was not disappointed, but rather that

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix A for the system of attribution of quotations used here.

*I'd never ever thought of you as being the sort of person who would be so stressed that you would actually weep yeah I mean I was very shocked by that and that makes me sort of **uneasy**...(iw6).*

This demonstrates not only my inability to know in terms of my misreading of Helen, but also raises the question of my positioning by teachers. Although I saw myself strongly as a teacher, the interaction described above indicates that I had not been positioned as a fellow-teacher but rather that my researcher status had been more significant, until I cried, after which I was apparently perceived as somewhat less 'threatening' by Helen. I will refer again to this point in *Chapter 6*. While this journal extract provides some explanation as to some of the events marking the progress of the research, the extent to which this kind of reflexivity actually works to strengthen representationality remains at issue since it functions to separate reflexivity from the research itself (Usher, 1996).

My positioning by and self-positioning in relation to students was similarly a matter of flux and unpredictability. In this, I felt myself to be also both insider and outsider. By positioning myself physically in the classroom at a student desk near the back of the room I was in some sense aligned with the students, almost becoming a participant myself, and thus having *insider* status. This was perhaps reinforced by aspects of my physical appearance; I never 'dressed up' as some of the teachers did; I am small in stature; and tend consistently to be seen as younger than I actually am. However, I would be naïve to think that all students did in fact at all times see me as an insider, although some comments by students, see later chapters, indicated that I had at least a more familiar status than teachers.

However, one incident indicates quite clearly that the students attributed me with a certain kind of power. This relates to the German student, Doris, whose

presence in the class was problematic for the Japanese students<sup>13</sup>, as I will discuss in *Chapter 5*. Towards the end of semester, Doris's attitude to and impact on the Japanese students appeared to change. She began to approach them and make arrangements to meet and discuss issues. This sudden and major change in heart was attributed to me by both Rie and Tomoko.

*Rie: I don't know why did she change quickly? I don't know.. Um....*

*Oh maybe Doris is also- or- had interview with you?*

*Constance: No, no.*

*Rie: Oh really?*

*Constance: She's the only person who said no.*

*Rie: Oh really- I thought Doris is also had um interview with you and we Japanese friends um say something about Doris you to you and you suggest something Doris.*

*Constance: You thought that I suggested? Right. Mm no, I never spoke to her.*

*Rie: Oh really! wh-why did she change? [laughs] (iw16).*

And Tomoko,

*Tomoko: So ah the- you know, German girl, Doris, is so friendly recently, we so surprised but she is very friendly and talk much and even we have a lunch with her and we was very surprise but it was very good.*

*Constance: Why do you think she changed?*

*Tomoko: I think you say something for- to her?*

*Constance: She doesn't come for interviews.*

*Tomoko: Oh-kay... Ah we were thinking it's because of you. Ooh really? Oh! [...] we thought your influence- your influence is so big or like that, I'm thinking mmm.. (iw14).*

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<sup>13</sup> Doris was the only participant to decline participating in the interviews.

One way, however, in which students attributed me with some kind of emic identity was in the way they included me in classes. If, for example, the teacher handed out papers for distribution, the student sitting nearest me would generally include me and pass me a copy. On the other hand, if teachers themselves distributed papers to individuals, I was generally not included. Additionally, several of the students would look towards me at moments of high amusement, high confusion and high exasperation. At other times, it was also evident that my presence had become something of an unremarkable fixture.

In this discussion of some aspects of my researcher role, it seems clear that the researcher's identity is far more complex, shifting and multiple than a binary emic/etic description will allow. Indeed, perhaps it would be more useful to consider Deleuze's notion of the power to affect and be affected; that is, rather than thinking in terms of static role identities, it might be useful to consider the multiple conjunctions and disjunctions created by the presence of a researcher.

### *Section c: Problematizing representation*

In *Chapter 2*, I discussed how poststructuralist approaches question modernist understandings of knowledge and reality. These questions relate to the indeterminacy of knowledge and reality, and therefore to how such knowledge and such reality can be represented, a process which cannot be done transparently, for any representation immediately limits and excludes.

Thus, on the one hand, the indeterminacy of knowledge and representation puts into question the notion of interview 'data' as raw material from which meaning can be ultimately and unproblematically made through the researcher's application of her understandings, no matter how linked to theory these understandings may be. As I discuss below, it is thus not a simple matter

of accessing the perspective of the person being interviewed. Many factors impact on the process and the perspectives of all participants, including the researcher, are products of multiple impacts due to specific socio-historical-cultural conditions.

In addition, language is not neutral. It is not a pre-existing privileged outside, and cannot transparently describe a 'real' world of objects. There is no 'truth' to be discerned and described; there can only be "procedure, proceeding and processes for willing [truth]" (Deleuze, 1995: 117). Thus in attempting to write about my research I am subject to the constraints of representation. These constraints impact at every level, from what might have been a simple and straightforward description of the research participants' cultural identities, to my attempts to name the discourses which I discuss in later chapters. As an example of the complexities of attempts to describe a 'real' world, here is a relatively straightforward description of the research which contains representations of participants' cultural identities.

The research project on which this thesis is based involved a one semester study of a group of fifteen international exchange students, their four teachers, and two senior staff at a large Australian university. The project used ethnographic methods to gather 'data' from two courses<sup>14</sup>, each consisting of six contact hours per week, and which were part of a larger program of study. The students, who had recently arrived in Australia for a stay of either one or two semesters, were enrolled in one or both of these two courses. Course A, *Academic English for Tertiary Study* hereafter AETS, consisted of three segments. Fifteen students, the total cohort, attended two of these segments, *Listening/notetaking* and *Critical reading/writing*. One student, Doris, was exempt from the third segment, *Conversation/pronunciation*. Each two-hour segment was taught, respectively, by Susan, Margaret, and Pauline. Course B, *Learning about*

*Australia* hereafter LA, which compared socio-cultural differences between Australia and students' countries, consisted of two segments, a content segment, taught by Helen, and seminar presentation skills taught by Margaret. Nine of the students, three French and six Japanese, were enrolled in this course. See *Table 1*, below, for a diagrammatic version of this information. My observations took place in all segments of AETS but only the content segment of LA.

A third course, *Course C, Australia in context, AC*, taught by Susan, was not part of the observed research, but was necessarily referred to by participants. This course, attended by the six Japanese and one Chinese, consisted mainly of non-classroom based activities and, for this reason and for reasons of time, was not included in the research project.

Table 1: Student enrolment in courses. Teachers' names are in parentheses.

	<i>Academic English for Tertiary Study, AETS</i>			<i>Learning about Australia, LA</i>	<i>Australia in context, AC</i>
	Listening/ Notetaking (Susan)	Critical reading /writing (Margaret)	Conversation/ Pronunciation (Pauline)	(Helen, Margaret)	(Susan)
Noriko	√	√	√	√	√
Rie	√	√	√	√	√
Yoko	√	√	√	√	√
Tomoko	√	√	√	√	√

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<sup>14</sup> I use the term 'course' to refer to a unit of study and the term 'program' to refer to a group of courses combined under one umbrella.



Katsuyuki	√	√	√	√	√
Noboru	√	√	√	√	√
Roland	√	√	√		
Antonio	√	√	√	√	
Dominique	√	√	√	√	
Sa'ida	√	√	√	√	
Chantal	√	√	√		
Ursula	√	√	√		
Doris	√	√			
Giovanni	√	√	√		
Li	√	√	√	√	√

The students, whose average age was 23, included six Japanese: four female, two male; five French: three female, two male; two German, both female; one Italian male and one Chinese male. See *Table 2*, below.

Table 2: Student details<sup>15</sup>

pseudonym	nationality	number of students of this 'nationality'	gender	age
Noriko	Japanese	6	female	21
Rie	Japanese		female	20
Yoko	Japanese		female	22
Tomoko	Japanese		female	21
Katsuyuki	Japanese		male	20
Noboru	Japanese		male	23
Roland	French	5	male	22
Antonio	French		male	24

<sup>15</sup> For a summary table which relates this information to students' years of English study, age at commencement and the courses in which students were enrolled, see Appendix E.

Dominique	French		female	22
Sa'ida	French		female	23
Chantal	French		female	21
Ursula	German	2	female	24
Doris	German		female	33
Giovanni	Italian	1	male	27
Li	Chinese	1	male	24

The teachers, all female, were Anglo-Australian either by birth or citizenship, native English-speakers, and were all aged in their 40s or 50s. They had between 16 and 36 years of teaching experience, an average of 26.25 years, and were all employed as casual staff. See *Table 3*.

Table 3: Teacher details

<b>teacher</b>	<b>nationality</b>	<b>gender</b>	<b>years of teaching experience</b>	<b>approximate age</b>	<b>years teaching in this program</b>
Pauline	Australian	female	36	55	< 1
Helen	Australian	female	27	50?	1
Susan	Australian	female	28	55?	1
Margaret	Australian	female	16	53?	3

The senior staff, one female and one more senior male, were both in tenured positions and had undisclosed but lengthy teaching experience. The more senior of the two had been in a mainly administrative position for around fifteen years. See *Table 4*.

Table 4: Senior staff details

<b>Staff member</b>	<b>nationality</b>	<b>gender</b>	<b>approximate age</b>
Kim	Australian	female	50
Max	Australian	male	50

In terms of cultural identities, this apparently straightforward representation of the participants' cultural, gendered and professional identities is immediately complicated by the complexity of actual lives. For instance, looking briefly at cultural identity, six participants, four students and two teachers, identified bi-cultural identities. My 'naming' of these more complex cultural identities derives from the participants' self-descriptions yet still falls short of capturing the complexities of their own identifications. Thus, in the case of the students for example, whereas Antonio described himself as first and foremost Brazilian and secondarily French, he added that he felt *"like a foreigner everywhere"* (iw3). Dominique saw herself as mainly French but also Portuguese - *"I think intellectually I'm more French [...] but then for um interacting with people I think I'm more Portuguese"* (iw3). Differently again, Sai'da saw herself as equally French and Moroccan, but with a proviso - *"equally if um much more Moroccan in my heart"* (iw3). Antonio's comment - *"French people, they are not friendly, they are cold and selfish and I don't like them, most of them"* (iw3) - throws yet another light on the complexity of the students' attitudes to their French nationality.

In another self-identification, Li, who was originally from China but who had lived in Japan for five years, described his level of Japanese in the initial questionnaire as "perfect", yet in interview spoke of the difficulties he had experienced being accepted in Japan. Additionally, Li was consistently presumed to be Japanese by the European students for much of the semester: *"I don't even understand if he's Chinese or Japanese!"* (Dominique iw10).

Two teachers also identified as bicultural. Susan did so on the basis of one Italian grandparent and a consequent ongoing interest in Italian culture. She considered Italian to be her second language and spoke it *"not like a native*

*speaker but pretty good*" (iw0)<sup>16</sup>. Margaret was originally from South Africa and grew up bilingual in Afrikaans and English.

Table 5.1, then, gives an alternative representation of these participants' cultural identities.

Table 5.1: The complexified view: diasporic identities

<b>pseudonym</b>	<b>students</b>
Antonio	Brazilian/French
Dominique	French/Portuguese
Sa'ida	French=Moroccan
Li	Chinese?Japanese
<b>pseudonym</b>	<b>teachers</b>
Susan	Australian/Italian
Margaret	South African (white)/Australian

Thus, even without entering the complex debates around notions of ethnicity, race, and diversity within cultures, my apparently straightforward representations of ethnic backgrounds, ages and genders in the earlier paragraph, above, is reductive and therefore misleading.

Additionally, my description of the courses may appear relatively straightforward, yet the origins of and enrolment requirements for the program are vital to consider since they had real material effects which impacted on the classroom. These conditions contributed to 'why' those particular students were in those classes and thus to the events and practices which took place there. In fact, the program had been established to address a growing need in this university to accommodate Japanese students whose English language (TOEFL<sup>17</sup>) scores did not meet university entrance requirements. Over time the program was also made available to other students. However, because of

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<sup>16</sup> Statements made in Week 0 refer to interviews carried out in the week before the beginning of semester.

<sup>17</sup> TOEFL = Test of English as a Foreign Language.

differing arrangements in the MOUs<sup>18</sup> with universities around the world, whereas students from Japan were required to provide an English language score before they could enrol, students from other countries were not obliged to do so. This meant, in effect, that students' language abilities were highly variable. I will discuss the consequences of this in the next chapter.

The Japanese students and Li, the 'Chinese-Japanese' student, were enrolled in all three courses, and this program made up their total enrolment at university. The European students, on the other hand, were enrolled in only one or two courses in this program and in addition were enrolled in between one and three courses in mainstream university programs, in most cases in Business or Information Technology. In interviews some references were made by students to their experiences in these courses. All students were in their third or fourth year of undergraduate university studies or were Masters level students in their home universities.

#### *Section d: Problematizing the methodology*

As stated earlier, the research used ethnographic methods to collect statements and to observe practices of the participants. The main methods used were interview and audio-recorded classroom observation. An ethnographic approach was chosen because of its flexibility. It allows an ongoing re-evaluation of questions, "guided by experience" (Wiersma, 2000: 238), in the light of the data which has been gathered. By moving back and forth between emic and etic standpoints the analysis and the form of the enquiry can be refined (Hornberger, 1994: 689). Thus, increasingly, the interview questions became individualised such that in the third interview, each student participant had their own schedule of questions, included among more general ones.

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<sup>18</sup> MOU = Memorandum of Understanding

A major value of ethnography is said to be its holism (Wiersma, 2000: 237). The goal is to “create a whole picture of the ...cultural event under study – a picture that leaves nothing unaccounted for and that reveals the interrelatedness of all the component parts” (Hornberger, 1994: 688). As Duff and Uchida state, ethnography is an appropriate methodology for an enquiry into a crosscultural situation “because of its orientation to cultural understandings, its attention to local contexts of practice and its recognition of the importance of incorporating multiple points of view in relation to observed phenomena” (1997:458). While I attempted to create ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973), by speaking to, and observing, students, teachers and senior staff, there are nevertheless many aspects of participants’ experiences which were productive of their identities which are outside the scope of my study. However, the focus on both students and teachers and their institutional environment enables a relatively holistic view. In fact, this project varies from many classroom ethnographies which tend to focus on one group only. It responds to calls (from, for example, Duff & Uchida, 1997) for further critical study of the complexity of the interactions between teachers, students and their institutional environment.

Ethnography has been described as the “written description of the social organisation, social activities, symbolic and material resources and interpretive practices characteristic of a particular group of people” (Duranti, 1997:85). In my research, I sought to build up a phenomenology of these differing interpretive practices using the notion of discourse. According to Wiersma “the phenomenological approach is based on the concept that reality consists of the meaning of experiences by those being studied” (2000: 238). My focus, however, recognises that my own discursive construction has impacted on the representations I make here. Thus although I attempt to differentiate between how participants represent themselves as much as how they are represented (Mignolo, 1995: 332), my discursive construction impacts even on the questions and structure of the interviews.

The interviews were approached as instances of co-constructed meaning, of "socially and jointly constructed (inter)action of which power is an indissoluble part" (Shi-xu & Wilson, 2001: 77). This notion of co-construction of meaning is not meant to refer to what Scheurich (1995: 243) calls a teleology of an ideal joint construction; rather that the meanings which are jointly produced remain ambiguous and unstable. In this approach, interviews cannot be seen unproblematically as sources of information about the beliefs and values of the participants in the study but as interactions in which all participants, including myself as researcher, express internalised assumptions and beliefs central to the social transactions of their/my particular culture/s. In other words, both participants and researcher speak through the discourses of their particular time and place. What we consider to be true is a product of how it has been 'languaged' at a particular time and location; what I, or an interview participant, claim as 'true' for ourselves - 'I am [this] kind of person, I behave like this because I am ... etc' - is a product of the particular discursive conditions which have, differently, produced our subjectivities.

The interviews were semi-structured, open-ended and informal. Three interviews, each of between approximately half to one hour's duration, were carried out in English, with the majority of participants, around the beginning, middle and end of the semester. Three students, all male, attended only two interviews<sup>19</sup>; one teacher, Margaret, attended four interviews, three of which were very brief; and as footnoted previously, one student, Doris, did not consent to being interviewed. Participants were told the study was about cultural identity in the classroom. See *Appendix B* for the schedule of interviews and classroom observations.

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<sup>19</sup> Antonio and Giovanni did not attend the final interview appointment. Li arrived late in semester.

The initial interview of teachers attempted to elicit sociocultural beliefs and values of participants in order to build up background knowledge of factors - read, discourses - influencing each participant. Subsequent observations of classroom events could thus take place in some context. These interviews took place prior to the commencement of the semester. The initial interview for students sought their purposes and goals in coming to Australia and their initial responses to the classes and to other students in the classes. These interviews began during the first week of semester but some did not take place until much later, making some questions redundant and necessitating others. See *Appendices C* and *D* for standard questions prepared for student and teacher interviews.

Subsequent interviews discussed issues which had arisen in earlier interviews, or during class, and any occurrences - in class or outside it - considered significant by participants. As stated above, these interviews were increasingly specific to the interviewee, an indication in itself of the way subjectivities form in relatively specific ways. Generally, questions to students continued to elicit their response to the classes and to each other, as well as their self-perceptions of their progress in relation to their goals. Questions about other students and teachers were asked in order to provoke comments about self based on the notion, following Deleuze, that conceptions of the Other are constitutive of the self. The Other is what makes the categories of subject and object possible; it is "the structure of the possible, sustaining the reality of the self" (Boundas, 1994: 112). My questions and comments from interviews are quoted in my discussion where relevant.

The research also utilised a form of 'member checking' in that statements made by individual participants formed the basis of questions to other participants. This can be seen in my attempts to clarify whether particular views and beliefs were held in common by participants, or how they intersected with related



views. In this way I built up my understandings of the discourses which were operating in the site.



As Scheurich points out in relation to interviewing, “[t]he language out of which [...] questions are constructed is not bounded or stable; it is persistently slippery, unstable, and ambiguous from person to person, from situation to situation, from time to time” (1995: 240).

All the interviews were conducted in English. While I would agree that some concepts remained unclear and some students expressed frustration with their inability to express what they wanted to express, my assessment of the interviews was that they were no more ‘slippery and ambiguous’ than might occur between speakers of the same language. Consider the three extracts below in which Noboru’s knowledge of English - I focus specifically on the word ‘boring’ here - appears in turn adequate, then inadequate, then again adequate for the task of self-expression. The last two extracts occurred only a few minutes apart in the same interview.

*Noboru: I-.when my high school ..I wanted to... be engineer that is fact but.. to tell the truth and..er..the ...the higher..my..grade..up...[...] as I get higher high and high, I get... boring and I get..*

*Constance: With engineering?*

*Noboru: Yuh boring and **hate** the engineering because I saw a lot of engineers who.. has narrow ... narrow world.. and the lot of students like me work in a big room and um.. I.. I....I think....- I don't mean I **hate**.. my friends but uhmm...they have very..narrow world..each other ...only in a.. school and ...for example this guy next to me do..*

*research.. and reading a paper.. playing pachinko.. horse racing*  
(iw2)<sup>20</sup>

*Noboru: I also met uh..Norway.. Norwegian student at uh.. entrance  
uh laughs.. at entrance of Tower building we had met at a first  
accommodation so I have.. then we go talk and sometimes go to- went  
to pub and spend uh three or four or five hours in the pub.. and we  
also went to the.. beach.. and spend a.... boring time with him*

*Constance: Boring?*

*Noboru: Boring time, no. [laughs] Do nothing but just | talking |*

*Constance: | Oh! relaxing! |*

*Noboru: Yeah yeah yes [laughs] relax! (iw9)*

*Noboru: I think the class is boring for them because they speak more  
fluently and they don't need- they don't need..our English I think..*  
(iw9)

Indeed, Scheurich describes the intense multiplicity, the radical heterogeneity which occurs at any moment in an interview. As he comments, not all of what occurs in an interview is spoken. The nonverbal is equally important, as are the unspoken thoughts of the participants. Both the interviewer and the interviewee may have trouble finding the right words to express themselves or may not be attending with full concentration to the matter at hand. In addition, one or other may resist, seek to dominate, or answer in terms of conventional meanings which they believe the other wishes to hear. The dialogue may swing between an active joint construction of meaning or an equally active resistance to joint construction. “Indeed the ‘wild profusion’ that occurs moment to moment in an interview is [...] ultimately indeterminable and indescribable” (Scheurich, 1995: 244).

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<sup>20</sup> See Appendix A for transcription conventions.

Additionally interviewees do not necessarily accommodate the direction of the researcher's questions. Interviewees may both actively and inadvertently resist the researcher's meanings, preferring to follow their own meanings and thus effectively controlling some or all of the interview. That the outcomes of an interview can be influenced by the identity – in terms of race, class, gender, etc - of the participants in an interaction has been discussed elsewhere (see, for example, McNamara, 1997; McNamara & Lumley, 1997; Siegal, 1996; Smagorinsky, 2001).

There are multiple ways in which the subjectivity of the researcher impacts on the research interview. For one thing, questions in an interview, as Gudmundsdottir points out, “signify not only what we want to know, but also what we know already” and significantly “our informant's narratives reflect both” (1996: 299). Additionally, as researcher and listener I have supplied my own explicit and implicit meanings, through the lens of certain discourses, to what I saw and heard.

Another way in which the subjectivity of the researcher can impact is in the inadvertent co-construction of meanings resulting from unconscious assumptions. In the case of one teacher, Susan, my question to her about how she coped with the diversity in the class seemed to instil the idea in her thinking for the first time as demonstrated in the extract below. It is interesting to note, also, how much hedging I perform in my question in an attempt to address the issue of diversity without pre-empting Susan's response.

*Constance: Well, I just wanted to hear how- how you're finding it and that- that incredible balance- or sort of disparate thing, of the classes, you know, what the needs of the different people-*

*Susan: Hmmmm mmm*

*Constance: -are [...] and just how you're managing the diversity of the group*

*Susan: Mm hmm*

*Constance: which is what strikes me as the most- the big- you know the biggest issue*

*Susan: Yeah*

*[...]*

*Susan: So how I'm coping with the diversity. Yeah in that-... I don't think it's as apparent in that class that I take on listening ... well, everyone seems to- some people seem to volunteer more answers certainly yeah.. but um... I mean you could put that down to personalities anyway but it does happen to be the Europeans ...um.....maybe I'm just making allowances because I know that.. the Japanese are not going to volunteer readily so I ask them, make sure I ask them (iw6).*

Here, after initially seeming to not see any issue of diversity, Susan answers in terms of a discourse which sees identity as personality - “*you could put that down to personalities*”; in other words, she responds in terms of an aspect of identity which I critique in this thesis. Then she answers in terms of the Europeans versus Japanese, calling on a discourse of cultural identity and difference. Thus, effectively, my question pressures her to answer and she does so in terms of currently available discourses relevant to a particular topic. That discourses circulate across bodies and institutions, as assumptions about what constitutes truth, can be seen in the way we both speak the same discourse, I in my question and Susan in her answer.

This relates to the way in which the interviews are instances of the confessional. Foucault speaks of the confession as being “at the heart of the procedures of individualization by power” (1978: 59). Confessions function to produce the subject in terms of the discourses in which they must recognise themselves;

they work to define the subjectivity of the subject. Thus, for example, what may appear to be an innocent question to students about their goals - 'what were your goals in coming to Australia?' - required them to have goals, so that they saw themselves as 'lacking' if they had no goals. At the same time, the students' 'willingness' to 'confess' in the interviews can be understood in light of the fact that "we have [...] become a singularly confessing society" (Foucault, 1978: 59) and the interview has become yet another opportunity for confessional, an opportunity to define who one is, to 'know' oneself, to become 'subject'.

Thus most students, in answer to my question - *What is your opinion about the interviews?* - replied that they saw me as a counsellor and that the interviews enabled them to know themselves better.

*This is like counselling for me, it's really good opportunity to dig deep into my mind (Katsuyuki iw15),*

*In this interviews I said about myself, or what I thought or something, if I say what I think and I recognise [myself] more strongly, I think it's useful (Yoko iw16),*

*Oh yes it's good to- for the purpose of speaking English and the purpose of thinking myself (Noboru iw16)*

*Oh its cool for me because like a psych- you're like a psychologist because when you go from here you know so much more thing about you (Sai'da iw13)*

The confessional as a technique of the self which produces good citizens can be seen in the following extract.

*Constance: Oh OK, all right, last question. What's your opinion about this interview process? What do you think about having interviews?*

*Chantal: Um... I think that's [...] because you- you act like psychologist [laughs] No because I think you- all the students like- trust you and conf-uh-like 'confident', comment dit? ["confidante", how do you say that?]*

*Constance: Confide?*

*Chantal : Yeah confide stuff that yeah they don't tell each other so*

*Constance: Mm I wonder why that is*

*Chantal : I don't know [laughs] because you feel like you have to tell the truth (iw15).*

Chantal's comment is an instance of surveillance and governmentality at work demonstrating how "individuals learn to discipline themselves or learn self-discipline through this notion that they are potentially under surveillance" (Mills, 1997: 39).

This sense of a need to tell the truth also impacted in the case of Katsuyuki. In the first few minutes of his first interview we were discussing his shyness, a characteristic with which only he associated himself and which I take up in *Chapter 5*. I was querying his self-perception in an effort to clarify what he could mean by it since, to me, he was patently not shy. The inexorability of the approaching confession is evident in the tape recordings throughout this stage of the conversation, both in his pauses before answering my questions and in my unintentional staging of the conversation. I quote the interaction at length.

*Katsuyuki: I can't speak to strangers [...] the person who I met the first time...and ...even though the person which I know well, I can't express my feeling completely. I can't show my 100%. Mmm. It's maybe comes from my shyness, I think. [...]*

*Constance: Hmmm. Do your friends think you're shy?*

*Katsuyuki: No. I don't know why but they don't think so.. [laughs]*

*Maybe I don't look like shy. Did you think that I'm shy?*

*Constance: Never.*

*[...] [I give examples from the first day when I had observed him to be the most talkative]*

*Katsuyuki: Right but I'm shy [...] Mmm But when I'm speaking to stranger my- my mind is like, you know, upset*

*Constance: So you feel nervous or worried that something is wrong. Maybe that's different from shy, just sort of uncomfortable.*

*Katsuyuki: That's right... that's right... I think so.*

*Constance: Why?*

*Katsuyuki: Maybe because I am youngest child, and.. I'm kind of spoilt [laughs] mmm.. maybe that's why and.. also...uhhh .... I had a really big secret in my life so that I couldn't say an- to anyone mm so maybe that fact.*

*Constance: Maybe that's why, because if you have a secret then you are afraid that it might slip out so you have to be worried all the time, mm, okay because I think shy is – I don't think you're shy*

About one and half minutes later, I ask how he achieved his high level of English skill.

*Constance: So you've learnt English not- only 7 years, but your English is very good, isn't it?*

*Katsuyuki: Thank you. Everyone says so [laughs]*

*Constance: Yeah no it's very good, really good. So why is it so good? What else has contributed to it?*

*Katsuyuki: I have question- answer to that question, because I went out with foreigner- I mean English speaker.*

Approximately one minute later, I ask him to describe his personality.

At this stage I will pre-empt any queries about my right to use the following extract by referring to the fact that Katsuyuki later 'came out' to all his teachers and classmates thus permitting this statement to be used here.

*Constance: We've talked about your personality a bit, shyness and uncomfortable...Are there any other aspects that you think your personality has? How would you describe yourself \for example.*

*Katsuyuki: \Okay you won't tell anyone right. I'm a gay [laughs]. [...] you know, in Japan to be gay is very not good thing, difficult thing. So I couldn't tell anyone about it until- until 18 years old and that affects my personality a lot (iw2).*

Thus, in my research, the kinds of self-revelations which students, in particular, provided in interview can be attributed to this notion of confessional. Katsuyuki, in order to answer my questions about 'who he was', was 'obliged' to produce himself in terms of a discourse in which he could recognise himself. These self-revelations may also have derived in part from the effects of therapeutic interviewing in which I had some training in an earlier incarnation, and from the three-interview structure which enabled me to follow up on issues discussed in earlier interviews. In addition, questions about participants' self-representations and identifications necessarily invite some level of *self*-disclosure on the part of the interviewee.

I see the interviews also as instances of autoethnographic expression, "instances in which [...] subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms" (Pratt, 1992: 6). Thus students sought to respond to me in ways which would allow me to recognise them. This is another way in which subjectivities are co-constructed and truths are contingent. As I will discuss in *Chapter 6*, this desire to participate in discourses



which legitimate bourgeois authority (Pratt, 1992) is also evident in the students' practices in which they sought to know what it was the teacher wanted them to do in order to be able to produce/re-produce 'appropriately'.

In the research context, and particularly in interview, there is always a power differential. As a Foucauldian approach would have it (Cooper, 1994), power is a productive presence exercised in all social relations. However it is impossible to consistently "find ways of ensuring that this power differential doesn't have untoward effects on the lives of the people who consult them" (White, 1995: 107). For example, as mentioned previously, it is possible, in terms of Rose's discussion of the unintended effects of research, that my research be used as a technique of power for the "coordination and regulation" of subjects (Rose, 1999a: 136). Additionally, as a number of writers have shown, power differentials are not necessarily straightforward, fixed or predictable; "[p]ower is more a form of action or relation between people which is negotiated in each interaction and is never fixed or stable" (Mills, 1997: 39). Angélic-Carter (1997), for instance, discusses the way power relationships shift from so-called 'interviewer' to 'interviewee' according to topic and to the interlocutor's prior experience, demonstrating that there is no necessary one-to-one association between interviewer and power and that "never completely stable effects of domination are produced" (Foucault, 1980a: 102).

Nevertheless, in a number of ways, in some moments, my position as more powerful was ensured. Thus, in my relationship with students, it cannot be questioned that I had the cultural capital of being a native English speaker; indeed, part of the attraction for some students of being involved in the research was that it gave them an opportunity to practise speaking English. Nevertheless, this did not automatically guarantee me a right to be heard, nor a right to receive answers to my questions as the two male students who failed to attend the final interview demonstrated. As a number of scholars have shown,

students have complex ways of resisting discourses which they perceive as inimical to their interests (see, for example, Canagarajah, 1993; Shamim, 1996; Spack, 1997a). In addition, as discussed above, in my relation to teachers I was also imbued with the cultural capital of being a researcher coming from a tenured position in a university. Thus my position differed markedly from that of the teachers who were all employed casually. In this sense, there were also power differentials which impacted on the research.

♦

Classroom observation data for the study was collected from the two courses mentioned above, AETS and LA.

Three of the teachers agreed to their classes being observed throughout the semester. One teacher, Margaret, was initially ambivalent so we agreed to 'wait and see' but in *Week 2*, Margaret agreed to let me observe. I joined her class on two occasions before she decided finally that she preferred that I did not observe. This meant that I do not have the same spread of observations over the semester as for the other teachers<sup>21</sup>.

Forty hours of classroom time were observed and 32 hours of these were recorded. During these classroom observations, audio cassette recordings were made of whole class interactions as well as small group discussions. At any one point in time, up to three tape recorders were in operation. As mentioned previously, during these observations, I would sit at the back of the classroom, either behind or on a level with the rearmost students. I wrote field notes at these times, and moved around the classroom to relocate taperecorders if and when small groups formed. Some classroom events were followed up in subsequent interviews with participants. As a teacher practitioner, I was aware

that many events and interactions occur in the classroom which do not reach consciousness. Thus my initial aim had been to ask participants for commentary on any events which I considered to be significant classroom moments. However, the hectic nature of classroom life, my own assumptions and the intense schedule of data-gathering which I had set myself, precluded this in most instances.

I also collected several other forms of material: an initial student questionnaire to gain background bio-data, some student essays and class journals, email exchanges from all participants, class rolls and teachers' weekly records. The weekly records consisted of brief daily written reports from teachers which were designed to enable some dialogue between the teachers on the courses. These and the class rolls provided some clarifying material for the observations made in class and through interview. Class rolls could not be considered reliable, however, as not all teachers kept them up to date. I also kept field notes of all classroom interactions, wrote some post-interview summaries/reflections and kept a personal journal.

An additional much smaller set of data was gained from informal conversation with participants. Although, ethically, some of these comments could be considered to be outside the framework of the approved research project, casual comments from participants inevitably colour understandings. In this sense then, they cannot not be used once they have been said and heard.



Mishler (1986) criticised standard interviewing procedures in which researchers define meanings of participant responses and participants have no opportunity to comment on or contribute to these meanings. One way of dealing with this

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<sup>21</sup> A prior acquaintanceship with Margaret may have contributed to these shifting decisions

would be to involve participants in some form of triangulation process, feeding back transcripts for correction and perfection, aiming to ensure that participants' voices are accurately represented. Conventionally, particularly since Mishler's criticism, this is a norm. The multiplicity and fragmentation inherent to a post-structuralist subject however, reveals such attempts to find the perfect, 'true' version to be misplaced.

Thus in this research project I have not returned my transcripts to participants and I present only 'my own' voice in my discussion of my 'data'. Clearly the researcher's 'subjective' view is only one of many possible understandings. Many different readings, and writings, are possible. And, as Derrida (1981) has shown, there is no one true reading. Related to this is the fact that as a "little scholastic writing machine" which writes this thesis, I am already "quite a crowd" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 3) each of whom brings her/his representations. "[W]hen one writes the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, *must* be plugged into in order to work" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 4). Questioning the subject as I am attempting to do in this thesis means questioning not only the author subject, but also the participant subject and the researcher subject. Thus, I justify this thesis as one heterogeneous story, one multiplicitous narrative of the classroom which does not seek to resolve the conflicting voices of participants into a single coherent representation, produced by the haecceity-otherwise-known-as-Constance.

In most cases, the interviews were not transcribed until after the data-gathering phase had been completed. Almost none of the small group discussions, which provided a very particular kind of data, were tackled until well after the data-gathering phase, therefore none of this material was addressed in student interviews as I had initially planned. This, in itself, may have contributed to a greater sense of freedom for students in those discussions. On the other hand,

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about whether or not she would have me in the classroom.

for many interviews I did find time to quickly re-listen to previous interviews before subsequent ones and was then able to revisit comments made by students in earlier interviews. While on the one hand this may have amounted to a kind of Foucauldian surveillance of students, it also formed one way which my methods respond in some way to Mishler's call, discussed above, to return transcripts to participants for their input.

### *Section e: Given all this... where am I going?*

If knowledge is accepted as always partial, reflecting the discursive construction of the individual as produced in specific social-historical-cultural conditions, research cannot be used to build a definitive description of learners and the individual cannot be seen as 'the origin of all meaning and value' as the modernist view would have it. In a poststructuralist approach, there is no possibility of a totalising theory which will give a cohesive resolution to contradictions and explanation must be always partial in order to reflect the complexity of lived moments. "[E]valuations reflect the quality of the forces which make them, and there will be as many evaluations of a given phenomenon as there are subjects of evaluation. There is no transcendent standard, no Gods-eye view to ground the possibility of objective evaluation. Any particular judgement will be an expression of the nature of that which judges" (Patton, 2000: 634).

In this thesis, then, my writing does not attempt to describe truth and does not claim a transparent, objective relationship to the research site and its participants. As a writer I accept that I "can never accomplish a 'real' writing or a 'true' representation; it is writing that is continuously relativised against the alternative that it inevitably suppresses" (Rhodes, 1999: 128). As a form of evaluation or critique of the events and practices of the research site, the thesis is "an effect of the meanings and values in circulation at its own historical moment" (Belsey, 2002: 37) and is thus "determined and formed by the power

relation of which it is a part" (Mills, 1997: 33). In this sense the subjectivity known-as-I is "not the author of [my] communication (expression reflecting intention) but is at best the effect of the operation of collective assemblages of enunciation" (Lecerle, 2002: 34).

Because of the indeterminacy of knowledge and the multiplicity of participant and researcher subjectivity, I seek in my discussion in following chapters, to demonstrate the complex interplay of discourses. I seek to show also how the drive to present the self as coherent, unitary and stable disguises the ambiguities and contradictions produced in conflicting discourses. One way in which I seek to maintain this multiplicity is in the incorporation of a number of different voices in the research – teacher, student, senior staff, researcher and the theoretical framework, which becomes another voice since 'words do things'. I see this as providing a kind of 'intertextual reflexivity' (Marcus, 1998). This differs from the notion of triangulation used in modernist research in that it does not seek confirmation of readings of 'reality' but rather seeks to juxtapose their differences and inconsistencies. Thus I hope to "incorporate a reflexivity that accounts for multiplicity without making it singular and that acknowledges the unknowable without making it familiar" (Pillow, 2003: 181).

This seeking after multiplicity forms an attempt to maximise awareness, my own and relevant others', of the variety of discourses operating in this site and of how these different discourses interrelate. This juxtaposition of discourses provides a mechanism for discursive change. By showing "the clash of different discourse types for ascendancy within interactions" (Mills, 1997: 154), the thesis challenges hegemonic understandings of classroom events and practices.

Secondly, I seek in some small way to employ some of the strategies offered by other writers in response to the stratifications and constraints of language. Thus Spivak suggests we must "be prepared to rejoice in uncertainty, to rejoice in

and even to will the reversal of all values that might have come to seem tenable" (1976: xxx). Therefore, I seek to, or I can do nothing other than, preserve the heterogeneity of the site, its gaps, aporias, contradictions and inconsistencies. In my use of transcripts, I attempt to reproduce some of the shifting openness of the interview by retaining the presence of the interviewer and by including some references to non-linguaged aspects.

Indeed, if as a subject I am the effect of discourses, then I am more likely to reproduce the uncertainties and misconceptions of my time than I am to solve them (Belsey, 2002). In fact, potential slippages already observed on my part include a drive to resolution and a tendency to discuss/critique as if relating to some ultimate truth. Although I claim to seek a 'messy text', one which is "many sited, intertextual, always open ended, and resistant to theoretical holism, but always committed to cultural criticism" (Marcus, 1998: 392), my own discursive construction may preclude this.

Nevertheless, Pillow advocates an ongoing critique of all research since "there is real work to be done even in the face of the impossibility of such a task" (Pillow, 2003: 192). Is it then possible for me to claim that this presentation of multiple voices, mediated by my own subjective readings of them, offers a deeper reading of a particular situated reality? To what extent is this thesis as much an indication of how I have interpreted theory "in terms of the data" and/or of how much this is a story of my findings (Gudmundsdottir, 1996: 299). Can I justify the privileging of my own reading? Is it enough to say that I am concerned not with 'truth' but with what kinds of truths operate in this site? Given the constraints of language, can I claim a Deleuzian approach in which the multiple voices keep the reading of this site open? Ultimately perhaps I can only offer questions.

On the other hand, as stated earlier, this thesis is necessarily a story, a piece of fiction with its “characters, plots, and settings” (Freeman, 1996: 351), based on a discussion of the texts which were produced as a result of this research project - transcripts of interviews and classroom interactions, fieldnotes, student and teacher texts, and sundry other items. As Usher (1996: 35) states “ [b]oth research and literature as practices of writing construct worlds and are therefore ‘fictional’”. If “constructing is a social process, rooted in language, not located inside our heads” (Becker, 1991: 5), there is no need to reject this piece of fiction as ‘too subjective’, or ‘unreliable’ as research. I, the writer, am as much a subject of current discourses as are the subjects of this research project.

One way I seek to acknowledge the fictional status of the research is through the novelistic ploy of beginning each chapter with a brief description of the content, in the style of Richardson’s *Pamela* and other works of the earliest English novelists. Indeed, Gudmundsdottir (1996) points to a tradition of storytelling in research writing in *Works and lives* (Geertz, 1988), *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* (Clifford & Marcus, 1986), and *Dora: an analysis of a case of hysteria* in Freud (1952). She describes the process as “an endless hall of faulty mirrors” since a research report is a re-creation of a re-creation which, when read by another, is re-created yet again (1996: 304). Perhaps then I can only hope that I am a good storyteller.

I turn now to a thoroughly partial discussion of the so-called ‘data’; that is, to the texts produced as part of the research project.



## *Chapter 5: Discourses of cultural identity: the tyranny of representation*

In which I introduce the next three chapters which discuss the texts produced in my research. In Chapter 5 itself, I begin with a review of previous literature in the field which addresses issues of cultural categorisation and stereotyping in second language teaching and learning. I then discuss the discursive production of subjectivity in discourses of cultural identity and the extent to which culture is a determining factor in subjectivity in the classroom site of my research. I show how a homogenising effect of discourse leads to the positioning, both self-imposed and other-imposed, of individuals as members of particular cultural groups with particular characteristics.

*Are there any happy foreigners?*

- Julia Kristeva



In the previous chapter, I discussed the paradigmatic underpinnings of my research as well as a number of impacts resulting from the methodology used in the research project. In this chapter I turn to my perceptions of and my narrative about the classroom events and its participants.

### *Introduction to Chapters 5, 6 and 7*

In this and the two following chapters, I aim to support the argument of this thesis by demonstrating the power of discourse to produce the intensely complex multiplicities which mark subjectivity. I therefore discuss some of the discourses which emerged in the research as key discourses operating in this site. In this chapter my focus is on discourses of cultural identity; in *Chapter 6*, it is on discourses of the good teacher and the good student; and in *Chapter 7*, I focus on discourses of becoming. As will become evident, this division, although necessary for the linear structure of writing, is somewhat arbitrary,

given the complex interplay of discourses and the relative unboundedness of any discourse. As stated above, these discourses were only some of those which emerged during the research project. Although a number of other discourses also have relevance, including discourses of language teaching, for reasons of space, they will be touched upon only briefly. It is also important to note that my discussion itself demonstrates how the use of fixed labels to name discourses is misleading, given the diversity and complexity of subjectivity. Such labels are both a limit and a resource; they reduce complexity to a single name, yet, in supplying that name, provide a notion around which discussion can occur.

In naming the discourses as I have, I draw on my understandings of the practices - behaviours and statements - made by the participants in the research, either in the classroom or during interviews. Since any attempt to make sense of practices brings discourses and their interplay into focus, I focus on how these discourses intersected, clashed and developed unpredictably. In this way, certain kinds of subjects were both produced - in terms of understandings, practices, beliefs - and differentially positioned. This impacted on the teaching and learning which took place and, at times, created effects which were far from the 'conscious' desires of the participants. A major task of these three chapters is, as stated previously, to extend the notion of poststructuralist subjectivity as employed in the literature in the second language field. Thus I seek, through a discussion of the texts which were produced as a result of this research project, to illustrate in these classroom practices a poststructuralist subject produced in discourse. Such discursive production results in a subject who is conflicted and partial, in other words, a site of struggle; in whom identifications are multiple, fragmented and impermanent; who is ultimately not capable of self-knowledge; and who lacks the capacity for mastery. This is an understanding of subjectivity as 'performed', as 'doing' and 'becoming' rather than as 'having' or 'being'. Thus,

I seek also to demonstrate how subjectivity, and language learning opportunities, are co-constructed through the human interactions in which discourses are expressed.

In showing the power of discourses to construct these relatively unpredictable subjectivities of participants, I illustrate the extent to which these human subjects are at the mercy, so to speak, of discourse. Since the subject lacks mastery, there is only limited agency in the sense of a conscious act of a self-knowing individual although there can be shifts in discursive identification, given the right conditions. Any 'choice' between discourses remains limited to those which are available. Thus, on the one hand, I make clear that, although they are both produced in discourse, subjectivity does not necessarily equate with agency, and that the power to act or to not act is a product of a complex interplay of discourses. At the same time, I am arguing for a non-subjectified agency. I thus seek to show where a Deleuzian notion of desire can be seen in this site and what role it plays. This focus on desire is largely confined to *Chapter 7*.



This chapter, *Chapter 5*, provides a response to my first research question: 'How are teacher and student subjectivities produced and performed in a second language classroom?' The chapter specifically considers the question of participants' representations of cultural identity, the kinds of subjectivities which are produced in discourses of cultural identity, and the impact of these in the classroom, an issue which provided an initial stimulus for this research project. The term, discourses of cultural identity, is intended to cover discourses which position members of different cultural groups in particular, fixed ways; that is, statements were made or behaviours carried out which had certain consistently positioning effects, as I hope to demonstrate. Thus, participants were both positioned by others, and position themselves, through discourses of

cultural identity. These discourses were evident in the practices of teachers and senior staff as well as students. The chapter thus focuses on the part played by discourses of cultural identity in the production and performance of subjectivity. In doing this, I aim to both demonstrate those “regularities in presuppositions, thematic choices and values” (McKay & Wong, 1996: 579) which indicate the operation of a discourse and to show how power is implicated in this operation. As mentioned in *Chapter 1*, my early research ‘findings’ also revealed the salience of other discourses – of *good teacher*, *good student* and *becoming*. A discussion of these forms the content of *Chapters 6* and *7*.

In this site there was evidence of a discourse of *Japanese cultural identity*, which tended to be reductively included within a discourse of *Asian cultural identity* as well as discourses of *Italian*, *German*, *French identity* which tended to be, at times, reductively included within a discourse of *European identity*. These reductions occurred inconsistently as a kind of slippage in the classes where there was a mixture of students of either Asian or European origins. Additionally, discourses of *Australian identity*, *Caucasian identity* and *Western identity* were evident. I focus most attention on the discourse of Japanese cultural identity, and on the way this was set up in opposition to discourses relating to a European cultural identity. These two discourses stood out as having primary impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom. Where relevant I will also make reference to the other discourses of cultural identity.

The first section of this chapter, *Section a*, discusses the literature in the field regarding the impact of culture on subjectivity. It grapples with the debate on representations of students and with accusations that such representations amount to essentialisation, with sometimes negative consequences. In *Section b*, I look at this debate in the light of my research texts and query some pervasive representations of Japanese students by teachers. I focus on the link between

discursively produced representations of cultural identity and the assumptions and expectations to which these representations led in the classroom. I also consider the extent to which practices can be said to be 'determined' by cultural background. In my discussion I engage with an ongoing debate in the literature about the extent to which, for example, Japanese educational practices produce the classroom identities of Japanese students. I discuss the perception, from the point of view of the teachers, of the Japanese students as passive and not expressive, with a focus on the notion of 'speaking up in class' and I seek to show the impact of these representations on teachers' classroom practices. I will also show how institutional practices supported the production of these discourses. In *Section c*, I look at the Japanese students' perception of themselves in terms of these same categories. Here I demonstrate the impact of self-positioning on student classroom practices in terms of speaking up. Throughout the chapter I seek to demonstrate that all 'truths' about cultural identity are discursively produced representations. Thus cultural tendencies and residues are in evidence and can have objective effects. However, the extent to which teachers should shoulder the responsibility of a thorough knowledge of the cultural practices of their students and the likely effects in the classroom of those practices needs to be questioned.

### *Section a: Representations of cultural identity in the field*

A number of scholars ( including Harklau, 2000; Holliday, 1999; Kramsch, 1999; Kubota, 1999; Spack, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b; Thesen, 1997) have discussed issues of the representation, categorisation and labelling of language learners. The motivation for such categorisation is normally well-founded and well-intentioned; it issues from an attempt to clarify the struggles that students may have with their language learning tasks. Nevertheless, as Spack points out (1997b), such 'rhetorical construction' of students' identities can lead to stigmatisation, generalisation and inaccurate predictions about students' capabilities. Zamel likewise speaks of characterisations which lead to "a

deterministic stance and deficit orientation as to what students can accomplish" (1997: 341). Similarly Kubota (1999: 9) attacks work in applied linguistics which uncritically applies "essentialised cultural representations" of Japanese culture, seeing Japanese students as, for example, lacking skills in critical thinking and self-expression, while Thesen (1997) notes that the way students are labelled by institutions fails to take account of the way students see themselves.

In part, the problem derives from a static conception of culture. Indeed as Harklau points out, when teachers are called on to explain the target language culture, they are obliged to call on reified notions, "making static something that is in constant flux, and making unified something that is inherently multiple" (1999: 110). Indeed, we should be wary of simple formulations of culture. Thus Atkinson's conceptualisation of culture (1999; 2000) following Bakhtin, uses the notions of centripetal and centrifugal forces to refer respectively to "normativity, homogeneity, conservation and control" and "difference, heterogeneity and disorganisation" (Atkinson, 2000: 54). This binary formulation misses the complexity of difference. Indeed Atkinson's discussion, on the whole, reveals numerous slippages and misconceptions relating to poststructuralist notions of subjectivity. Thus he continually seeks to name 'shared perspectives' although claiming to be trying to take account of heterogeneity. Siegal (2000) is thus correct to note that Atkinson has failed to move to a greater understanding of what lies behind notions like individual and culture. This shortcoming can also be seen in his comment that "to do without a meaningful concept of culture in the coming century would be like doing without the notion of the individual itself" (Atkinson, 1999: 649).

Instead a concept of culture needs to reflect "complexity and hybridity" (Spack, 1997b: 768) and "a multiplicity of meanings that are constructed within discourses and compete against each other in a struggle for power" (Kubota, 2003: 80). Above all it needs to avoid concealing heterogeneity behind

reifications (Veyne, 1997b: 167). Holliday's contribution of the notion of 'small' and 'large' cultures offers a useful heuristic to the discussion. The notion of small culture distinguishes "any cohesive social grouping" (Holliday, 1999: 237) from 'large cultures', the term he uses to refer to reified ethnic, national, or international groups. This notion of small cultures can accommodate the extremes of diversity, dynamism and hybridity necessary for an adequate discussion of cultural influences.

Holliday's notion of cultural 'residues' (1999) is also helpful. This can account for the material effects of the educational and socio-cultural discourses which have contributed to student - and teacher - subjectivities. Since discourses are produced or situated in specific locations and times, subjectivities can be seen to display 'cultural' characteristics even though, for example, educational practices are multiple, contingent, diverse, impermanent, and complex. The existence of these cultural residues or tendencies is captured in Appadurai's concept of culture as "situated and embodied difference" (1996: 13). However, in light of the fact that the complexity of identity and the instability of discourses produces a multiplicity of subjectivities, I will argue that, rather than thinking in terms of 'cultural' characteristics, it is ultimately more fruitful to think in terms of radical difference.

If conceptions of culture are one issue, "the limits of representation" (Zamel, 1997: 346) are another. As discussed in *Chapter 2*, all representation functions to limit and exclude. In addition and importantly, as Kubota (1999) argues in relation to cultural identity, the connection between power and discourse - Foucault's power/knowledge nexus - is involved in any representation of cultural identity. Thus, "how we come to name the world is of crucial importance to how we act upon it" (Norton in Sharkey et al., 2003: 70) and critical scrutiny is necessary when attempting to define cultural differences (Kubota, 1999).

Indeed, in response to arguments, such as Spack's (1997b: 773), who asks whether we should name students at all, a number of writers have suggested that we cannot avoid representation. Nelson's claim that we "cannot not classify" since it "is what our brain does" (Nelson, 1998: 798), while unarguable, nevertheless fails to see the power effects implicit in discursive representation. Indeed Nelson's example of how we classify in order to make sense of our environment betrays a US-centric stance which normalises hand shaking as unmarked behaviour. Thus when she states that "when I meet people at a faculty reception, extend my hand, and say 'hello', I predict that they will extend their hands, that we will shake hands and that they will say something appropriate" (Nelson, 1998: 798), one immediately wonders what classifications she would draw on in a faculty reception in another country where handshaking is not a norm. Similarly Carson (1998) naturalises stereotyping and categorisation when she fails to see how all language carries the trace of the binary term. In addition, both these arguments rely on a modernist understanding of the subject since these writers call on teachers to understand the other culture and assume that teachers are capable of standing outside their own discursive construction to do this. More importantly perhaps, neither writer accepts the way representation constrains subjectivity. However, the suggestion (Spack, 1997b) that we should find room for students to name themselves also does not address the issue since students too, as I will show, are subject to discursive constructions of themselves.

My research, discussed in this chapter, unequivocally supports the view that discursive constructions of students' cultural identities are an issue in the classroom, often with negative consequences, and that the operation of these discourses is not something that can be lightly altered as Carson and Nelson suggest.



While the main point at issue is the way these discursive constructions of cultural identities actually impact in the classroom, the debate continues in regard to what kinds of characteristics, if any, can be attributed to cultural background. Indeed the term 'passive' is one of the major descriptors applied to Asian learners generally in a number of documents relating to language education (Chalmers & Volet, 1997; Ciccarelli, 1991; Liu, 1996; Nguyen, 1988). Evidence for discourses of Asian cultural identity can also be seen in the number of studies in Australian higher education which either reproduce or attempt to counter notions of Asian learners as passive and lacking in critical thinking skills (Ballard, 1996; Ballard & Clanchy, 1984; Burns, 1991; Chalmers & Volet, 1997; Choi, 1997). Ballard (1996) suggests, for example, that, on a continuum of approaches to knowledge, Asian cultures tend to be more 'conserving' while Western cultures are more 'extending'. More recent research questions the validity of this notion (Doherty & Singh, 2002), suggesting that conceptions of Western academic skills are an imagined pedagogy, a reification of heterogeneous practices.

I seek to show how the term 'passive' operates from within the 'colonialist/racialized discourses' (McKay & Wong, 1996), essentialised discourses of Japanese culture (Kubota, 1999) and 'ideological assumptions' behind teachers' constructions of Asian ESL students (Vollmer, 2000). Indeed Kubota cites recent research as "generating new knowledge on educational practices in Japanese schools" (1999: 9) which she claims challenges essentialised notions of Japanese students. Thus she suggests that characteristics such as rote-learning and lack of self-expression are wrongly attributed to Japanese students. Although I would support her stance that power/knowledge links are at work in representations and in essentialised constructions of student identities,

the empirical data she uses to support her argument is unconvincing since she extrapolates from data limited to primary schools or mathematics classes.

In fact, work by other scholars which discusses educational practices in Japan and the way these impact on identity (see for example LoCastro, 1996; McVeigh, 2002; Nakane, 2003; Turner & Hiraga, 2003; Yoshimoto, 1998) tends to support the attribution of particular characteristics to Japanese students. Nakane (2003), for instance, clearly shows how the literate nature of teaching/learning practices in the Japanese high schools in her study deprivilege oral skills. She gives as an example the teacher's dialogue during a lesson in which the teacher is the only speaker and answers her own rhetorical question by writing the answer on the blackboard, prior to speaking it (2003: 149). As a result, Nakane claims, Japanese students studying in Western background English-speaking contexts, which instead privilege oral skills, find themselves at a disadvantage. Similarly, LoCastro discusses attitudes to English language education in Japan and shows how classroom practices reflect attitudes and beliefs about language and language teaching that are embedded in the sociocultural context (1996: 43). Her reference to the fact that spoken language is considered ungrammatical and therefore deprivileged (LoCastro, 1996: 47) is supported by Nakane's findings. Such practices reduce the status of speaking in many Japanese high school classrooms and, over time, lay down habits of both behaviour and of perceptions of self which are difficult to alter quickly given the drive for a unified subjectivity. Thus, a number of cultural 'tendencies' in the Japanese students' classroom speaking practices in this study may be seen to derive from these cultural discourses and their concomitant classroom practices.

Explanations for students' inability to speak up, given by students in my research and confirmed in the literature discussed earlier (see for example, McVeigh, 2002; Nakane, 2003; Turner & Hiraga, 2003; Yoshimoto, 1998) include the fear of making mistakes, a conformity to certain patterns of turn taking, a valuing of silence, politeness strategies, and not wanting to stand out from the group. Thus, the Japanese scholar, Yoshimoto, speaks of some of the factors which influenced her experience of studying in Canada such as "the concept of shame, the preference for silence, the avoidance of individuality, the fear of making mistakes, and the concept of social harmony" (1998: 62- 63). McVeigh likewise refers to students who fear making mistakes and "standing out" (2002: 98-99) while Turner and Hiraga spoke to Japanese students studying in England who attempt to be "deliberately modest" in their responses to tutors (2003: 162). The fact that these tendencies are offered by Japanese students as explanations for their own silences does not necessarily mean that they are 'truths' or 'facts', since rationalisations of behaviour are as much discursively produced as is the behaviour itself.

Thus, while it may be true to say that the discourses which construct Japanese as having specific characteristics - harmony-loving, group-oriented, non-individualistic and so on - can be seen to be as much a discursive field used by Japanese people to 'know' themselves as they are discourses imposed by Westerners (Kubota, 1999), nevertheless, as I will discuss below, such practices can be powerful determinants of subjectivity. They have real material effects on practices and create a 'Japanese' cultural identity with which Japanese students themselves can readily identify. Indeed, as I will argue, any drive to deny these characteristics may be counterproductive. Rather than attempt to deny associations with particular characteristics and claim, in a homogenising move, that the Japanese are not so different, it may be more productive to look for differences in order to acknowledge the radical multiplicity of identity. The

issue then is rather to recognise and value the differences and the intense multiplicity which students and teachers bring to a classroom. In this chapter, I seek to illustrate some of those differences.

The impact of binary thinking on representation is important to consider here. One impact comes in the form of negative associations with the deprivileged term. Thus 'group-oriented', for example, is not only opposed to 'individualistic' but also in Western cultures, individualism may be viewed more positively. Additionally binaries also operate to align subjects with one side of the binary almost exclusively, rather than recognising that practices of, say passivity and activity, are produced in social relations of power.

At the same time the terms in a binary tend to be reduced in meaning, making it important to consider the way each term is understood. The tendency to cite Confucius as an explanation for various aspects of Japanese behaviour, or Asian behaviour in general, has been critiqued a number of times (see for example, Kubota, 1999; Spack, 1998a ; 1998b; Zamel, 1997) as too simplistically calling on so-called Confucian ideas to explain characteristics such as a preference for collectivism, passivity and harmony. These characteristics are opposed to so-called Western ones of individualism, activity and critical thinking. However, Cortazzi and Jin question assumptions about the way the term active is understood in these contexts. They point out that "while the West favours verbal activity, Chinese culture stresses mental activity" (1996: 199). They quote a Chinese student as saying "We are active in our minds. We are thinking all the time. Our minds follow the lecturer with questions and challenges. We are just not used to speaking out" (1996: 199). Thus, rather than engaging in either a denial or elaboration of Confucian influences, it may be more worthwhile to be wary of simplistic interpretations of binary terms and to develop a solid distrust of all representation.

In any case, in my study, I seek to avoid calling on external discourses to explain classroom practices. I seek instead to demonstrate the intense multiplicity of practices and to foreground 'what' subjects 'do', rather than to be overly concerned with postulating 'why' they may be doing it. Although I argue that cultural identities have real, material and symbolic effects which contribute to the positioning of individuals (S. Hall, 1990), in my discussion of the research texts, I seek to show that effects of culture can be described in terms of residual tendencies marked by radical diversity. This diversity is to be expected if we accept that subjectivity is formed over time in a palimpsest process. The fact that these residual practices and beliefs play out in unpredictable ways when they contact other discourses should not be surprising.

I turn now to a discussion of the texts produced during the research project.

*Section b: Discourses of Japanese cultural identity: passivity and participation in teacher representations of students*

Pervasive perceptions of the Japanese students as passive and reticent and of the Europeans as outgoing and able to express their ideas were evident in the statements made by all participants, including the native-English-speaking teachers, senior staff, and students. We have already seen, in *Chapter 4*, Susan's comment in relation to the students that

*Some people seem to volunteer more answers certainly yeah.. but um... I mean you could put that down to personalities anyway but it does happen to be the Europeans ... (iw6).*

In a later comment in the same interview, Susan compares the two female German students with the Japanese students as a whole.

*Doris and Ursula equate more to the local [Australian] students, I think,.. they're more outgoing, you know, they speak their minds, they don't wait to be asked [...] the Japanese are just very quiet compared to the local students generally, so more passive (iw6)*

The European students are attributed with energy: *"We'd romp along sometimes"* (Pauline iw0)<sup>22</sup>, and *"I could really run with that kind of energy and that fluency"* (Margaret iw15). Two of the female French students, Sai'da and Dominique, were described as *"great sparky girls"*, (Margaret iw15).

In contrast the Japanese were seen as non-communicative and not forthcoming. Susan's comment, *"the Japanese are just very quiet [...] so more passive"*, above, is ascribed a negative quality by Helen,

*They had a sort of sullen-looking expression but of course it wasn't sullen it was just their 'devoid of expression' face which again I was culturally unaware of (iw0).*

The Japanese students were also seen as not participative. While Margaret comments, *"they give so little"* (iw15), Helen refers to *"the unwillingness and reticence on the part of the Japanese women"* (iw0) and to their lack of participation *"they were just sitting back and being discreet and dignified"* (iw6).

It is important to note, that even the more positive perceptions implicit in expressions like *"discreet and dignified"* necessarily continue to position the Japanese students in particular ways. Thus, even when discourses of cultural identity do not carry negative connotations, they remain problematic. This is because, while they screen their own impact under apparently complimentary descriptions, they continue to fix identity.

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<sup>22</sup> The statements made by teachers in Week 0 refer to students in previous semesters.



A casual observer to the classroom might want to claim that the Japanese students' passivity and reticence towards participation is indeed the simple truth of the matter since, also evident in my own classroom observations, it was clearly the case that it was almost always the European students who spoke up in class most quickly, most often, most loudly and most articulately. In addition, it was mostly Japanese students who did not speak up or who hesitated longest after being nominated by the teacher to speak. Several Japanese students also tended to take long pauses within phrases when they spoke and to self-correct frequently.

Although, as discussed in *Section a*, a number of studies demonstrate clearly how high school practices contribute to Japanese student silences in the classroom (see for example, Nakane, 2003), this relative silence of the Japanese students cannot be accepted at face-value.

It is important to notice that the ascription of the European and Japanese students as active or passive can be seen to follow a binary structure. This failure to acknowledge that all persons are passive sometimes and active at other times and that these terms only refer to certain observable characteristics, elides the social relations of power between the interactants, which, as Norton Peirce (1995) has shown, can produce this very passivity or activity. Additionally, as several researchers have argued (Harklau, 2000; Kubota, 1999; Spack, 1997b) there are always students who do not fit the cultural categories which are imposed, and indeed, there was a range of differences amongst the participants in this research. In fact, it is to such a range of differences which Deleuze's notion of multiplicity responds. The concept of multiplicity recognises a

world in which difference is primary and no longer thought of in terms of opposition to a hegemonic identity. It foregrounds difference not in terms of binary oppositions which privilege one term - as can be seen in the case above with 'active', when 'passive' aligns with 'sullen' - but as an "infinity of loose ends" (Davis, 2000: 185) and amounts to "a defence of the particular" (Patton, 2000: 46). This chapter deals with the effect of binary representations in the classroom site of my research and gives numerous examples of the way homogenisation seeks to gather a multitude of particular factors into one recognisable universal.

My focus here is twofold. Firstly I will focus on how power relations in the discursive representations of Japanese students positioned the students in particular ways in these classrooms, and how a lack of awareness of the operation of, and an unquestioning acceptance of, these discourses and the power relations within them had negative consequences for the teaching and learning which occurred. Secondly, I will consider the material impacts of prior discourses and show how the extreme diversity and the unpredictability of the interplay of discourses limit any benefit of classifying students according to cultural background.

As well as considering the impact of binarised representations of cultural identities I will look at the intersection of these discourses with others. I focus now on the way a discourse of cultural identity intersected with educational discourses in this site. My discussion here relates to the discourse of good student, other aspects of which I take up in more detail in *Chapter 6*.

♦

Teachers within the educational system of the research site are aware of the discourse of communicative teaching and thus have a strong interest



in active student participation. The discourse constrains teachers' expectations by determining what a good class and a good student are considered to be; thus participation by students is seen as a good and necessary thing. Talking about her idea of good students, Susan says:

*Well for me in a class like that, 'good' is the ones who participate and, you know, how [they're participating], so you see that they're participating, you need to get some kind of feedback [...] You need to be able to know if they've understood what's happening and so, you know, they need to ask questions or answer questions I think (iw6).*

Noise levels are seen as an indicator of participation. We have already seen Helen's comment about students who "sit back" and who are "discreet and dignified" as non-participatory. She confirms in the comment below her preference for voluble participation.

*I'm very fond of those communicative activities you know like 'read ask and tells<sup>23</sup>' or groups working on summarising, a dictagloss, sort of things and I was always sort of nervy because I could hear no noise they'd always be [whispers] whispering. I hate [whispers] whispering. I want noise and hubbub (iw6).*

Margaret too dislikes silence in the classroom,

*And this thing about teachers wanting to feel that there's noise there's talk there's things happening... and I know I don't personally [tolerate silence] as a teacher (iw1).*

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<sup>23</sup> This refers to activities similar to show and tell, in which students are required to discuss and report back on reading.

For her the Japanese students are hard work because of the difficulty bringing them out of this silence.

*It's hard teaching Japanese students, you know [...] Yeah you're having to find ways of...um...generating communication (iw15).*

Susan similarly finds this aspect difficult. Speaking of students she had recently taught in another of her casual jobs, Susan refers to loving the experience of teaching Koreans because they are people she both knows and likes. In speaking about a class of Arab students as participative, Susan was uncharacteristically animated.

*Susan: Umm it's funny ... at [institution name], I take a few classes there.. relief ... and I took the interpreting class last week for Koreans and I loved it because I like you know I like Koreans generally, I know about them, and I think they enjoyed it too and then last night I took the Arabs. I thought 'Oh these are not my favourite people!', but I really enjoyed it! ! [laugh] We had a great time! They were very good! We said- Oh I'll have to come back! You're such a fun class! Like talking, very participative, actually hard to stop them talking.. but-*

*Constance: Does it frustrate you that the Japanese aren't?*

*Susan: Umm. Yes. It can be a bit frustrating, so it's good that there's not a whole group of them (iw6).*

Susan's final comment, that a "whole group" of Japanese might be a problem, and her animation when talking about the Arab students suggests an identification with Margaret's view that the Japanese students are difficult to teach.

Understandings of communicative teaching methods and teachers' ideas about participation and noise levels cannot be satisfied by students who are seen as "passive", "reticent" and "dignified". In this way a discourse of 'the good student as participator', which derives from discourses both of communicative teaching and of good student, intersects problematically with the discourse of Japanese cultural identity.

The discourse of active, participating student and its association with noise and volubility means that other kinds of participation are not considered valid. Cortazzi and Jin's "mental activity" (1996: 199) is less easily monitored by a researcher, but another kind of participation which was evident in the behaviour of many of the Japanese students was that of being prepared for the lesson and listening to instructions, also aspects of a discourse of good student. Frequently, in my classroom observations, I saw the Japanese students open their folders promptly to the relevant place as instructed by the teachers. The European students, on the other hand, consistently tended to be the ones who had forgotten to bring their papers at all, or had to ask the Japanese students what page they should be working on. Interestingly, the rustling of papers as Noriko selected the correct sheet was once interpreted by Helen as a lack of preparation. My field notes for this read,

*Helen points to N's folder "there it is'. N is a very organised person. She is tidying up the last notes in an orderly fashion. Knows very well where her notes are. Helen reads the shuffling of papers as disorder (fHw7).*

A comment by the German student, Ursula, supports this aspect of the Japanese students' behaviour,

*They always seem very prepared and follow the lessons um very concentrated and are not really um- [...] sometimes I don't really care about the topics and I don't really care about whether I come five minutes late or not. They are always right on time (iw10).*

At the same time, teachers' statements were evidence for the power of the operation of the binary such that while the Japanese as a group were seen as not participative, individual European students were described as non-participative but this did not lead to a labeling of the Europeans in terms of this binary of non participator-participator.

*Roland's been away quite a bit and I feel he kind of cruises in and takes what's going and, you know, he's not very vocal um he doesn't engage very much (Margaret iw15).*

### **Body language: reading students' capabilities**

Speaking is only one form of expression; nonverbal participation also plays an important part in communication. However there was a difference in the way teachers were able to read – or believed they were able to read – the body language of the European-background students compared to that of the Japanese students. In fact, teachers assumed that they understood the body language of the Europeans, and that they did not understand Japanese body language. However, as I hope to show, when I take up some of the mismatches between teachers' readings of students and students' understandings, both these understandings are assumptions. As I show in the next chapter, the European students' body language tended to be interpreted as a negative reaction to the weaker language levels of the Japanese. However I will argue that it was foremost a reaction to their dissatisfaction with the content of and methods used in the courses. For the moment, my point is that these assumptions contribute to how teachers understood the students and the

teaching context. Importantly this tended to occur along the lines of the active/passive binary.

The European body language was seen as “*obvious*” and helped teachers’ understandings:

*It was obvious from [the Europeans’] facial expression and body language, shrugs and things (Helen iw0),*

*I would say it’s the body language, non verbal communication, that makes you understand what the European students are thinking or feeling [...] yeah I think it’s more the signals of the body language, the non-verbal signals (Pauline iw15).*

However, the Japanese students’ body language and behaviour remained something of a mystery to teachers.

*I don't really get [the signals] the way I readily get the disdain of Dominique for something that’s happening or I don't see those sort of signals coming from Japanese students or I can’t necessarily read them (Pauline iw10).*

In fact, the difficulty of ‘reading’ the Japanese students leads Pauline to describe them as inscrutable: “*I mean you just sort of resort to clichés: the inscrutability of the Japanese students*” (iw15), and alien, “*there’s a sort of alien quality there*” (iw10).

Helen’s term ‘dignified’, cited above, although more positive, captures the teachers’ perceptions of non-verbal behaviours of the Japanese students as difficult to read. In the same interview, she states,

*They're still using Japanese body language habits, they haven't realised that something will have to change for them to make themselves understood (iw6).*

In this case, the Japanese students are positioned in a kind of double deficit in which not only are they not able to make themselves understood, but also they do not know, or have not realised, that they are not being understood.

The teachers' difficulties with getting the Japanese to speak and with reading their body language meant that *"they're not so easy to get to know, you know, there's always a distance"* (Susan iw16).

On the other hand, the European students were seen as easier to get to know.

*It's so much easier for me to respond to the Europeans as individuals already, at this stage, um I learn their names much quicker of course because they're familiar and you have a sort of sense of them as personalities... I can see I'm tending to still see the Japanese- I don't have a sense- I haven't been able to learn their names as yet and I don't have a sense of each one and what their particular- ...*(Margaret iw1).

This aspect of the discourse of Japanese cultural identity was paralleled in Vollmer's research where teachers felt that the Chinese students were more difficult to get to know than the Russian students. One teacher stated: *"Like, when you come to the Chinese students... I never have a conversation with them, I never talk to them because they don't ever respond... it's so discouraging to try to do it. (...) I don't know them at all. I wouldn't be able to tell you one personal thing about them. Not at all"* (Vollmer, 2000: 57).

One rationalisation for this difficulty is expressed by Pauline when she talks about her difficulty remembering the Japanese students' names,

*Because there's a sort of group quality to them all (iw10).*

Again, such differential positioning is supported by Vollmer's research. She quotes one teacher as saying: "For the Russian students I think that [seeing them as a group] goes by the wayside very quickly. Uh... you begin to know them as individuals and... they stand out as individuals. More so, than say, the Chinese students, [who]...[ *original text omitted*] will always stay as a group" (Vollmer, 2000: 56).

One consequence of this inability to know the Japanese students is that the teachers are running blind to the meaning of what occurs in the classroom. For Helen this leads to a process of continual guesswork about behaviour. Typically, her guesses are in terms of notions of passivity and a loss of face; that is, in terms of familiar discursive constructions of Asians.

*What I had thought was reticence on the part of the Japanese was actually I think they felt a bit ashamed, or they were embarrassed, or they didn't want to put themselves in a position where they could feel ashamed [...] I realise I was putting the wrong interpretation on it completely...(iw6).*

Helen also struggles to adapt to a situation she doesn't understand by working to change the physical space, never quite sure which arrangement will have the impact she seeks.

*Yeah I mean I continue to try to cope with the diversity and every week I have a different configuration of furniture, every week I go along with a different idea of how I will do things (iw6).*

The inability of teachers to 'read' the body language of the Japanese students was thus strongly felt. And indeed this can be attributed in part to a Japanese

tendency to limit the facial expression of emotion. Katsuyuki described himself as being, in one sense, less Japanese than the other students because *“my face moves more than they do”* (iw6). However, unexpressed emotion does not necessarily signify unexpressed emotion.

Nevertheless, it remains arguable whether all lack of expression in the classroom is enacted solely by the Japanese students. Thus, for example, one of the French students, Chantal, had a relatively quiet and still classroom presence, as noted in my classroom observations, and by Susan, who described her as *“very quiet”* (iw16). Indeed, Chantal herself reflected on this.

*Chantal: I think I'm shy, very shy and um not so not so open and...*

*Constance: Not so open...say a bit more...*

*Chantal: Because I don't dare to speak in English sometimes because I am afraid to make mistakes or something (iw4).*

She was also seen by other students, such as Sai'da, as shy. In the quotation below, Sai'da had nominated Chantal as an 'ideal' student. Interestingly Sai'da here associates a reticence to speak up with notions of a good student.

*Sai'da: Chantal really, a little bit shy, not expressing directly to people what she feels, very involved in her studies (iw9).*

In Chantal's case, her shyness is not equated with a failure to participate. Rather she is seen to have *“valued the learning”* and to be *“interested in what's going on”* (Margaret iw15).

Another, and major, consequence of teachers' inability to 'read' or know the Japanese students is a set of assumptions about student needs and capabilities. As I will substantiate here, because some of the European students were more



voluble in class, there was a tendency in the teachers to see them as more capable generally.

This was evident in the way teachers tried to organise students for group and pair work. As demonstrated in the following comments, there was a belief that the European students, being stronger, could help the Japanese students who were weaker:

*There aren't enough of these high level Europeans to go around (Helen iw6),*

*Last time I carefully put one European in every group (Margaret iw3),*

*I tried to organise the groups so that there were Europeans in each group (Susan iw6).*

In fact as will become evident, a simple division into two groups in terms of language levels according to cultural background cannot be justified. In any case, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the question of language levels is only one factor; expert status is not necessarily beneficial if the social relations of power are such that affective connection in interaction is negatively experienced.

Margaret's assumptions about students' capabilities were very evident in the way that she set up her course. She opted for a challenging topic to begin the course because she was anxious that she would lose the interest of the European students if she began with something too easy.

*I just felt like with the Europeans I had to start this at a level, that they felt they were getting something from it, that they were being challenged to some extent, that it wasn't just boring old-...(iw2).*

At the same time, she believed that the work might be too difficult for the Japanese students,

*I'm jumping in the deep end with this particular..component, starting off with [this topic], I mean, if I only had Japanese in this class I wouldn't dream of talking about [this topic] from the beginning... (iw2).*

However, in this case, as subsequent events proved, the operations of the discourse affected what could be seen or thought; that is, the actual abilities of the students, across a range of skills, were not seen until too late. When the European students failed to complete a class activity in the way the teacher had expected, she merely commented:

*Even the Europeans didn't come up with those questions [...] so that was interesting, I would have thought that some of them would.. (iw1).*

By the end of the semester, the mismatch between the assumptions produced in the discourse and the actual skills of the students had become clear when Margaret realised that she had misjudged the students' capabilities, by extrapolating from speaking skills, which themselves, as I will argue below, were, to a certain extent discursively produced in these classrooms.

*I'm actually finding that the good Japanese students are doing very much better on paper than the Europeans (iw15).*

The final assessment task revealed the assumptions - the impact of the discourse of cultural identity - which had led to the positioning of the Japanese students as less able.

*Oh yeah I definitely made assumptions in terms of general competency just because of the oral which were not founded at all. [...] you know, the issues- all the language had been- the ground had been laid for the kinds of [work] that could be done and they weren't well done at all...[by] uh.. surprisingly by the Europeans. The stronger Japanese had a good go at them, did better than I expected ...so that shifted my perspective (iw15).*

However the assumption regarding students' abilities had carried on throughout the semester and had had definite consequences for all students. The Japanese had been mistakenly treated as less capable of the class material - in terms of both critical thinking and written skills - and imbalances between the written and oral skills of all students had been overlooked. It is also possible that teachers' assumptions that the Europeans were more capable had contributed to a false sense of confidence in some of the French students who tended to skip more classes and did not see the relevance of some of the work.

Speaking about which classes she had found useful, Dominique's comment reveals her view that Margaret's reading/writing class had been too easy and somewhat irrelevant.

*Constance: And the reading writing class which she taught also?*

*Dominique : No no that was- phough!! that was bad!*

*Constance: Why?*

*Dominique: Because um uh.... like today we had like an assignment in this class and we had to do a summary and I mean like most of people were going to the classes are like in their third or fourth year of university and like summaries I've done that when I was 12 or something so its just too easy and you know*

*Constance: So did you get good results in [that course] then, for the assessments?*

*Dominique: [...] I had good marks yeah yeah without doing [anything].*  
(iw15).

In contrast to Margaret's focus on more challenging work, the fact that the Japanese were seen as weaker appeared to lead Susan and Helen to focus on issues and concerns believed to be more relevant to the Japanese students, particularly towards the beginning of the semester. This was very evident in Susan's class, where Susan's approach to and choice of materials alienated most of the French students. Chantal, for example, commented,

*Yeah uh tomorrow for example the class of tomorrow, it's a bit boring. Because I feel like we are in high school and [sigh] "and so what you remember from last time" listening to radio watching TV* [mimics teacher, laughs] *I think everyone feels [this]* (iw8).

The French students commented on a focus on Japanese issues in Helen's classroom. One set of responses related to a guest speaker in *Week 2* who related his experiences as an exchange student in Japan. The French students expressed frustration to me in interviews about this.

*It was interesting but kind of frustrating because there were only Japanese people in the classroom and we would have like to hear an Australian speaking about France* (Antonio iw3),

*I've got the impression that most of the courses we've got are made for Japanese people* (Dominique iw3).

In the next chapter, in relation to the discourse of good teacher, I will discuss Helen's responses to this speaker.

One event, in particular, sparked resentment on the part of Sai'da. Her use of the term "racist", below, arguably indicates the extent to which she felt excluded by this focus on Japanese issues.

*When the Japanese people from the Engineering faculty came with the director [...] and then the teacher said yeah but there are many people here who don't speak Japanese and the director said well it could be a- it could be a- it could be cool for them, they have to learn, you know, was like, oh, racist remark really but you know we- I felt like that (iw3).*

Her frustration was expressed the same day in the classroom in a small group which also included Katsuyuki, Rie, and Roland. In this extract, below, Sai'da justifies the use of French language in group work in terms of a reaction to this focus on Japanese content.

The group task had been to take notes individually during a listening task and then combine forces to recreate the text. I cite the interaction at length to show that neither the French nor the Japanese students had understood that the task was to take notes in order to have the material with which to reconstruct the text<sup>24</sup>. After a period of discussion about what they were supposed to be doing and some attempts to reconstruct the text, Rie makes the following unfinished comment.

*Rie: We didn't write down, because I.. [laughs].. I [..]*

The students continue to attempt to jointly reconstruct the text from memory,

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<sup>24</sup> The original text reads: *It's easy to know what to do to practise your writing, you just write more and edit your writing. This could include doing exercises, writing letters, writing a journal and so on. It's quite an active kind of practice where you actually use the skills you have and develop them further.*

*Katsuyuki: Basically did you see about the writing skill, uh 'to include writing skill is easier than to including listening skills'. Maybe. I'm not sure*

*Roland: Something like that [to Katsuyuki]*

*Katsuyuki: Yah*

After this, Roland and Sai'da discuss both Katsuyuki's comment and the task, this time in French.

*Roland: C'était pas la même chose [to Sai'da] [It wasn't the same]*

*Sai'da: C'est à dire rien [It means nothing]*

*Roland: Je crois qu'on n'a pas pris de notes en fait [I don't think we took notes, in fact]*

*Sai'da: [Laughs]*

*Roland: Moi j'avais pas compris qu'il fallait prendre des notes, uh [I actually didn't understand that we were supposed to be taking notes]*

*Sai'da: [Giggles]*

Katsuyuki queries their exchange.

*Katsuyuki: What are you talking about?*

*Roland: Er ... about the sentence [laughs]*

*Katsuyuki: Ho oh [laughs]*

*Roland: You write in Japanese-*

*Katsuyuki: Yes*

*Roland: We speak in French.*

*Katsuyuki: Oh*

*Katsuyuki: [referring to his own writing] But no- no Japanese can read this.*

*Sai'da: No, we are taking our revenge because of this morning, you were just like that "ooh ooh ooh" speaking Japanese, you know, the guys who came this morning*

*Katsuyuki: It was not our fault*

*Sai'da: Yeah I know, no, just make joke*

*Rie: Ohhh [made slightly anxious by the interchange] (gSw1).*

This extract then, among other things, demonstrates a string of consequences for all students of the discourse of Japanese cultural identity. The privileging of the needs of the Japanese students, based on conceptions about their ability resulted in resentment on the part of Sai'da.

I have argued here that this initial focus on issues and teaching methods considered to be more useful and appropriate for the Japanese arose out of a belief that the Japanese were weaker and therefore needed more attention. In *Chapter 6*, I will argue in addition that, in Helen's case, a focus on Japanese issues provides, perhaps unconsciously, a form of in-servicing or up-dating of skills/knowledge which is not provided institutionally. These aspects of Helen's role as teacher always struggling to understand will also be discussed further in the next chapter when I look at the way this discourse intersects with the production of Helen in the discourse of good teacher.



In the section above, I have attempted to demonstrate how the operation of a discourse of cultural identity created certain beliefs about students' capabilities and how these beliefs intersected with other discourses relating to noisy classrooms, to students as active participators, to students as knowable/not knowable and capable/not capable, and to the impact of these beliefs on teacher practices. These discursive understandings operate in a complex conjunction with the actual skills and abilities of the students.

The impacts of these understandings were not solely on the Japanese students; there were also impacts on the European students in terms of their specific needs not being met, as my discussion above demonstrates. I will briefly discuss an additional case, that of Giovanni, to show another way homogenisation seeks to subsume all particular factors into a universal.

### **Assumptions about students' capabilities: institutional factors**

Unlike the majority of students admitted to the course who had 7-11 years of English<sup>25</sup>, Giovanni had had only 3 years of formal English study. In interview he stated that his goal in coming to Australia on exchange was to improve his English.

*I'm not interesting my marks. If I learn English here in six month but my marks is very low, I don't have problem because for me is most important learn English and understand when you speak with me (iw4).*

In his self-assessment of his language level, he positioned himself, accurately in my opinion, as one of the weaker students.

*The German and French guys speak better than me, a lot of the Japanese speak better than me. I think I am last (iw4).*

A number of the Japanese students were also aware of his low level. Yoko, for instance, was aware of his slow reading pace.

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<sup>25</sup> See Appendix F for a table of collated student data which includes years of previous English study.



*He has not so good skill of reading because always when we read something he always- it takes so long time for him to read something so I think he has not so good skill of reading (iw6).*

Noriko saw him as fitting into the 'Japanese' group.

*I think if about confirming whether we understand or not, teacher most asked Japanese or maybe if Japanese understand, European of course understand. But we can't say if European understand, Japanese also understand. [...] From the aspect of whether we understand or not Giovanni is in our group I think (iw15).*

Giovanni's low English language proficiency meant that the AETS course in which he was enrolled did not meet his needs since it was not a language course at the level he required.

*I have a lot of problem with the grammar of English. I don't have a lot of problem for word vocabulary. My real big problem is the grammar [but] I don't find grammar there [in this course] (iw4).*

Giovanni had three main responses to the mismatch between his aims and the level of the course. One response was to email all his written assignments back to friends in Italy to correct.

*When I write my- my assignment then I send in Italy and my friend correct there and then he send me back by email because have a good English ah because here don't have a lot friend that give me a help, I have good friend in Italy [laugh] and er yuh- he know speak good English better than me but is [h]ard you know (iw12).*

Secondly, he skipped classes frequently leading to one teacher's impression that he wasn't actually interested in learning English at all.

*I don't think Giovanni was particularly motivated as far as language goes  
(Susan iw16).*

Thirdly, when he did attend classes he chose, where possible, to sit next to Doris who he had targeted as the best student in class and therefore the most likely to be able to give him assistance. He stated:

*I prefer work with a girl- with a guys that know the English better than me  
because if I have problem I ask 'oh what is this?' (iw4).*

Indeed, classroom observations confirm that he frequently asked whispered questions of Doris during group and whole class tasks.

Giovanni's placement in this class, I would suggest, is indicative of the discourse of cultural identity at work. As a European he is assumed to have adequate language to cope with the demands of the courses. Giovanni's case thus demonstrates one way the discourse operates through institutional practices, namely enrolment requirements.

Indeed, in order to be effective and powerful, a discourse needs a material base in established social institutions and practices (Weedon, 1987). As is clear from the many studies about the role of school discourses in producing particular kinds of social relations and social identities, educational institutions in general are prime sites for the construction and perpetuation of particular discursively produced practices. The enrolment requirements for the course, outlined in *Chapter 4*, were one of the institutional practices which supported this discourse at the university under discussion. Because only the Japanese students were required to provide an English language score – and students whose scores

were too high went into mainstream university courses - some European students had been admitted who were, effectively, of too high a language level for the course. On the other hand, the possibility that a European student may be too low in English level, as in the case of Giovanni discussed above, was apparently not considered.

The customary concern of gatekeepers is to keep out those who do not 'measure up', hence the concern here to exclude students whose level was too low and the concomitant lack of concern with enrolling students whose level was too high. The enrolment practices operated here to exclude low-level Japanese students, but not low-level European students, thus making it likely that each semester, students of widely differing language abilities would be combined in the same class. Enrolment requirements for the course thus ensured that differences in language ability were formed along east/west lines with the highest level students tending to be Europeans and with a number of the Japanese students clustered towards the lower end. In this sense, the institution itself contributed to the reinforcement of this gap and sustained an asymmetrical distribution of power. As I will argue below, this contributed to a sense of inadequacy amongst some Japanese students.

The case of Dominique illustrates this anomalous situation. Dominique, a French national, had completed high school in the United Kingdom. As discussed previously, this meant that she in fact met the university's English ability criteria<sup>26</sup> for entry to mainstream courses and yet she was allowed to enroll in this course which was specifically for students who did not meet the English language entry requirements. Not surprisingly, in interviews she expressed irritation with the subjects she was required to do in the program and the teachers found her *"a difficult kind of character"* (Susan iw16), *"a bit problematic in that group"* (Margaret iw15), *"impatient"* (Helen iw6), and *"the most*

*difficult person*" (Pauline iw15). On the other hand, however, the course suited her in the sense that it enabled her to meet her home university requirements for an English component and to complete her degree.

*It was good because so that I can make the equivalence in France but it's still frustrating when you- you spent like half- like uh- a term of learning nothing, you know, its frustrating so.. um, but still you know I'll have my degree (iw15).*



In this section I have sought to show the impact on teacher practices of some aspects of discourses of cultural identity. I have focused on the construction, primarily by teachers, of the Japanese students as passive and difficult to know. I have sought to demonstrate how these representations resulted in views of the Japanese students as less capable, and on how this impacted on teachers' decisions about what and how to teach. I have also shown how this discourse is evident in institutional practices. I turn now to a discussion of how the students positioned themselves in relation to these binaries of passive/active and able/less able in relation to issues of self-expression and speaking up in class. I argue that this self-positioning was a complex co-production within Japanese discourses of cultural identity.

***Section c: Discourses of Japanese cultural identity: passivity and ability in student representations of themselves***

In this section I show how discourses of Japanese cultural identity operated as techniques of the self to contribute to the production of the Japanese students as passive and less able than their European counterparts. I discuss the

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<sup>26</sup> Students whose high school studies had been conducted in English were eligible for direct entry to undergraduate programs.

discrepancy between Japanese students' urgent desire to speak and the teachers' frustration with them as difficult and passive.

The Japanese students, not unsurprisingly, were able to articulate particular conceptions of Japanese identity. Some students preferred to speak of those characteristics as tendencies or as only true for some. One characteristic they mentioned was a tendency to be 'shy',

*Japanese tend to be shy (Noriko iw2).*

This shyness was often related to a reluctance to speak up in the group.

*I think Japanese people are too shy to- shy, or to have- don't ...don't get used to that situation to speak in many- in front of many people (Tomoko iw1).*

Katsuyuki admired the ability of the European students to speak up, saying,

*I wish that I could be like them but I'm really shy, really, really shy so I don't think I can be like them but I wish..I really wish..(iw2).*

This goal of speaking up was often articulated as a desire to express opinions. Yoko, for instance, stated that although the French students were able to express their opinions quickly, the Japanese could not.

*It's interesting to have same class with another French students because I think they have their own opinions strongly because usually.. when they uh- when teacher ask some questions, French people say their opinions soon, very soon, but Japanese students just listening or thinking or.... I want ... I want... I want to be the person who has the opinion, I want to be the person who can say (iw2).*

Tomoko also sees herself as someone who is not able to express her opinions.

*In case of discussion, I can't tell my opinion well [..] I don't have confident in my opinion. [I can] in some cases only, not so often. Or I-sometimes I hesitate to tell my opinion (iw1).*

In fact, this is one of the reasons Noriko gives for coming to study English,

*But I'd like to say my opinion clearly or my thought so clearly and categorised or so... (iw2).*

Whereas five out of the six Japanese identified themselves as shy, unable to express opinions, or hesitant to speak up, Noboru's identification as 'not shy' illustrates the diversity possible within any one discourse, "I was shy but not now I'm not shy. I have a lot.. lot of part-time job and make friends with customer, in Japan. I believe I'm not shy [laughs]" (iw2). This contrasts with teacher perceptions of him as the most reticent student, discussed below.

I am claiming here that a discourse of Japanese cultural identity contributes to a production of the students as shy; it is a subject position with which they tend to identify. Katsuyuki's case illustrates the powers of the discourse to produce subjectivity even in the face of conflicting positioning.

Katsuyuki's self-positioning - "really shy, really, really shy"(iw2) - contrasts very strongly with my impression of him and the impressions of his friends, already referred to in *Chapter 4*,

*Constance: Hmmm. Do your friends think you're shy?*

*Katsuyuki: No. I don't know why but they don't think so.. [laughs]*

*Maybe I don't look like shy. Did you think that I'm shy?*

*Constance: Never (iw2).*

My view derived from such moments as the following. On the first day of semester, in an orientation for a larger group of about twenty Japanese students, Kim had read out the names of students enrolled in the high level group but Katsuyuki's name had been inadvertently omitted. Katsuyuki had called out to Kim, across the room, "*Excuse me, but I guess that I'm in [this class]*" (cKw1). In this way, Katsuyuki was among those Japanese who presented on the first day as able to speak up in the group.

Thus, although he consistently self-positioned as shy, Katsuyuki stood out as being one of the least shy students, certainly among the Japanese. Helen, also, did not agree that Katsuyuki was shy, commenting that "*he's the least shy person in the class*" (iw6).

Katsuyuki, nevertheless continued to think of himself as shy. In an email to me in *Week 10*, he referred to it again in relation to a class assignment.

*I need to do some interview with strangers!! As you know it's really hard for me 'cause I'm shy!! (ew10).*

Susan also saw Katsuyuki as the most capable public speaker and often called on him during excursions to respond to tour guides. Katsuyuki, however, as his comment reveals, did not understand why Susan called on him.

*Katsuyuki: I'm not sure but Susan like me a lot or hate me a lot, I can't judge but she cares about me I guess, in one of the way [..]*

*Constance: Why do you think she cares about you?*

*Katsuyuki: On Monday's class Susan always ask me something, sometimes we go to the excursion and some staff of art gallery or yeah somewhere, asked 'is there any question?' or something and I always*

*asked by Susan to say something and, yeah, beside that even beside that, she always ask me, not the other Japanese but me (iw15).*

Katsuyuki's inability to understand why Susan asks him to speak may derive from his powerful identification with the discourse of Japanese cultural identity which represents Japanese people as shy and unable to speak up.

Another way in which a type of reticence in Katsuyuki's subjectivity was formed in a complex interplay of discourses can be seen in responses to his initial desire to get to know Dominique, which was subsequently taken over by peer pressures to remain identified with the Japanese group.

Like a number of other students, Katsuyuki was drawn to Dominique in the first class of semester. When questioned in his first interview he said his goal was to be like her.

*Dominique, I like her so much and I really envy her character. I want to be like her. She's so attractive isn't she? [...] She's always cheerful and she can express her- what she wants correctly.... She has many things that I don't have, like confidence, cheerfulness, that kind of things. I really want to be like her (iw2).*

When I asked if he would try to get to know her better he replied wistfully

*Oh no you know. At that point I will be shy. I don't want to be disliked by anyone so that I'm really careful to have contact with- I mean.. uhh... I don't know (iw2).*

In the second interview when I asked if he had succeeded in talking with Dominique he explained how a Japanese friend had convinced him that making friends with the European students was an unnecessary goal.



*I felt better because I talked to my friend, Emi, who is in another class, and I felt so relieved because I was ah too- uh I tried hard, so hard, too hard to get European friends but she told me that you don't need to because I was- ahhh- uh no- uhhahh.. I was worrying about my relationship between people and I couldn't get along with everyone so... but she told me that you don't need to be friend with everyone, if you don't feel comfortable with them, you don't need to, and I felt really relieved from that word (iw6).*

This event could be viewed in terms of a discourse of Japanese group harmony such that it could be argued that some kind of 'Japaneseness' was evident in Katsuyuki's 'return to the group'. Above all, it supports Katsuyuki's identification with shyness. In these ways the discourse of Japanese as shy provided a subject position in which students positioned themselves through their 'choices' and behaviours.

Another way in which a complex interplay of Japanese discourses of cultural identity produced subjectivities in the classroom can be seen in an associated discourse relating to self-evaluations of the ability to speak up. In my observations in the first week, Yoko presented as one of the most active participants in small group discussions and in whole class responses. However, when I drew her attention to this, she appeared to deny it.

*Constance: Did you notice that you are the Japanese person, certainly the Japanese female who speaks the most in class? Did you notice?*

*You are the Japanese one who will answer.*

*Yoko: Am I? Oh I didn't notice [laughs] (iw2).*

In the second interview, when I again made reference to this, Yoko answers with modesty, denying herself a position different from that of the other Japanese students.

*Constance: Last time, I said you speak more than the other Japanese girls, do you agree?*

*Yoko: Actually I try to say something in the class but the other Japanese students also try to say something (iw6).*

I seek here to point out that, although to me, Yoko was noticeable for her contributions rather than her silence, her responses can be seen in the light of the discursive constructions of Japanese identity. Her denial that she spoke up in class more than the other students could be seen as a sign of the modesty referred to by Turner and Hiraga (2003) and a fear of standing out in the group (Yoshimoto, 1998). Indeed, a number of students referred to these characteristics in interviews. However, their understandings were diverse. Thus Rie gives the following explanation for why Japanese students sometimes do not speak up in class.

*And also in Japanese culture if I know the question but-.. uh.. I don't- I don't say that because I know, but many-.. every time, every answer which I know and to say teacher is not good in Japanese culture because sometimes we had to hide and other person say that answer and tend to be- I'm no- I don't know but-... It's fake but sometime it needs in Japanese culture, so that if I know the answer I- sometime I don't answer the question, or it's kind of Japanese culture so it difficult for me to answer the every question (iw1).*

In other words, Rie attributes to Japanese culture a complex restriction on speaking up. However for Katsuyuki this was not true.

*Constance: In Japanese culture, is it true that it's better to **not** answer if you know the answer, better to allow someone else to try and answer?*

*Katsuyuki: Not true*

*Constance: So if the teacher asks you, you should answer if you've got the answer?*

*Katsuyuki: Yes I think so (iw6).*

For Yoko, the issue was a different one, the fear of making mistakes. When I asked her the same question as I had asked Katsuyuki, she replied,

*If we were asked some questions, it's better to make- say opinion in front of other people but most of Japanese students are afraid of make- let those mistakes know publicly, yes, so that's why we- uh even in Japan we uh.. I- I think- I think more long time.. ah, not 'more', I think well or something, before I say something during class (iw6).*

At the same time, however Yoko acknowledged that speaking one's opinions in class could be regarded in Japan as "rude or selfish" (iw2).

Rie was aware of the impact, discussed earlier, of Japanese schooling practices on the Japanese students' speaking practices. She observed early in the semester that the other students volunteered answers, whereas the Japanese students needed to be called on directly by the teacher. She commented that the French, German and Italian students<sup>27</sup>

*Answer the question volunteer- volunt- voluntarily but Japanese student if- only if I [am] asked from teacher 'what is your answer?' I can say that, but if they are no chance to point out me, [be] point[ed] out [by] the teacher, maybe Japanese students in answer the question*

*the- because mmm- in elementary school and junior high school teacher always point out the student to ask, to ask the answers so I am very- we are get used to the style but another nationalities students they speak freely, not pointed out and.. er.. mm... (iw1).*

Noriko sees the 'pointing out' as a strategy used expressly for the Japanese students by the teachers in the course.

*Maybe they know Japanese tend to be shy in the class and they looked around the class and maybe they gave us the chance to speak, I think, yeah, because the European students started to talk even if teacher don't pointed so yeah, maybe I think these point- they understood these point and I think they try to give us the chance to say our opinion (iw2).*

The students tend to view this 'inability' to speak up as their own inadequacy. For Tomoko it is a character flaw which she feels responsible to change.

*Tomoko: In my character, because of my character, before- before I saying something in class, I stop, I hesitate to say something, so when I do this, other students say other opinion so I don't like this point in my character so I have to change that point.*

*Constance: Right you have to speak | before- straight away*

*Tomoko: |Speak before, yah yah yah, I think a few moments before saying, hesitate to say something, something my opinion... my bad bad character, or I shy or I hesitate. I wanna change this point (iw9).*

Rie, after observing that the European students do not hesitate to answer even if the answer is not correct, comments that this is something she would like

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<sup>27</sup> At this stage, Li, the Chinese student, had not joined the class.

some day to be able to do too, in order to speak freely. Like Tomoko, she sees this as her own problem.

*They don't hesitate to make a mistake but Japanese people hesitate to make a mistake. It's my problem to solve it, it is a my problem, make a mistake is not uh hesitate things. I know that I can do it but not yet but after maybe.. this is a first week so I have that problem now but one month ago- or one month later or two months later I can- I want to manage- I can- I want to solve it and I want to answer the question freely (iw1).*

It can be seen here that a discourse of speaking up operates as a technique of the self in which students attempt to mould themselves as speakers. At the same time, the Japanese students' sense of inadequacy, I will argue, is a discursive production resulting in part from the presence in the class of a number of high-level speakers.

It may appear to be the case, then, since they position themselves as shy and unable to speak up, that the Japanese are indeed passive and not able to express themselves. As discussed earlier, Japanese schooling practices can be drawn on to support this. However, if we are to consider identity as co-constructed and always in flux, then it is important to consider the impact of discourses as expressed through social relations of power. I want to suggest that discursive constructions of the Japanese students in this classroom actually functioned to position them strongly as non-speakers. As Norton Peirce (1995) has shown, the social context of the speaking situation and the power relations of the interactants impact strongly on what speaking is possible. As I will discuss, a number of other factors reinforced and provided identifications with this discursive construction of Japanese identity.

An objection which I would like to pre-empt might come in the form of a claim that the language levels of the Japanese were lower, given my discussion above of the impact of the enrolment requirements and the consequent language levels of the students in the course. However, while it is evident in the transcriptions that students such as Dominique and Sai'da are capable of more complex oral structures than students such as Tomoko or Rie, it is also true that other students, for example Giovanni and Katsuyuki, refute the ascription of students to either side of a binary of strong/weak language skills according to culture. In addition, and more importantly for my purposes here, language competence is only one aspect of communication. My 'data' shows numerous examples of extended and animated conversation occurring between students with variable levels of competence. Importantly, as I hope to demonstrate, oral skills are only one part of a complex equation. Thus I seek on the one hand, to verify that the issue is rather whether "those who speak regard those who listen as worthy to listen, and [whether] those who listen regard those who speak as worthy to speak" (Peirce, 1995: 28). Additionally, I seek to demonstrate the intense complexity of impacts on speaking.

I will discuss a number of factors here which contributed to the Japanese students' identifications with this discursive construction of themselves as passive non-speakers. These factors go beyond a simple understanding of the Japanese students as non-speakers because of schooling practices. There is evidence, for example, from the first week of classes that the Japanese students, at that stage, were speakers. In relation to this point I will claim that the operation of the discourse conspired to quickly re-position them as non-speakers; that is, it provided subject positions for them to take up. In regard to reasons why these subject positions were taken up, I will discuss how this developing self-positioning of the Japanese students as inadequate speakers was reinforced by several non-discursive events in conjunction with the operation of other discourses. These events demonstrate the co-constructed

nature of subjectivity and culture. Thus other students in the class provide a major resource for the production of subjectivity. I focus, for example, on the attitudes of the French students to some of the courses, and how these attitudes were interpreted by the Japanese students in a way which reinforced their self-positioning as inadequate. I focus also on the impact of one student, Doris, to illustrate the negative impact of a high-level, non-sympathetic speaker on the class. Additionally, I mention briefly some consequences of particular teacher practices which I will take up in more detail in the next chapter. Above all in this section I focus on what makes it possible for someone to speak up in class. I illustrate Peirce's statement that "feelings of inadequacy are frequently socially constructed" (1995: 28) and seek to show that this statement can be applied in the classroom to the construction of the Japanese students as inadequate speakers.



All the quotations from students above were made after the first week of classes. By the time of my first interview, with Tomoko, the students had attended the first sessions of all courses included in my study. Tomoko's comment that "*in case of discussion, I can't tell my opinion well*" (iw1) directly expresses her experience of the first week of classes. However, my observations of student participation in the first few days of the course, shows the Japanese students participating at a level which did not appear to be maintained, hence my argument that the discourse of Japanese cultural identity functioned, relatively quickly in fact, to reduce the amount of speaking possible for the Japanese students.

For example, in my field notes during the first week of classes, I noted a number of occasions when some of the Japanese students contributed in ways which did not appear to be maintained in subsequent weeks. While many of these occurred in small group discussions - I will discuss briefly below the

conditions under which this kind of participation continued throughout the semester – some incidents involved addressing the whole class. Thus, on the third day of semester, in Susan’s class, Noboru volunteers a personal story to the whole group after a small group discussion with Doris and Ursula.

This occurred after the three students had discussed the topic of ‘any language difficulties they had recently experienced’. During this discussion I note that

*Both Doris and Ursula are fluent and using colloquial language and have good pronunciation. Noboru has none of this, struggles, is overridden. Doris shows extreme but unkind patience (fSw1).*

When Susan called on the whole class to report back on the most interesting story in their group, Doris responded with her own story, and then volunteered Ursula’s story, saying, “Ursula, yours is funny as well”. Susan then asks “Any others?” and Noboru responds, beginning his turn with “My situation is not so funny but...”.

In the field notes, I comment:

*Noboru not to be left out, not daunted by his level of English (fSw1).*

Despite Doris’s comment which implies that Noboru’s story was not funny and was therefore not worth relating, Noboru participates. He has not yet been silenced.

This image of Noboru as speaking up in *Week 1* in class contrasts with Susan’s assessment given later in the semester of him as the quietest student, “Noboru’s probably the most reticent” (iw6) and “he’s quite a retiring and shy personality” (iw16).



Another instance of early participation manifested at the micro level in an interaction in Margaret's class in which her goal was to have students participate in a whole group discussion about a number of complex and contested concepts. I have already discussed Margaret's positioning of the Japanese students as less able. In the interview, I refer to my observation in class where Rie had answered appropriately but her response was apparently not heard.

*Margaret: I mean, if I only had Japanese in this class I would not dream of talking about [this topic] in the beginning, even though as principle I feel that it's something that has to...*

*Constance: But didn't- like when you tried to get them to say where their assumptions came from, Rie was the first one to respond |in terms of culture.*

*Margaret: Was she? |I can't remember (iw2).*

This is an instance of the way discourses serve to delimit what it is possible to think by determining what is seen, heard and understood. This "function of exclusion" (Mills, 1997: 56) is one of discourse's most important effects.

By positioning Rie as a non-speaker, this event both derives from and confirms the discursively produced view of the Japanese students as passive non-speakers; that is, the students were constituted by the discourse partly through objectification, in being made 'subject to' the procedures of the discourse, and partly through subjectification in terms of the "techniques and evaluations for [...] evaluating, perfecting, managing the self" (Rose, 1999a: 218).

♦

The impact of the other students in the classroom is another important factor in the discursive production of subjectivities in this classroom. Clearly, in a

classroom, social relations of power occur between students as much as between students and teacher. I focus here on two main power relationships which impacted on the Japanese students' self-perceptions. The first of these resulted from actions taken by the three French students, particularly in the courses taught by Helen and Susan. These actions were mistakenly interpreted by the Japanese students in such a way as to reinforce their self-positioning as inadequate. I will argue in *Chapter 6* that, significantly, the French students' actions were a result of their attitudes to the courses.

As can be seen in the example quoted earlier from Dominique - that she had spent "*half a term learning nothing*" (iw15), and indicated also in Pauline's reference to "*the disdain of Dominique*" (Pauline iw10) - there was some negativity, particularly in Dominique, towards some of the classes. In addition, having known each other in France, Dominique, Sai'da and Antonio were long-term friends and sometimes operated as a cohort. Given Dominique's stellar role in her sub-group, when they skipped classes, they often did so together.

When asked in interview about what he thought about the French students skipping class, Noboru's explanation is in terms of the inadequacy of the Japanese students' English.

*Noboru: Um I think the class is boring for them because they speak more fluently and they don't need- they don't need..our English I think.. If I were- If I were them and I will- If I were them- if I (?)<sup>28</sup>...*

*Constance: 'Would'...*

*Noboru: 'Would'.. maybe I would some- same thing*

*Constance: Would skip class too?*

*Noboru: Mm. I don't know. We're struggling with- struggling with the class (?)*

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<sup>28</sup> As stated in Appendix A, the symbol, in italics, "(?)" indicates a rising tone question to me, from the student, about possible grammar choices.

*Constance: Hmm mm*

*Noboru: But they not so...they're not so struggling with class, they just enjoy so they will come, enjoy [...] class for example presentation in Wednesday morning and uh.. yuh.. I think that's it (iw9).*

However, a variety of factors contributed to the French students' absences from class, including illness, internecine squabbles among the three, and the above-mentioned dissatisfaction with the classes, to be discussed further in *Chapter 6*. Given the animated engagement witnessed in the small group discussions, and the tendency of teachers to neglect the affective role of small group and pair work, Noboru appears to misconstrue the French students' intentions.

Noboru's perception of the French students' behaviour appears to be grounded in the belief that the Japanese students' English levels are too low to maintain the French students' interest. This perception aligns with the discursively produced views which the Japanese held of themselves as non-speakers. In this way, the Japanese student identities were produced in a co-construction process in which the discourse of Japanese cultural identity made identities available with which the students could relatively easily form identifications because of cultural residues.

♦

Another major impact on the Japanese self-positionings in the class<sup>29</sup> came in the form of Doris, a high-level and somewhat non-sympathetic speaker. I referred in my field notes, above, to Doris's "*extreme but unkind patience*" (fSw1). This subjective and negative reaction to Doris's behaviour on my part may have been, I was aware, fed initially by the fact that Doris had declined to take part in the interviews. However, my reaction was subsequently borne out by

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<sup>29</sup> Note that Doris's enrolment meant that she was only in a total of three classes, with two of the four teachers, Margaret and Susan.

students' comments. Only two students received these kinds of negative comments from their class mates, Doris and Li. I focus here on Doris.

Doris was a German student who, at 33, was considerably older than the other students and had a very high level of spoken English. Katsuyuki's comment which questioned the rationale for the presence in the class of some students certainly applied to Doris, "*European people can speak really, really good English. I wonder why they are in that kind of class*" (iw5). The enrolment conditions, discussed earlier, are implicated here.

In fact, Doris was described by Ursula as "*obviously um overqualified for this course*" (iw10) and, as discussed above, Doris's high level English was also recognised by Giovanni and exploited to support his goal of learning English.

In class, Doris was by far and consistently the most eager respondent to questions. I made numerous references in my field notes to that fact that Doris was always the first to answer and did so in a voice noticeably louder than others.

The teachers appreciated this committed attitude. Thus Susan states, for example,

*She's right on the ball, she knows what's going on [...] It's good that she's enthusiastic and it's good that she hasn't lost interest because she might feel that she's above the rest of the group (iw6).*

However, most of the students found her behaviour irritating or strange. Indeed, Dominique commented,

*I think Doris is a bit irritating, uh, I'm sure she's a really nice person but I mean.. um.. I don't understand how she can be so much committed in a..*

*in a stupid course like um [...] okay c'mon, it's okay [laughs] oh I don't understand, she's- I think its because she wants to put herself um she likes to be um the one to talk (iw3).*

Later in the semester, after speaking with Doris, Dominique came to understand Doris's behaviour in terms of a strong drive to succeed.

*Yeah I understood the way she works um she just wants um to succeed so that's why she's uh like doing everything she can to succeed so...(iw10).*

Thus, although Doris's drive to succeed can be considered an admirable quality in a student, many of her classmates found her difficult throughout the semester. Sai'da, for example, following a comment which naturalised a discourse of French-German relations as antagonistic - "*French people and German people don't really like each other, [laughs] it's in our culture [laughs]*" (iw3) - said she found Doris to be impolite:

*Doris uh yeah I'm sure yah I don't care about her, sometimes she's um boring because she always wants to speak in class and she always speak louder and always um I don't know when teacher ask someone like Noriko to ask question and she'd take time to answer and she [Doris] is like that [gestures] she wants someone to respond, I mean impolite, I don't like that (iw3).*

When I asked Chantal, in her first interview, with whom she would choose to be in a group during class, she included Doris in her selection because of her "*good ideas*". However, she noted that Doris was "*a bit aggressive*" whereas Ursula, the other German, was both "*gentle*" and "*nice*". However, towards the end of semester, Chantal no longer considered Doris a good person to work with in a group.

*I think Doris scares me a bit because she's really strong and uh a bit stubborn perhaps so yep I won't like to work with her (iw10).*

Even Antonio, who was generally reluctant to say anything negative about anyone, when talking about “a kind of a debate between Sai'da and Doris” commented,

*Antonio: I think Doris- I don't know she seems to be.... I can't judge anyone*

*Constance: Does she annoy you a bit?*

*Antonio: I think that when she speaks she means she wants everyone to hear her to hear her. That's- no, she speaks very loudly and uh but it's maybe just her way to speak and maybe she speaks like that all the time, I don't know. No but I don't have any feeling against anyone (iw3).*

While the classroom presence of Doris was problematic for all of these French students, some of the Japanese students expressed even stronger reservations. Her impact on the Japanese students was commented upon by Roland.

*I think she is admirable with his determination but she can irritate for example Japanese people which are more reserved- reserved person (iw3).*

Katsuyuki confirmed Roland's impression that Doris's presence impacted negatively on many of the students. Interestingly Giovanni's strategy of always seeking to sit next to Doris has been interpreted here as liking her.

*Katsuyuki: From that class German people comes to class, right? Do you know Doris? She's really uh, I don't know, I can't find proper word, aggressive. So I feel more uncomfortable than other classes because of the Doris.*

*Constance: How do others feel?*

*Katsuyuki: Most of them doesn't like her in some way*

*Constance: Does anyone?*

*Katsuyuki: I don't know but maybe Giovanni (iw6).*

Katsuyuki refers here to feeling uncomfortable. Yoko too becomes uncomfortable in Doris's presence.

*Doris sometimes when I saw her face is so irritated or something because Japanese students couldn't make opinion well and it takes long time to say something so sometimes especially small group I can see her face, or expression, when I see those face expression I feel more nervous or more frustrated, I can't make opinion more (iw9).*

Similarly, Tomoko felt the class would be more comfortable if Doris was absent. When I asked with whom she felt most comfortable, Tomoko first listed all the students in the class, except Doris and Li. Of the other students, she said,

*I like talking with them so if they if I attend their group in class I feel very comfortable atmosphere so I can easy to say something (iw9).*

When I asked if that meant it would be better without Doris and Li, she appeared to find this suggestion novel and appealing.

*Constance: If you had your choice would you say bye-bye to Li and Doris and just have the others?*

*Tomoko:[Laughs] Ha ha ha [not the doll laugh but not the belly laugh either, maybe a little bit 'evil']*

*Constance: Do you think that would be better?*

*Tomoko: Mmmmmmm it's easy- very comfortable atmosphere in class*

*Constance: When they're not there?*

*Tomoko: Not there- mmm. but I'm not sure it is good or bad [um]  
choice or not but I feel good [laughs] (iw9).*

In an interaction between Doris and Noriko in Susan's class in *Week 4*, Doris enacted the irritation which so discomfited the Japanese students. On this occasion, the students sitting in the back row of seats were in the following order: Dominique, Sai'da, Ursula, Giovanni, Doris, Noriko. Susan had passed out papers to every second person. These required a matching task to be completed.

When Susan says "you share with the person next to you", I comment in the field notes

*Sai'da plunges towards Dominique. Doris towards Giovanni, then 'oh' and realises it's [got to be] Noriko. Noriko in the meanwhile had looked lost. 'No partner for me' (fSw4).*

Doris's subsequent interchanges with Noriko, including her facial expressions and body language, expressed the dissatisfaction she felt at being paired with a partner she had not chosen and patently did not want. My field notes, written at different stages in this extended interaction, document this.

*Doris is helping Noriko. Not doing it herself. Waiting and pointing things out. Noriko is doing the writing of the answers at her bidding.*

[...]

*Noriko never marks anything until Doris has told her. There is very little discussion. Doris turns the pages over. Incredibly patronising.*

[...]

*Second page. Doris interacts the same way with Noriko. Painful to watch. Doris leans on one arm as she does it.*

[...]



*Ditto with D and N. Doris indicates with her pen. Noriko nods and marks the correct one.*

*[...]*

*They finish. Doris sits back. Noriko nods politely. Doris starts writing on whatever she has in front of her. Noriko keeps looking at the sheet, starts to use her dictionary (fSw4).*

Susan's perception of the classes was that pair work was effective and enjoyed by the students. Thus, she commented,

*I think the way the Europeans and Japanese interact with each other is quite good, especially on a one-to-one basis, I think. They both have an opportunity to speak. When it's in a larger group then the Europeans tend to take over (iw6).*

Clearly this perception cannot be justified in the case of Doris and Noriko.

Nevertheless Noriko justified Doris's behaviour in terms of her own - Noriko's - poor English skills.

*Noriko: I think I need to get more skill or knowledge and I angry to [myself] "Oh why I couldn't understand this question and why Doris is so clever" sometimes so conflict in me in my mind yeh yeh yeh in the class [...] but I know it's so difficult for me because my level of English or knowledge is not so high I know but sometimes – so but I need to learn these things [...] or I'm not sure about maybe I need to joining these English class*

*[...]*

*Noriko: I can't understand because maybe in the class I'm not so clever and maybe the level is go up in the class*

*Constance: You mean your level is lower?*

*Noriko: Yeh yeh yeh yeh, in the class and sometimes I- I think it is bad for classmates to be more time to answer something*

*Constance: Bad for which classmates?*

*Noriko: Bad for high level students because the level is so range*

*Constance: Big range*

*Noriko: Yeh yeh I think so sometimes (iw8)*

The impact of Doris illustrates the way relations of power impact on speaking. Her higher level speaking skills combined with her intense desire to improve her English produced an impatience in her which was keenly experienced by the other students, producing discomfort or irritation. This 'impatience' can be usefully understood both as a form of symbolic violence (Worsham, 2001) and in terms of Deleuze's notions of affect, and the power to connect. Doris's behaviour effectively precluded connection in the class. For most of the semester, she remained relatively aloof and apparently unaware of the effects of her classroom practices.

Indeed, when speaking about conceptions of ideal student behaviour in Japan, Rie commented that, in Japan, Doris would find it difficult to make friends.

*Oh honest honest opinion, in Japan she will be a nnn she doesn't- she maybe not able to get the good relation- friendship to another student because - she is very diligent, she is smart, she knows the answers, and sometimes she said the wrong answer but she doesn't hesitate. It's good - but in Japan maybe the other Japanese student think that she is arrogant... yeah [...] yeah there are some [...] student like Doris or Li uh nnn another other Japanese student feel, you should [be] quiet [said in a gently admonishing way] or... [laughs gently].. (iw9).*

Sai'da made a similar comment.

*She would be fired by the teacher [laughs] Anyway she wouldn't be liked by the teacher. In French, we call it huge mouth, always protesting, criticising, without real arguments, just saying things, telling things (iw9).*

As previously stated, *Chapter 4*, late in the semester, Doris's behaviour in fact changed quite remarkably. However, Ursula's comment confirms that, until almost the end of semester, Doris had not had connections with other class members.

*[Now] she's a bit more open-minded for that whole class. She was a bit more separated in the beginning. I never saw her joking around. [...] now she's more part of the community, of the whole class (iw16).*

In the last week of semester, Doris began to actively seek out the Japanese students and to express interest in Japanese culture. Although her motives can be viewed with cynicism since she had apparently decided she wanted to study Japanese, the Japanese students were delighted by this opportunity to get to know her.

*Rie: Now I think he chang- she changed, I think the reason is she understand what the Japanese are, so she- at first I think she she she couldn't understand why Japanese people don't say anything in a class, and just listen, and the Japanese people, Japanese students don't didnt say volunteer volunteer really so.. getting he she understand English, out of the class she talks- she talked to Noboru or me in a Japanese culture*

*Constance: About Japanese culture?*

*Rie: About- about Japanese culture and she try to understand Japanese people and Japanese culture and Japanese society yeah and also she's going to study Japanese maybe next semester or something*

*yeah so yeah so we Japanese friend easy to open my- our heart my- our mind and we feel like speak to Doris ourself from ourselves nn so nn yeah I think just she didn't understand what Japanese are so nn nn (iw16).*

Rie's email to me describing her class mates in the second semester describes a class assemblage which appears to enable speaking in a way which the presence of Doris could not.

*Yes, in our classes, there are two French, two Chilean, two Spanish, one German and one Norwegian.*

*However they are not talkative people, they do not speak in classes very often, I mean they are not aggressive. Maybe, all of our English ability is sort of same. So teachers ask some comments and answers to Japanese students more than non-Japanese students.*

*That is the big difference between this semester and last one (ew26).*

Rie's reference to aggression here is important. I quoted earlier Katsuyuki's comment about his desire to be like Dominique, and other Japanese students' admiration for the European students' ability to speak up and to express their opinions. However, this admiration did not appear to be an undifferentiated one. As discussed earlier, a number of students had made reference in interviews to a negative quality associated with speaking up.

Indeed Rie felt that Japanese students returning to Japan could encounter problems if they brought back too much of the Western style of expressing their opinions. For the Japanese students, then, finding a balance between speaking their opinions and being too assertive was not easy.

*Yeah its very difficult to the balance. If I say too much it's very I think rude or arrogant but it is uh most important thing in international*

*world [...] there are some differences because the who have studied abroad people are very aggressive and very nnn little bit emotional but the only study in Japan they are not so emotional or they are not so nnn [...] aggressive they are very um nnn eto? [thinking filler] passive so if the nnn if the the person who have studied another country and go back to Japan they are feel little bit differences different gap and very uncomfortable because in other country they speak a lot, speak their opinions but in Japan they should be not, not quiet but they should not speak too much, so little bit uncomfortable feeling during the class with the Japanese student (iw9).*

Pauline expresses this possibility too, suggesting that perhaps talking when you have nothing to say is overrated in Australian culture.

*You want everybody to participate in a discussion but even if you aren't the greatest genius on earth and know all about it you're still expected to participate, whereas I'm sure a different culture would say 'no you keep your mouth shut unless you have something really important to say' which I often think here we could do with a little bit more here, you know, not unlike the person who just keeps out and then just comes in with something important to say, and everyone thinks 'well that was interesting and important as opposed to the empty vessel', so yeah I don't know (iw0).*

When I asked Rie about the extent to which she would like to be like Doris she said

*Rie: Aaahhhhhhhhhh....Nnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn yes or no-o-o ....if I nn hard to say, no, because nnnnnn.... nnnnnn because ... nnnn..... I think it's..it's very difficult, the balance is very important things, I know she is very good perspective- I think she is good, I just- I not- I*

*don't get out- get along with her, so just always in the during the class, I don't know the- her character, her personality, I don't know well about her personality just only the during the class, so nnn.. the- nnnnnn.. more like friendly or like she should- if she would be more like friendly or smile a lot and uh suggest another student or nnn yeah, for example Antonio is not so- I don't feel so much arrogant or Dominique or Giovanni. Giovanni is very make the atmos- class atmospheres a very kind- not kind, very cheerful, cheerful (?)-*

*Constance: Cheerful? happy? relaxed?*

*Rie: Happy not so. Relax yeah, but Doris doesn't do that, so if the Doris make- can make the class atmosphere more happy or more cheerful, she will be the very nice person, very good, the best student, I think, because she knows she has many knowledge and also she could be- she can the class cheerful, I think it's a very the best student international student other international student nnn so.. (iw9).*

In this section I have sought to demonstrate the way subjectivity is co-constructed and the role played by the classroom relationships in this. I have tried to demonstrate the multiple ways discourse works to produce the identifications of the Japanese students with the subject position of non-speaker. In addition, I am arguing here for consideration of the affective impact of other students. My observations show numerous occasions when the Japanese students participated actively in small group discussions. Needless to say, the amount and type of participation varied according to who was present, leading to different kinds of affective impacts on speaking. The actual practices of the Japanese students in small group discussions thus provide another site in which it is possible to see, not only a demonstration of the subject's inability to know itself - since the students continue to insist that they are non-speakers - but also importance of affect in the discursive construction of subjectivity.

In this chapter, I have shown how language limits our thinking by freezing concepts into what we come to believe are real categories (Lecerle, 2002; Mills, 1997). Describing students in terms of binary categories, such as active or passive, positions them in fixed ways (Spivak, 1976: lix). One consequence of these reified and static understandings of cultural identity in the classroom is that neither learners nor teachers see the potential diversity either of themselves or of others (Kramsch & von Hoene, 1995: 338). Deleuze's notion of difference responds to this by seeking to foreground the logic of 'and' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 25) in place of a logic of 'is' which implies attribution and evaluation. This is useful for rethinking the representations discussed here since it allows us to see the intense multiplicity of subjectivities. It also highlights the impasse which is reached when cultural diversity - between the Japanese and the European students - is put forward by teachers as the problem.

My focus here, on the impact of fixed cultural identities, is a focus on what Deleuze calls a process of molarisation or stratification. Molarisation is evidence of a kind of rigidity and fixed-ness in the flow of becoming and is a fixation - a coding - of the "relatively stable moments in the flow of becoming-life" (Colebrook, 2002: 125). Becomings are restricted through these codings or norms of perceiving and representing the world to ourselves and each other. In the next chapter, I detail the codings of teacher identity which illustrate another way in which identities were produced and performed in this research site.

It is also important to note the relative disfunctionality of my naming of discourses. While impacts of a discourse of Japanese cultural identity can be seen, the situation is massively complex. Although the cultural scripts provided by discourses can be seen to have powerful impacts, the radical heterogeneity of subjectivities and the complex interplay of factors which contribute to interactions, preclude any simple or deterministic mapping of cultural identity

onto particular individuals. Given the power of representation to determine thought, a useful stance may be to live in a climate of constant questioning of all representation systems and to be wary of any naming at all. Any fixed notion of a discourse of cultural identity becomes problematic in such a climate. In the next chapter, I again attempt to work with discourses but show how such fixed naming becomes increasingly limited and less useful.



## *Chapter 6: Discourses of teaching and learning: the tyranny of identity*

In which I discuss the discursive production of subjectivity through discourses of good teacher and good student. I attempt to show the extent to which these discourses are molarising processes with which teachers identify to a greater extent than do students.

*There is something amorous - but also something fatal - about all education. We learn nothing from those who say: 'do as I do'. Our only teachers are those who tell us to 'do with me'*

- Gilles Deleuze



The previous chapter looked at discourses which related to production of the cultural identities of participants, in terms of how Japanese students, in particular, positioned themselves and how they were positioned by others. In this chapter, I discuss discourses associated with teaching and learning, focusing on a *discourse of good teacher* and a *discourse of good student*. I will show how teachers' identifications with the subject positions available to them as teachers, on the whole, did not match with students' views. I focus on how the interplay between discourses makes available particular subject positions and how any choice between these subject positions is limited to those which are available, for there are no subject positions outside those which are discursively produced. I will also show how teachers became sites of struggle within competing discourses. In addition I will demonstrate clearly the inadequacy of conceptions of the subject as capable of mastery, autonomy and self-knowledge. Indeed the teachers' practices, and the mismatch in teacher and student assumptions, discussed here, and in *Chapter 5*, illustrate clearly a subject who is fragmented and incapable of self-knowledge or mastery. As will be seen in my discussion, the discourse operates differentially to produce the subjectivities of teachers in ways that create relatively singular ways of being; that is, the production of teachers in this discourse is not a determinate but a highly fluid

one. The chapter also proposes that desire was rarely seen in this classroom and suggests that this was partially a result of the dominant molarising effects in teacher practices. As with the representations of students discussed in *Chapter 5*, this means that *becoming* is restricted through the codings of conduct which produce teachers as professionals. However, at the same time, the uneven processes of discursive construction meant that alternative identities emerged in resistant ways, at times allowing some opening towards what Deleuze and Guattari call lines of flight, a discussion which will be developed in *Chapter 7*.

In *Section a*, I briefly address some of the literature regarding the ways teachers and students are normatively conceived. In *Section b*, I focus on a discourse of good teacher, and on the classroom practices which result from teachers' identifications with particular subject positions, and at the consequences in terms of the ways students responded<sup>30</sup>. I attempt to demonstrate how this discourse functions as a technique of the self in producing the way teachers *believed* they should behave. I show how an interplay of discourses and non-discursive factors, such as conditions of casual employment and the particular combination of students, produces teachers as sites of struggle. This section also seeks to show that the discourses which produce teachers and teachers' understandings of students are instances of a molarising coding. In *Section c*, I focus on teachers' positionings of students and student responses to this positioning. I thus look here at the *discourse of good student* and students' variable identifications with it. Although students recognise common conceptions of appropriate student behaviour, some do not strongly identify with them. Thus, I will argue, a mismatch of expectations results.

### ***Section a: Teachers and students***

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<sup>30</sup> These classroom practices may not be necessarily specific to English language teachers.

Classroom culture is generally seen as relatively predictable and familiar (Oxford, 2001). Thus Louden refers to “traditions of teaching: common ways of understanding content, pedagogy, students and the social milieu of schooling” (Louden, 1991: 186). However, a number of studies have demonstrated that all is not as smooth as some might think. Thesen’s study of students in post-apartheid South Africa, for example, found that “students were often alienated from the curriculum, tending to invest more in their social lives than in their academic identities” (Thesen, 1997: 505). Canagarajah found that the students in his study of a Sri Lankan classroom “display a complex range of attitudes towards domination with a mixture of oppositional and accommodative tendencies” (1993: 603). He refers to the “active underlife” (1993: 613) of the students in his study. Kramsch speaks of learners who “find the most ingenious ways of playing with schismatic meanings, pretending they do not understand, double-guessing the grammatical exercise, beating the system, sneaking in the forbidden native tongue, creating a counter-culture with foreign sounds and shapes” (1993: 48-9). While all these studies dealt with minority students with the implication that there is a mainstream whose experience is more positive, I want to suggest, like Thesen (1997), that students are not necessarily reaching for a mainstream. In fact, perhaps there is no mainstream and the ‘underlife’ of students reveals this. As Ellsworth says, “[m]omentous things are happening right behind the teacher’s back, and have been all along” (1997: 195).

Many problems and resistances in the classroom are attributed to a lack of motivation on the part of students (Canagarajah, 1993) and are often seen as the students’ failures to understand what is expected of them. This leads to a concern with improved methods and techniques on the part of teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). However such a response relies on a knowing subject and a transparent relationship between language and meaning (Ellsworth, 1997). Any notion of motivation in language learning, if it is predicated on the learner’s conscious intentions and conscious awareness of what knowledge of

the language may bring, remains associated with a rational and controlling subject. Although it makes a significant move by criticising understandings of motivation which attribute failure to learn to the learner, Norton Peirce's term 'investment' (Peirce, 1995) falls short of seeing that the motivations of both learners and teachers are discursively produced. The term is based on a double understanding that learners see an 'investment' in the second language as giving them "a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will increase their value in the social world" and is also "an investment in the learner's own identity" (Norton, 2001: 166). The second meaning of the term is useful here since it highlights the importance of identity in considerations of both 'resistant' and 'non-resistant' student practices. However, this cannot be understood as a conscious investment in identity but rather the consequences of a discourse of unified subjectivity which drives the fragmented self to a sense of closure.

At the same time, in terms of teachers' roles, Kramsch points out that it is not necessarily the teachers' actions which determine how much time and energy students invest in learning the language, but rather "the little epiphanies experienced along the way that are often totally beyond the awareness and control of their teachers" (Kramsch, 1995c: ix-x). This chapter takes up these questions through a focus on teacher and student identities in terms of their classroom roles. It discusses the extent of teachers' identifications with, and students' resistances to, the normative roles which are expected in classrooms. It thus considers such 'traditions' as the learner giving the right to the teacher to adopt the role of teacher, and evaluations of classroom participants as 'good' or 'bad' learners, and 'good' or 'bad' teachers (Breen, 1985: 146).

The role of the teacher is a highly normalising one (Breen, 1985; Kramsch, 1993; McGroarty, 1995); it is both subject to and subject of the molarising effects of discourses. Put another way, subjectification is an ongoing process of

molarisation which acts both on teachers and through them. The molar refers to a way of inhabiting space marked by rigid structures of organisation which constrain, stabilise and render static. It relates to what Foucault would refer to as 'norms' and 'normalisation', and processes of regularisation. The teacher's role of enculturating the learner, whether to a first or a second culture, requires that both teachers and students participate in classroom processes which are, effectively, techniques of government for the development of good citizens (Donald, 1992). At the same time, teachers themselves are always already molarised, as I will show. Thus teachers are constantly reminded of their need for a sense of "professional responsibility" (see for example, Byram & Risager, 1999). In the case of language teaching, teachers are trained to think of themselves as 'expert knower', as representing a community of native speakers, and their role is "to impart a certain body of knowledge to non-native speaking non-knowers in order to facilitate their integration into the speech community" (Kramsch, 1993: 45). However, as I will show, the teacher's mastery, or knowledge, of the teaching situation in terms of the goals, purposes and understandings of the classroom are often at odds with the desires and expectations of students. In addition, I seek to show that it is not a question of teachers finding ways to know and understand students better since all subjects, both teachers and students, remain only partly and contingently knowable to themselves and to others. Indeed, it may be ultimately necessarily to find a way to live with the paradoxes of teaching rather than "making the foreign continuous with the domesticated" (Ellsworth, 1997: 195).

Nevertheless, the demand for professionalism puts pressures on teachers to perform appropriately. This demand has, increasingly since the 1970s (Freeman, 1996), led to research which investigates the part played by teachers in student learning. Thus, the intense complexity of teaching has been acknowledged for some decades (Breen, 1985; Louden, 1991) and language teaching has been recognised as "a juggling act that requires instant-by-instant

decisions based on both local and global knowledge and on an intuitive grasp of the situation" (Kramsch, 1993: 3). The impact of institutional pressures on English language teachers in particular has only been considered more recently. Thus Vandrick refers to "the whole field of ESL [being] treated as inferior stepchildren in academe" (1997: 155) and Johnston, speaking of the "reality of EFL/ESL" refers to teachers being "underpaid and overworked, often operating in difficult physical and psychological conditions" (Johnston, 1997: 682). He adds that "[t]he occupation of EFL/ESL teaching as a whole lacks the status of the established professions such as medicine or law. Many teachers work without job security or benefits" (Johnston, 1997: 682). These factors were highly relevant in my study in that the casual employment status of all four teachers meant they not only lacked job security but also suffered from a diminished role in the academy where access to research and institutional input into their teaching practices are not available to them (Zubrick et al., 2001: 54).

This chapter considers the pressures of professional responsibility on teachers in the light of both a conception of a poststructuralist subject and of the objective conditions of teachers' work. My discussion contributes to an understanding of how discourses which impact on teacher practices contribute to the negative attributions which teachers sometimes receive, such as that they are "unreflective, conservative, narrow-minded and more inclined to accept unfavourable conditions than to struggle to change them" (Louden, 1991: xiii).

### *Section b: Discourses of the good teacher*

The practices - actions and/or statements - of both teacher and students, and the correlation of these statements with classroom events, indicated that certain understandings of teaching were operative in my research site in some key way. These were evident in the subject positions taken up by teachers. I focus here on a number of related subject positions which, by indicating the normative conduct of a professional English language teacher in this context,

produce teachers' identities. For the purposes of my discussion I see these subject positions as subsumed under what I have named a *discourse of good teacher*. However this term is somewhat misleading since it simplifies a complex discursive field, and, as I will show, the subjectivities of teachers were unevenly constructed by this discourse.

The normative subject positions which were most evident in the teachers in my research were 'taker of responsibility', 'knower', 'controller', 'motivator', and 'transformer'. In contrast to these normative positions there was also evidence of resistant or oppositional conduct in the subject positions of, for example, 'rejector of responsibility' and 'allower', rather than 'controller'. In addition the subject position of facilitator was evident. This is a more recent historical phenomenon in the discourses of good teacher and is considered appropriate in communicative teaching methodology. It links closely to transformer and motivator and is in some ways oppositional to controller. I will show that this identity was not strongly present in the teachers in my study and will argue for a variety of causal factors including gender, the hegemony of other subject positions and the impact of casual employment conditions.

The subject position of teacher as 'knower' underpins conceptions of teachers' professional identities. Three types of knowing are required of teachers (Bromme, 1991 cited in Beijaard et al., 2000): 'pedagogical knowledge' which "encompasses, among other things, what is going on in students' minds, ways of communicating with and speaking about other people, and personal or private problems students have" (page 751); 'didactical knowledge' which includes knowledge of appropriate procedures or methodologies; and 'knowledge of subject matter'. Beijaard et al (2000) claim that these three types of knowledge are common conceptions, in European and Anglo-Saxon countries, of "what a teacher should know and be able to do" (Beijaard et al., 2000: 751). The pressure to 'master' these three types of knowledge contributes

to the complexity of teacher identity. I return to these notions throughout my discussion.

Clearly the subject position of knower is closely linked to responsibility and control since the teacher must be responsible for and have control over these three types of knowledge. The subject position of 'responsible teacher' then, refers to teachers taking responsibility for outcomes; that is, the success or failure of students. This is linked to a responsibility for classroom teaching materials and methodology, and for their own level of expertise in the field since these contribute to outcomes. In this particular site, the amount of independence given to teachers was high<sup>31</sup>. There was neither a set course textbook nor a prescriptive syllabus. Teaching materials were chosen or designed by teachers themselves. No in-servicing or updating of skills and knowledge was provided by this institution. The intersection of these discourses meant that the subject position of responsible teacher referenced an independently responsible teacher. The production of teachers as independently responsible was an important aspect of the discourses of good teacher in this site.

The subject position of teacher as 'controller' refers to the teacher's belief that she should be in control of the class and what takes place in it. This subject position is implicitly linked to teacher as knower and as responsible since if a teacher has taken responsibility for the class and therefore has some knowledge or opinion about what should be occurring in it, then she must have control of the class in order to carry this out. Having control is commonly associated with notions of good teaching since it indicates that the teacher is achieving her or his objectives. As discussed in *Chapter 5*, the notion of a noisy classroom being a good classroom is ultimately an aspect of the subject position of teacher as

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<sup>31</sup> The characteristic teaching conditions in this institution are familiar to many Australian teachers employed to teach ESL/ TESOL in some of the major teaching contexts such as TAFE (Technical and Further Education) and AMES (formerly, the Adult Migrant English Service).



controller, since interaction in the classroom is one of the things which the teacher, within the terms of this discourse, should be able to control.

Clearly these subject positions are predicated on a certain kind of identity, that of a conscious and knowing subject who is capable of rational evaluative knowledge in relation to herself, her students and her teaching. This notion of the subject runs counter to that discussed in *Chapter 2*, of a subject who is fragmented, decentred and a site of struggle. In addition, the independence required of teachers in this site presumes an individual whose identity has been formed in isolation. However, as I seek to show here, identities form in interaction.



I turn now to a discussion of statements and behaviours of teachers, students, and senior staff to elaborate the complexities of this discursive field. I focus on each teacher, interweaving comments about the production of particular subject positions in the subjectivity of each teacher. It is important to remember that although particular statements are attributed to individuals, individuals themselves are no more than the agents through which discursive formations take effect. This discussion is in no way a critique of teachers but rather an exploration of how their discursive possibilities are limited by notions of 'good'.

### **Helen**

I begin with Helen and seek to develop an understanding of the way the discourse produces Helen as responsible, controller and knower. Responsibility, particularly when shouldered by the individual, is evident in her statements. In talking about her class, Helen described the anxiety she felt before teaching it,

*So this time I thought well I've got all the materials together and it's just going to be fantastic this time... I still don't think I'm getting it right [...] and so I'm feeling just as anxious, you know, the night before, Monday night. When I go to bed I know I'm not going to sleep properly and I wake up every morning with a surge of adrenalin and butterflies in my stomach on that Tuesday morning when I come in to teach it, so it's still having that big sort of negative effect on me (iw6).*

I want to argue here that the “negative effect” is an aspect of the discourse of good teacher related to the subject position of teacher as responsible.

Helen is clearly what would be called ‘a dedicated teacher’. This is evident in the fact that, although only employed part-time, she spends a lot of her unpaid time preparing lessons in great detail.

*I'm working 2 days a week, but I prepare for 5! I come here 2 days and the other 3 or 4 days I'm at home in the study preparing, researching, thinking of ways to put it to them (iw16).*

In fact, the course coordinator, Kim, commented on Helen’s dedicated attitude to teaching.

*Someone like Helen though, she's so dedicated she's almost like a permanent in her attitude, but we're just very very very lucky to have people like that here (iw16).*

Helen’s dedication can also be seen in her detailed records of what she has taught in each class. She kept these records to support her own reflection on the classes and how they could be improved.

*I think if you're a teacher there is a certain [responsibility], you know, and I mean its- I- I should um .....yeah I mean I always um not hedge my bets but I- I'm so prepared, you know, and all my lesson notes are written up and in that folder there and, you know, I do all these things to try to- so that if anything did go wrong I can go back for myself [and check and see]. But I taught that in week one! And we did these exercises! And I did that and that! (iw16).*

The personal responsibility which Helen takes for the course, and the mastery which she assumes to be possible, are evident here. The following quotation also illustrates the extent of her sense of responsibility.

*I think that if the [assignments] were duds [...] I would feel at the end of the semester I would feel terribly, terribly responsible and I would end up thinking it's - it's my fault, I did something wrong in my teaching that these kids did not attain what they should have. I wouldn't think they were lazy, they didn't work hard enough, they... you know, I would think 'Oh God, you know, I've cocked up, I've just- I haven't done what I should have done'.. so.. (iw16).*

Indeed, the reason Helen gave for agreeing to participate in the research was her desire to gain more knowledge in order to be able to improve the way she taught the course.

Because of the difficulties she had experienced in the previous year teaching this same course, she saw her knowledge, particularly of Japanese culture, as inadequate and limited. In fact, although as previously stated in *Chapter 4*, she had 23 years of teaching experience, her actual experience with Japanese students was limited since most of her previous teaching experience had been with migrants and the proportion of Japanese migrants to Australia tends to be low. In addition this course was only the second occasion on which she had

taught international students. She thus saw my research project as offering her a solution to her lack of knowledge.

*I thought it would be useful and helpful when you get it all written for me as a teacher [...] I'm always very interested in research and what I can get out of it myself [...] You know, I want to know!! I want to know!!*  
(iw16)

Helen's comment here, "*I want to know!*", indicates the way knowing underpins the subject position of responsible teacher. If Helen can know more, she feels, she will be able to perform better as a teacher.

Considering Helen's commitment to knowing and the responsibility she takes for her classes, it is clearly possible here to see Helen as a dedicated teacher who seeks to take responsibility for her classes. Additionally, as one who accepts the idea of reflecting on her own practice for ongoing input into her understandings of teaching, she identifies with Schön's (1987) discourse of reflective practitioner. In this sense, and like the other teachers in my research, she has identified with these aspects of the discourse of good teacher; she has accepted these behaviours and feelings as part of the norms of teaching.

Nevertheless a strong identification with this subject position creates a great deal of stress, as indicated above, producing Helen as a site of struggle in which her sense of responsibility – the discourse of good teacher – clashes with the impossibility of mastery. This strong identification also limits her to certain kinds of practices. In order to demonstrate this, I want to turn to the variety of ways Helen's identification with the discourse of good teacher manifests in her teaching. I have shown how her identification with the subject position of responsible is experienced as a burden or pressure. I turn now to another subject position within the discourse of good teacher: teacher as controller. This supports Helen's identification with the norm of teacher as responsible since a

responsible teacher has control of the class and of what she is teaching. In fact, I argue, Helen identifies strongly with the subject position of teacher as controller.

In my classroom recordings and observations, which cover 50% of Helen's classes, I noted that throughout the semester she rarely relinquishes the floor to student-student dialogue. This occurs in spite of the fact that, as a dedicated and informed language teacher, Helen is aware of the subject position of facilitator which, I would claim, at this time in history is a recognised practice for a professional language teacher; that is, she believes in the limitations of teacher-talk and the benefits of group interaction. She acknowledges the appropriateness of student-to-student interaction when she states:

*I think too [in] the early stages of [the course], I know I'm awfully teacher-speak because I've got to tell them stuff, I've got to explain things, but later on it gets more groupy and they're talking (iw16).*

In fact, she produces two characteristic types of practice where the subject position of teacher as controller intersects with the subject position of teacher as responsible. Either she sets up situations where one student reports for an extended period during which Helen controls the direction of talk by monitoring the students' oral reports with frequent glosses, warnings or exhortations. Or, she produces long stretches of talk with little opportunity for students to participate or respond.

Indeed, Noboru commented on the difficulties he experienced in participating.

*Sometimes some teacher don't- wouldn't give us to speak when she very excited [laughs].[...] [Helen] give us the chance[to speak] but we are not so fluent with our- once we start speak we have to stop sentence to think*

*what next- what I have to say next and when I start to speak again she give me a lot of sentences rr rr rr.... ...(iw16).*

Indeed, Dominique commented about the Japanese students in Helen's class that, "*she doesn't give a chance for them to express themselves so we don't know if they've got ideas and opinions*" (iw10).

Not uncommonly, this dominance of speaking time is seen as normative behaviour for teachers - as a "legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge" (Foucault, 1977b: 199) - and in fact, Rie commented on the relationship between Helen's speech and 'professor' quality in an email to me several months after the end of the research project.

*I think when Helen starts to explain, her atmosphere becomes very "professor", I mean she explain in her speed (ew26).*

During the stretches of her own talk, and during the student reports, Helen does make explicit calls to other students to participate, however the calls are rarely accompanied by enough pause time for anyone else to enter into the flow of her talk, usually between 2 - 4 seconds; for example, she says

*Any other questions you want to ask Yoko about what she saw or if you would want to know if you were doing that observation? [four second pause] Okay thanks Yoko (cHw2).*

This strategy does indicate an awareness of the value of eliciting student comments, however the lack of pause time means that during Helen's talk or during any particular student's extended verbal report, she is not successful in eliciting comment. As a result, the other students are excluded from verbal participation for extended periods. This aspect of her teaching practices reflects Breen's comment that classroom life "requires that many learners spend

surprising amounts of time doing little, whilst a teacher spends equally surprising amounts of time trying to do too much" (Breen, 1985: 149).

Related to the amount and quality of teacher-talk, is the fact that Helen tends to rush through her lessons, presumably manifesting her anxieties about bringing the students to achievement of their task. Thus, although she regularly engages students in casual conversation in relation to external activities or aspects of their lives, these conversations are marked by abrupt endings which contradict the implied friendliness. This, I would suggest, is one of the factors contributing to some student understandings of Helen as not 'genuine', and indicates a concern with authenticity expressed by some students.

Additionally, in relation to classroom tasks, while the rationale for the activities is highly appropriate, their original purpose and the expectations they set up in students is often lost in Helen's haste to move on to what she obviously considers to be the main goal of the class. This has been referred to elsewhere as "the racing syndrome" (Oxford, 2001: 100). Thus for example, in an information gap activity, two students, Dominique and Antonio, were required to exchange information in order to complete a map under the gaze of a third student who had been designated to observe their body language. However, Helen allowed no time for the two students to see how well they had achieved the task. As a result, while the student who had observed, Noriko, was preparing to report on her observations, the students who had done the activity continued to interact, in French, in relation to the unfinished task.

*Helen:* [briskly] "Okay well done! ...

*Helen:* What did you | notice?' [to Noriko]

*Antonio:* | Phough [...]

*Helen:* | Last week umm [we had]

*Antonio: | Very [..they're sure..]*

*Helen: | All Japanese I think, all Japanese, so now you observe these French students*

*Antonio: | Moi j'arrive pas. Regarde! [I can't do it. Look!]*

*Noriko: [laughs]*

*Helen: What did you notice. How did they-? What techniques? What strategies did they use?*

*Noriko: Mmmm*

*Dominique: Plus du tout [Nothing else]*

*Antonio: Ouais. Ouais. Tu vois c'était chaud d'écrire au milieu du truc. [Yeh yeh. It was cool to write it in the middle of the thing.]*

*Helen: Listen to us analyse, we're going to analyse you (cHw7).*

In fact these practices are understood by students to imply a lack of faith in their capability and lack of interest in their ideas.

Thus Dominique commented,

*I think she just wants us to um to do something very simple and don't think too much, just do something like that, I think she's very- uh she tries to be very maternal, you know, and she treats us like child and I don't think she really fully understood that we could have like um um um ideas and opinions, you know, a bit different than what she wants us to do ... (iw10).*

Other students also commented that they felt bored in class.



*I'm not interested in [that course] [...] so maybe sometime I feel little bit boring- boring- I'm bored [..].it's not for my interesting. Just I have to do that so I do (Rie iw9),*

*Very boring and I don't like. Mmmmm so I don't like Tuesday (Tomoko iw9).*

In fact, Tomoko, in an earlier interview, had referred to a feeling of anxiety about the Tuesday class.

*Yeah before Tuesday I- before that class I'm very I'm very de- not bit dep- feel uneasy or depressed (iw2).*

Interestingly, this feeling mirrors Helen's anxiety about teaching the same class, mentioned earlier.

Thus, in my observations of the classes in all weeks I noted indications of student boredom during the report sessions. Dominique and Sai'da, and to a lesser extent, Antonio, were observed sitting with arms folded, clicking pens, staring blankly at the papers in front of them, gazing vacantly into space, and, at times, restlessly changing position or looking towards me. Dominique left the room on average twice per class to go to the toilet<sup>32</sup>. In my observation notes for *Week 7*, I made the following comment:

*Antonio tries to kill a mosquito. Dominique rolls her eyes, gives a slight shake of head. Noriko is still soldiering on (fHw7).*

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<sup>32</sup> Classes were three hours duration with a mid-point break of around 20-30 minutes.

I mention this conduct because, in my observations, it was particularly this kind of conduct which teachers chose to interpret as a clash between the Japanese and the Europeans rather than as a reflection on their own teaching practices.

For Helen, the pressure for the teacher to be the one who knows and to be the one in control, I am suggesting, were subject positions with which Helen strongly identified; that is, they operated as the techniques of the self which produced Helen as the kind of teacher she believed she ought to be.

Another aspect of control, previously discussed in *Chapter 5* in relation to Helen's inability to know the students, was the positioning of classroom furniture as a substitute for the teacher's lack of power to change the classroom atmosphere. It manifested also in her detailed instructions to students. One such instruction occurred in *Week 1*: "*Don't forget the readings extend over the page, you'll have to turn over*" (cHw1).

Such instructions were seen as patronising by some students,

*'To watch the TV you have to turn your back for your eyes to be able to watch the screen'* [mimicking teacher] *Okay! It's true! She told me that once. Okay! I know how to watch TV!*(Dominique iw15).

Helen's strong identification in the classroom with the subject positions of responsible teacher and controller meant that she resisted any identification with 'not knowing' or 'not having control'. As a result, the discursive field of good teacher limited her to certain practices in the classroom. I now want to give another example of an identification with knower/controller. Subsequently, I want to argue that there was no discursive identity available which would have allowed her to present herself as a not-knower.

This example occurred in her response to a guest speaker, Matthew, who addressed the class in *Week 2*. Matthew, as a former exchange student to Japan, had been suggested as a guest speaker by the course coordinator, Kim. As Matthew was leaving the classroom, Helen thanked him warmly.

*Thank you so much for your time. It was wonderful. Very very interesting, and enlightening (cHw2).*

However, she stated in interview with me that

*Matthew was a surprise to me [...] I didn't actually think that it was a terrifically valuable thing [...] I thought there were lots more things he could have explored. He didn't seem to understand where the questions were coming from either (iw6).*

She added later, by email, that, having Matthew as a guest speaker may have been a negative experience for the French students.

*Matthew was somewhat irrelevant to the French students [...] Consequently I wonder if that fed those students' frustration [sic] (eHw6).*

Indeed, as mentioned in *Chapter 5*, this event had indeed contributed to a negative response in the French students.

The thanks which she expresses to Matthew are, in fact, the only evaluation of Matthew's talk which Helen presents to students. The fact that she felt ambivalent about his contribution is not something she reveals to them even though she suspects that his talk may have 'fed their frustrations'. Her only comment to the class once Matthew has gone does not indicate anything of her own response:

*Once Matthew went did you suddenly think 'Oh I wish I'd asked...!' You didn't have any feelings like that? (cHw2)*

This complicity with an event – Matthew's talk – of which she is herself critical, illustrates the constraints on Helen to present to the students as a knower. She felt free neither to show that she did not know what Matthew would produce nor to criticise what he produced. This contrasts with her comment to me in interview in which the identity of not-knower is available "*I want to know!*" and is an example of how identities are produced in interaction. With students, she is produced as 'knower', with me, the researcher, as 'not knower'. This, I am suggesting, relates to differences in the social relations of power. As discussed in *Chapter 4*, seeing me cry altered Helen's relationship with me, and positioned me in a way that somewhat diminished the imbalance of power between us.

In fact, a number of students made critical comments about Matthew. Such comments included the fact that his information was no longer correct, he was patronising and inauthentic. Thus Yoko commented that his information was perhaps out of date.

*He went to Japan maybe 10 years so getting changed. Sometimes not right (iw2).*

And, in relation to comments about feeling patronised, Dominique stated:

*It's like when Matthew came, do you remember? It was just like 'Oh it might be the first time you travelled.' No! I mean I'm 22. Um I've travelled! They are too – well- it's- you know, its also common in the university that they are too paternalist (iw3).*

In the same interview Dominique commented that Matthew was “squeaky clean” to the point of inauthenticity.

*You could reckon that he was doing marketing, you know, he was a marketing boy, like yeah say squeaky clean, good presentation, like um he obviously did the seminar presentation courses, you know, like looking at everyone, and it was so unnatural (iw3)*

In addition, Matthew expressed many stereotypical and contradictory views of Japan and Japanese culture. For example:

*I think Australian kids around 15, 16 seem to be a lot more mature than Japanese students of the same age and probably experienced a few different things umm [...] at 16 when I was staying with my homestay family [in Japan] all I wanted to do was go with my money and buy beer and cigarettes from the vending machine because in Australia you couldn't [...] I couldn't believe that the Japanese kids at 16 or 17, they didn't want to go out and buy cigarettes and alcohol from the vending machine (cHw2).*

There are strong arguments that teachers not be complicit with certain practices in classrooms and indeed Matthew's comments provided, among other things, an opportunity for a discussion of stereotyping. However, it appears that the production of Helen as good teacher functioned as a molarised coding which constrained her practices and limited her from 'going with the flow' of classroom life that day. I see in this event an instance of the way pedagogical practices in the classroom could emerge from within the classroom site itself; they are immanent to classroom life. However, molarised identities and the complexities of the 'juggling act' required of teachers seem to preclude the pedagogical potential of thinking in terms of immanence for some teachers. I

will discuss in *Chapter 7* the way teachers' molarised practices also interrupt possible student connections in the classroom.



The strength of Helen's identification with the subject positions of responsible, controller and knower, and the unavailability to her of a subject position such as facilitator problematise the notion of agency. They necessitate a questioning of the factors which cause an individual to take up some identities rather than others and indicate that it is not a matter of 'seizing agency' (McKay & Wong, 1996) but rather of acknowledging the molarising power of discourse.

One material factor contributing to Helen's strong identification with the discourse of good teacher can possibly be found in the conditions of Helen's employment, as having been employed as a casual for her entire teaching career of 23 years, and in her self-doubt due to this and a qualification she feels is outdated.

As previously stated, educational institutions in general are prime sites for the perpetuation of discursive practices which produce particular subjectivities. Thus, as with the discourse of cultural identity, the discourse of good teacher can also be seen to be operating in institutional practices. One way this occurs is in a complex alignment of 'good' with permanency, and in the relationship of this with the production of teachers as independently responsible for their own knowledge.

As stated in *Chapter 4*, whereas the only participants in my research to have full-time permanent positions were the two senior staff members, Max and Kim, all the teachers on the course, like many ESL teachers the world over (Johnston, 1997), were employed as casual staff. This impacted on the teachers

in different ways. In the case of Helen, it accentuated her sense of responsibility in response to a lack of confidence.

*I guess some little element still remains with me that I've gotta- I've gotta have everything covered, all bases must be covered because I have to prove that I'm worth employing even [...] it is an insecurity thing and I'm sure it's to do with those two elements, I was telling you about, casualisation, constant casualisation and, um, the fact that my degree is so old (iw16).*

Helen's self-doubt about her casualised status is part of a discourse which denigrates casual teachers. This can be seen in the course coordinator's statement, quoted earlier, which links dedication to permanent status and, by implication, lack of dedication to being casual.

*She's so dedicated she's almost like a permanent in her attitude (Kim iw16).*

Additionally, Helen's self-doubt was presumably fed by the previously-mentioned subject position of teacher independence. The head of the department commented:

*That is part of people's responsibility when they teach another course like that is to make sure that they're up to date and informed [about] what they're teaching, so they can't be teaching now what they were teaching six years ago, it has hopefully been updated, I know it has (Max iw16).*

In response to my question about whether she thought inservicing might be helpful for teachers, Kim, the course coordinator, commented

*Look we do it so much informally, I don't really- I think an in-service would be totally over the top and unnecessary (iw16).*

This response from the institution supports the subject position of teachers as independently responsible but effectively leaves them in a relatively isolated situation where any input is left to chance. Indeed, Helen had commented to me, in relation to the silences of the Japanese students, discussed in *Chapter 5*, which had been troubling her,

*I didn't realise that this was a whole cultural thing until luckily I started talking to Pauline and Margaret and reading the teachers' notes and all these things were being said, umm (iw16).*

Thus, on the one hand, the subject position of responsible and independent teacher was given support by the institution's assumption that teachers themselves were responsible for their own upskilling and inservicing. On the other hand, the necessary upskilling is almost an impossibility for casual teachers, due to objective constraints such as an obligation to take on heavy teaching loads to compensate for periods of unemployment<sup>33</sup>. Additionally, as previously mentioned, opportunities to undertake research are not available to casual teachers in Australian tertiary institutions (Zubrick et al., 2001). A situation is then produced where the casual teacher, produced in a discourse of teacher as knower, must by definition, always fall short of being 'good'.

Another key factor impacting on these teachers is gender. A number of writers (Ellsworth, 1992; Gore, 1993; Luke & Gore, 1992) have discussed the tension, experienced by women teachers, between the successful management of the democratic classroom, in other words effective facilitation, and the enactment of authority. In other words, the pressures on teachers to present themselves authoritatively, in the subject positions of knower and controller, can be seen to be more intense for women. These factors then contribute to the production of female teachers as sites of struggle.





## **Margaret**

Margaret's practices and statements gave evidence of identification with a subject position of 'responsible', 'controller', and 'knower'. The position of 'transformer' was also strongly evident.

The transformation envisaged by Margaret involved changed identities arising from the development of understandings of other cultures. Thus, she saw her role as teaching 'cultural literacy'. She defined this as

*The ability to stand outside oneself in a way and um that you only get when you leave your home and your own culture so yeah an ability to reflect um to get to see your culture...[...] and an ability to judge things and to measure things against each other and see the relativity of cultures and not to be trapped in one culture, so cultural literacy (iw0).*

In addition, in keeping with the theme of this research, she saw learning as involving changing identities and her role as facilitating that change.

*I've always thought that my overarching goal as a teacher is to enable people to access different identities and that learning is about that rather than ... [...] I thought of it in terms of people becoming rather than people um having something that you know add on it's rather a becoming and that real learning is about becoming different, rather than adding on a list of skills (iw0).*

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<sup>33</sup> I will take up this point in more detail below in relation to Pauline.

However this role of transformer was not perceived as an easy one. She referred to “*this huge task of moving them from A to Z*” (iw0). Indeed, it seems that, as with Helen, the pressure to perform as responsible teacher may itself have aggravated the situation.

Thus, Margaret revealed the high level of responsibility she felt for the results which students attained. Like Helen, she over prepared. This over-preparation, together with her heavy load of teaching responsibilities, appears to have contributed to extreme levels of exhaustion that semester. She described her teaching week as:

*An impossibly full week, if you're putting all that preparation in and then I had [other teaching responsibilities], so in fact, I mean, I reckon I'm burnt out. Oh I've already told Max that I didn't want to teach next semester (iw15).*

Also like Helen, she is continually reflecting on the classes and trying to adapt them in order to better meet the students' needs.

*I think, well, what did they not get? and who didn't get what? and who seemed to be bored with this because it was too easy? and who- you know, and how can I bridge that gap? (iw15)*

As with Helen, Margaret's sense of her inability to manage the class and the teaching in the way she would like to reveals a level of self-doubt and self-questioning. Again this indicates a self-positioning in terms of responsibility. These 'techniques of the self' operate here such that teachers see themselves as both the source of and the solution to any problems.

*One often locates a deficit in oneself and each week you're trying to compensate for something that didn't work in the previous class or that*

*could've if- you felt you'd missed out on- on some section of the class or whatever, looking for material that will...(iw15).*

However, at the same time, Margaret is aware of some of the consequences of these levels of commitment. Thinking 'too much' about what the class needs can have negative effects and be a stressful task.

*I think that's what tires me out, is readjusting week by week, what can be achieved [...] I think you can tear yourself in pieces trying to do that (iw15).*

Nevertheless, as with Helen, Margaret is strongly committed to her responsibility for the students' learning. She speaks of

*Feeling very responsible about learning taking place that's useful and interesting.. Um if I were prepared to just say 'Oh what the heck...'* (iw15).

Responsibility is linked to control in her concern to keep control of and not 'lose' the students. Thus she says,

*Yesterday I was a bit uncomfortable feeling that I was maybe losing them along the way (iw1).*

Indeed in the classroom, Margaret displayed an identification with the subject position of controller in the way that she structured her lessons and in her choice of materials. These both attempted and presumed a clear path of progress for students through a series of understandings. However, such presumptions do not accommodate the radical heterogeneity of students' goals and intentions.

One aspect of this control can be seen in Margaret's expectation that students would participate appropriately. Thus, during a period of groupwork, one group (Katsuyuki, Rie, Giovanni, Antonio) combined some on-task work with foreign language learning provided by various members of the group. I unwittingly commented on this to Margaret. My field notes read:

*Group 1 seems to be learning other languages.*

*Margaret comes up to me: "I'm letting them go much longer. It's taking longer than I thought". I said "they're on target, are they?" or something and "group 1 seems to be learning other languages".*

*Margaret goes straight over to them (fMw2).*

She attempts to draw them back to the task by reminding them that they should be focusing on English. In this exchange, she positions Antonio as the miscreant.

*Margaret: Is he distracting you?*

*Giovanni : No no*

*Antonio: We were just confronting our opinions*

*Giovanni: We want to learn Italian*

*Margaret: So you **are** distracting them, this is an English class (gMw2).*

The tape-recording of the small group shows that prior to Margaret's question, the students had in fact been addressing the task, along with the exchange of vocabulary items from Japanese and Italian. Interestingly this language exchange grew out of an earlier discussion in this group about their origins.

While Margaret's intervention would present to most teachers as a perfectly reasonable move, as a responsible attempt to control student outcomes predicated on the teacher's knowledge of what students ought to be doing.

However, not only can it not be assumed that student goals are aligned with teacher goals, but also, as I will argue further in *Chapter 7*, student concerns with identity – the need for a unified subjectivity – must be considered.

The subject position of knower of students, of pedagogue, is also evident in Margaret's practices, since she accepts that it is appropriate that she have a thorough understanding of all the students and their needs. However, she regrets a lack of time "*to get to that level and chase those needs*" (iw15).

Indeed, Margaret's concern with students' needs was the reason she gave when she decided she did not want me observing in her class again. As discussed in *Chapter 4*, Margaret had initially been reluctant that I observe at all but agreed, at the end of the first week of classes, to allow me to observe. Although a number of personal factors appeared to impact on this decision, her overt reason was in terms of her commitment to the students.

*I want to be teaching to the students only. I don't want to be distracted from what their needs are, although I say to myself 'all right you know Constance is there but she's irrelevant to the process' [...] I want to be teaching to the students only. I don't want to be distracted from what their needs are* (iw15).

However, as we have already seen in *Chapter 5*, Margaret's assumptions about the students caused her to position them in ways which she later realised were incorrect. As her misreading of the students demonstrates, the belief that students' needs can be known is misleading. This belief seems to derive in part from understandings that the goal of teaching, or an indication of a good teacher, is a "settled practice" (Louden, 1991: xi) and that this goal can be achieved when the three types of teacher knowledge are met. However, the assumption that teaching will ultimately settle down into a manageable experience, seen in Helen's comment "*that it's just going to be fantastic this time*"

(iw6), counteracts evidence from ongoing notions of teaching as struggle (see Ellis, 2001 for a study of metaphors of teaching) and from statements by all teachers in my study. My discussion here seeks to demonstrate that a settled practice cannot accommodate the complexity and fluidity of identity.

Indeed, as reiterated in the opening section of this chapter, the idea that teachers should be committed, responsible and reflective in their teaching is subject to a modernist notion of the individual who is capable of such things. I would suggest here that there are limits to the capability of any teacher to successfully take on responsibility for the level of pedagogical knowledge such as that which Helen and Margaret expect of themselves, precisely because of the multiple, fragmented and impermanent nature of subjectivity as it is produced in discourse in interaction.

Interestingly, in the case of the other two teachers, there is evidence of different kinds of identification with this particular discourse, and thus differing levels of molarisation, one difference being the absence of these levels of anxiety and stress, indicating that in terms of this discourse, Pauline and Susan were not produced in the same way. Nevertheless in Susan's case, as I discuss below, although her identification with the subject position of responsible teacher played out in ways very different to that of Helen, the consequences in the classroom were similar.



### **Susan**

Susan had had 28 years experience in teaching. In my initial observation in *Week 1*, I observed that she was a highly efficient teacher with well-planned materials which incorporated different kinds of activities. In this first class, she used group and pair work consistently, and called on a variety of different

students to answer questions. She spoke clearly and slowly, and had a sweet voice<sup>34</sup>. In the classes which I observed, she worked steadily through the materials she had developed for the classes. In my first observation, I noted that she gave “*a model lesson*” (fSw1) since she seemed well in control at all times, had plentiful material which developed along themes, and she varied the types of tasks which students were required to do.

Susan appeared to inhabit the subject position of responsible teacher with a degree of comfort not evident in Margaret or Helen. Thus, one could say that Susan did have ‘a settled practice’. As mentioned above, she was always well-prepared with a variety of tasks and she appeared able to decide, with relatively little angst, what materials to draw on in class. There were no apparent signs in her of the stresses and burdens experienced by Helen or Margaret. Susan thus appears to produce and perform the recognised practices of a good teacher in relatively uncomplexified ways.

In terms of the control aspect of the discourse of good teacher, Susan appeared to identify in some ways. Thus, I noted in my field notes in *Weeks 2 and 15*, that, like Helen, Susan’s focus on task completion meant that she made transitions which implied a relative lack of interest in what students had told or had asked her. Thus during a note-taking task on abbreviations, when Roland asked if the Simpson Desert was in Australia, she answered only “yes” before continuing to the next answer (cSw2), not responding to Roland’s desire to know more about the country. She also tended to take control of listening material, for example, preferring to give up-front glosses of new lexis rather than finding out what terms students already knew (fSw7).

On the other hand, she also maintained a more *laissez-faire* attitude to her classes. Thus although she said, halfway through the course, in relation to the

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<sup>34</sup> Student comments and mimicry support this subjective description on my part.

diversity, "I think I have to engineer a little bit yeah [...] with pair work and group work I think" (iw6), when I asked her about it after the course had finished, she said she hadn't done so.

*Constance: You said you were going to engineer it, like in terms of group work*

*Susan: I didn't really did I ?*

*Constance: I don't know because I wasn't really there*

*Susan: No I didn't. Um I didn't- I didn't do group work every week but um if it had been a real problem I would have, but I think it worked out reasonably well ... just by chance organisation... They did it themselves [...] wherever they were sitting and that sort of thing. It was probably their choice too which might have been better.... in some ways (iw16).*

In these ways then, Susan appears to walk a middle path in terms of control.

However, although her lessons appeared to me to be model lessons, they were not always positively received. Indeed, one 'complaint' which came from the French and German students was the inappropriacy of the subject matter for them because of their level of study and previous experience. I have already cited Chantal's comment about feeling as though she was in high school in Susan's class in the previous chapter. The other French students also felt the classes did not take account of their previous studies and level of knowledge.

*Sometimes its quite boring because we do things we have already done yeah like last week [...] we had to learn how to take notes, it's the 4th year of university we are doing, we are supposed to know (Antonio iw3),*

*Yeah oh I think it is insulting for us because we're suppo- um on one hand I'm thinking okay perhaps for Japanese people it's very useful because it's*



*total different alphabet and but for us I think its insulting to teach us how to abbreviate words, I mean we're supposed to be like um all 3 or 4 years at university even more like if you look Doris she's 33 (Dominique iw3).*

I referred earlier to Dominique's comment that the university was "too paternalist" (iw3). This seems to relate to discourses of maturity and infantilisation. Indeed, as the intonation of Chantal's earlier comment indicates, Susan's speaking style, including her sweet voice, possibly contributed to the students' sense of being infantilised. For Ursula too,

*I was more bored by Susan's classes [...] she always treated us like kids sometimes and it was a bit annoying (iw16).*

For these students then, identifications with a discourse of maturity which can be seen in students' statements – such as Dominique's "I mean I'm 22! Um I've travelled!" (iw3) – were challenged by the denial of maturity experienced in Susan's class. At the same time, however, the purpose of Susan's class was not clear to students. Chantal asked me in interview to explain the purpose of the classes.

*Um I don't – uh, I don't really understand what she wants us to do because, um, it's just taking notes using abbrev- abbreviations in English or? [...] um I mean, is it the way we take notes that is important? Or what we can get from the tape, for example? (iw10).*

A sense of not having their maturity recognised combined with a contradictory experience of not understanding the purpose of the classes, in conjunction with an assumption by students, discussed later, that teachers should be 'knowers', presumably contributed to the negative responses discussed above and to the students' interchanges in French during classes. These comments included "J'ai envie de Prozac, je te jure" [I need Prozac, I swear], "J'en peux plus, uh" [I can't

take any more, you know], "*Quelle heure il est?*" [What time is it?] (cSw2). These asides were recorded during group work, but were audible neither to the teacher nor to the researcher at the time.

For the Japanese students, a lack of clarity about the purpose of the classes was also not an uncommon experience. Katsuyuki commented that Susan's classes were "*kind of meaningless*" (iw6). When I asked if he would use the abbreviations Susan was teaching he confirmed his sense of the irrelevance of the work,

*No, I would never use it and also we listened to the conversation of Aborigine on the tape. Maybe I will never have opportunity to speak to Aborigine people so I think kind of meaningless... (iw6)*

While the other Japanese students often stated that they found the classes "boring" - "*sometimes boring*" (Tomoko iw9 and Noriko iw6), and "*I felt bored*" (Yoko iw6), they were very aware of the dissatisfaction of the French students with the classes, and it may have been the case that that dissatisfaction had a spin-off effect.

*Actually I think French students feel more bored because they sometimes say boring and they are bored just after class or in the class (Yoko iw6).*

However, where the note taking skills taught by Susan were viewed as providing something some Japanese students had not been aware of, the listening texts were sometimes too difficult as Katsuyuki's comment above also implies. Here Yoko comments on her experience.

*During class when I saw those European students they already know abbreviations or note taking skills, I was surprised to know they know abbreviations but only Japanese students didn't know that so*

*sometimes I feel ...[long pause] ... for example, abbreviations, importance of body language or different intonation, volume of voice, pitch or something, those things- I didn't know those things before so I feel it quite useful but sometimes just listening...um actually the last class is uh we had uh aboriginal story but I didn't understand almost all because I- it not clear and too fast so that class was- I felt bored and it's too difficult for me (iw6).*

Indeed, Susan's self-assessment was that she taught to the middle of the group,

*I probably teach to the middle um because generally the majority of students lie in the middle, you've always got someone either- either end (iw16).*

However, only Noboru, who was viewed by all teachers as one of the two weakest students, found Susan's classes a positive experience

*Most of all student don't like Susan, I think for me Susan is good [...] I don't know [why] [laughs] what can I say? ... .. it's very difficult (iw16).*

Other mismatches were also evident in Susan's understanding of students' motivations and students' comments. Chapter 5 described Susan's misperception of Giovanni's attitude to learning English. In addition, during a discussion about her belief that the students only needed to be able to survive whilst in Australia, she stated that Giovanni had a big social life although he did not have the language for it, whereas Noboru did not appear to need or want to have the language which would have allowed a big social life.

*Well I think Giovanni is probably the best example of that, you know, he's- he's not able to cope very well in the class [...] um but he's got a big social*

*life and I think, you know, he's coping quite well with that um just picking up what he needs for social interaction [...] Well survival, you know, depends what- what they get involved in um I think- I was thinking about language and, you know, if they've got a big social life then they've got to have the language for that but people like Noboru, who I don't think has got a big social life, doesn't need- you know, hasn't needed that so much but needs to be able to um.. to survive in the class-[..] he perhaps doesn't need the language for social interactions because he hasn't placed himself in that position (iw16).*

This perception of Noboru's motivation contrasts sharply with the intensity and focus of Noboru's search for friends. In the first interview Noboru expressed to me his keen desire to make connections and friendships: *"my time is limited so.. I have to try to make a friend with some[one from] other country"* (iw2) and some strategies to achieve this,

*I think I have to talk classmate and if I try to- I plan to exchange language. Matthew says that [this university] has a opportunity to exchange [language with] some students, I plan to join and..... I'd like I try to enter some clubs (iw2).*

In the second interview he had activated these strategies and referred to his choice to join a scuba diving class different from the one which all the other Japanese students had joined, specifically in order to make friends

*I have a only three [friends] but I have three international students umm I met at uh scuba diving course held by university union..my friend in my class, Japanese, also went to the class but I took another.. [...] and I'm the only Japanese in ten students (iw9).*

Another mismatch could be seen between Susan's stated goals and students' perceptions of her goals. In relation to the excursions course, *Australia in context*, she stated that her main goal was to inspire in students an interest in Australia and Australian culture.

*What I really want the students to do is to get to like the culture a bit and to be motivated to learn the language, I mean that's the ultimate goal (iw0).*

She suggested that this could be achieved in part through her own enthusiasm.

*Susan: I guess instilling them too with my love of the country and what we've got here*

*Constance: Yeh, right.*

*Susan: Try and pass that on*

*Constance: How?*

*Susan: Umm I don't know I guess just to be enthusiastic about things we do and um ....present them in an interesting way (iw6).*

However, Rie commented on Susan's apparent lack of interest in participating in the excursions in the AC class and on the teachers' preferences for coffee rather than accompanying the students on the tours.

*Rie: When we out on Monday oh Susan didn't- mm.. Kim was always join the- join the some tour guide and asked some questions but Susan just stand apart not join just follow*

*Constance: Right right right mm*

*Rie: This is a different between Susan and Kim, and also they like to have a coffee [laugh] after the class or during we ha- Japanese students had tour guide, they like to have a coffee [laugh] "coffee time!" [mimics teacher] (iw16).*

Of the four teachers, Susan appeared to be the one with the most 'settled' practice. However, as we have seen, apart from Noboru, her practice did not seem to meet students' needs or interests. Interestingly, Louden notes that experienced teachers appear to be less prone to major identity shifts (1991). His comment goes some way to explaining the discrepancies between the students' comments and my first positive assessment of Susan's teaching practices. In terms of my argument here, Susan's settled practice reflects a molarised identity and may be evidence of an inability to accommodate multiplicity and fragmentation in her own and other subjectivities.



### **Pauline**

In Pauline's case, the impact of casualisation and of other discourses intersected with the discourse of good teacher to produce yet another set of practices. Although she identified strongly with the aspect of teacher as knower, she was less strongly identified with the aspects of teacher as controller or as responsible. Her personal situation and the effects of casualisation, I would suggest, created a kind of resistant discourse in her which, while acknowledging a discourse of good teacher, was expressed in a relatively untroubled, *laissez-faire* attitude which contrasted sharply with the anxieties experienced by Helen or Margaret. Rather than 'controller', much of Pauline's teaching fitted with the subject position 'allower', and her attitude to responsibility was tempered by the pragmatic stance of a survivor.

As a single mother with two dependent children, Pauline's financial situation was less secure than the other teachers who had partners and no dependent children. Pauline made frequent references to the pressures arising from casualisation:

*Well you know when you you've been living on an overdraft and a credit card for four months... (iw0),*

*You're only really getting- uh you've got an- almost 5 months without regular income, three of those no income at all (iw10).*

She also commented that the amount of work required of a casual to make an adequate income created a heavy teaching load.

*For someone like me who's dependent on my living from a casualised academic teaching position, I have to teach much more than a full-time academic would have to teach in order to make a living income which is actually half of what a full-time salary would be, so it makes a lot of demands on teaching preparation (iw10).*

In addition, she felt that the variety of teaching at this institution required skills in a wide range of areas and disciplines, thus adding more pressure.

*The trouble is I think in this- um what- the work we do here, we're really asking to be experts in a lot of different things (iw10).*

Perhaps as a result, her approach to teaching this course was pragmatic.

*There's no sort of research basis to it, it's entirely trial and error, and intuitive and 'oh that looks a good idea! I'll try that!' and if it works, 'oh that's good' and I'll do it for a while and then I'll chuck it (iw15).*

Within the constraints provided by her casualised status and family pressures, there was also some wish to improve what she was doing in her teaching, her didactic and subject matter knowledge.

*Well if I read a bit more up on techniques and knew a bit more about the subject, [...] um if I had a bit more time um preparation time, I might do different things but I do gradually find things at work and try them (iw10).*

Indeed, this at times amounted to an expression of guilt demonstrating an awareness of the availability of this subject position of responsible teacher. Thus she did not regard herself as being a 'good' teacher. In fact, she used herself as an example of what not to do.

*I think teaching probably not the way I am, if I think- if- I respect those people who are very strict task masters and um set very high standards (iw15).*

But she was pragmatic about this also, since her initial training was not in ESL, but in literature.

*I mean where's my expertise? I'm a literature academic, that's where I have almost my whole degrees, my honours, my everything, is in literature (iw15).*

In fact, she had other subject positions with which she could identify, linked to activities in politics and acting. She states,

*I move in lots of different places, circles, areas of life. Standing up in front of a group of students is I know where I am on the whole pretty well at ease. I could match most people. That's what I feel to be honest (iw5).*

I am suggesting here, as McKay & Wong do (1996) that due to this range of available subject positions other options than a close identification with 'good' teacher were available to Pauline. She was free to choose a discourse of, say,



actor in order to reject some aspects of the subject position of teacher as responsible and controller. Indeed, several students commented on her dynamism in classes, and she referred to her teaching style as

*A more performance oriented style of teaching than perhaps what might be more politically correct or educational or pedagogically correct, [than] that student outcome-centred style of teaching (iw15).*

The production of Pauline's subjectivity, then, appeared to derive from discourses other than that of responsible and controlling teacher, and were produced in conjunction with a low-key resentment regarding conditions for casual teachers. At the same time, she was aware of the discourse of good teacher but did not believe she performed it.

On the other hand, the subject position of teacher as knower was clearly evident in her classroom interactions with students. One of Pauline's teaching subjects, as mentioned above, was pronunciation. In my classroom observations, I was normally impressed by her relaxed ease and apparent control of her teaching material. For one task, however, I privately questioned the demands she was making of students when she asked them to listen to their own pronunciation on tape and self-correct, with the aid of a partner often from the same language background.

Indeed a number of students, both in class and in interviews were dissatisfied with this activity. Thus Rie, in interview, expressed her disagreement with the value of this activity and her desire for individual attention to pronunciation difficulties.

*In the pronunciation class I want to prono- I want to check my pronunciation each by each. Just practised in pairs, students with students, so I can't- I couldn't advise, like for example that- uh Sai'da, I*

*think she has a French- French um pronunciation, maybe different to I have Japanese pronuncia- Japanese particular pronunciation problems but I can't- I couldn't say what is wrong mm nn..so I- I wanted Paula [sic] to advise each by each [...] each student, yah (iw16).*

Indeed, Katsuyuki and Noboru struggled with this activity and attempted unsuccessfully to get more assistance in class from Pauline.

*Pauline : Okay so... if.. have- you've been able to fill this in?*

*Katsuyuki: No. ... It's hard for me to..*

*Pauline: To know.*

*Katsuyuki: To know yuh*

*Pauline: Okay so is it the vocabulary?*

*Katsuyuki: Uhm /?*

*Pauline: So have you heard yourself here?*

*Katsuyuki: Yes. But ... I don't know... Whether I can do it or not. I can't judge.*

*Pauline: You can't hear it*

*Noboru: Could you make a program with consonants?*

*Pauline: Yes well we'll do all that. Okay well this is what I want to know. I want to get a bit of feedback. Where you feel your weaknesses are.*

*Katsuyuki: Mm*

*Pauline: See, what we do, when we do the course, I listen to you all. I say you need to practise this or you need to practise that.*

*[...]*

*Noboru: What are we supposed to [make]?*

*Pauline: I want you to hear if you can work out where your mistakes are.*

*Noboru: You **show** my mistakes. You mean, **you** show my mistakes.*

*Pauline: You mean you want me to show you your mistakes? Yes but I want you to listen to see if you can hear them.*

*Noboru: Okay*

*Pauline: Where you think when you listen here you're not pronouncing them quite the right way. See, see. [She leaves briefly].*

*[...]*

*Pauline: Now the idea of this is that you're trying to help each other. He's trying to help you and you're trying to help him. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in your pronunciation.*

*Noboru [?]: Okay.*

Following this they commented about their difficulties to each other in Japanese as indicated in the extract below.

*Katsuyuki: わかんない。 [I don't get it]*

*Noboru: わかんないよな [I don't get it either]*

*Katsuyuki: 全然わかんない [I really don't get it]*

*Noboru: おれも [so as I..]*

*Katsuyuki: ぽぽぽって[...] [It's like papapapapapa [...]]*  
*[They listen again].*

*Katsuyuki: わからず [I don't get it!]*

*Noboru: んー [Mm]*

*Katsuyuki: [laughs] あはは わかんない [I don't get it!]*

*[Sound of tape rewinding. They listen again.]*

*Katsuyuki: わかる？何がわるいのかわかんねえ。 [Do you get it? I don't get what's bad.] (cPw2)*

In this extract, the students make numerous attempts to get more help with the task: “It's hard for me to know”, “I can't judge”, “**You** show my mistakes” and “Could you make a program with consonants?” However Pauline consistently calls on a subject position of teacher as knower: “See, what we do, when we do the course, I listen to you all. I say you need to practise this or you need to practise that”. The linguistic choices of “I want you to...” in “I want you to hear-” and “I want

*you to listen-*“ and of the use of the imperative in *“Identify the strengths and weaknesses..”* supports the projection of an identity of confident knower.

As previously mentioned, Pauline’s presentation of the pronunciation materials, and the clear and modulated tone in which she spoke were impressive. I had failed to take in the full import, in our second interview in *Week 10*, of the following comment.

*I’ve only just sort of picked up what I can of pronunciation from the materials I’ve got, um if I had a bit more time um preparation time, I might do different things but I do gradually find things at work and try them... so I don’t feel terribly expert in it (iw10).*

And her comment in the final interview where she says

*But I have no idea how you teach pronunciation, I’ve never read anything about it (iw15).*

Again the lack of institutional support for teachers’ skills and knowledge, and the concomitant assumption that casual teachers have the time and resources to upskill, are issues. As Pauline noted, teachers are constantly required to teach in new areas without training. Rather than acknowledging the demands of families and heavy teaching loads which compensate for periods of unemployment, teachers are expected to ‘know’ everything and to be amenable to teach in new areas at short notice.

In terms of the subject matter of pronunciation then, Pauline’s identification with knower can be seen to be produced by the discourse of a good teacher. And as with Helen, the identification with this subject position which Pauline presents to the students is thus not the one she presents to me.

However, in terms of the students, while some were dissatisfied with some aspects of the pronunciation course, on the whole Pauline's classes were among the best received. This was attributed at times to her dynamism, and at times to her subject matter knowledge in other areas, discussed below. Yet, in terms of pedagogic knowledge, in answer to a question from me about what she felt she needed to know about students in order to teach adequately, Pauline replied candidly,

*Oh well I don't really need to know a lot, I don't see- I'm not a- I don't need to know a lot about the students in any kind of personal way at all, the personalities or- I mean basically, where they come from, how good their English is, and away we go (iw10).*

In an earlier interview she had commented in a similar way about the irrelevance of the need to know much about student identity.

*I mean it doesn't matter if you're sort of, you know, transvestite or whatever you are (iw0).*

In relation to her teaching she stated

*[It's] always got to be a little bit hit and- well, hit and miss, or just pitch somewhere round about more common (iw10).*

Her view seems to undermine a modernist approach which seeks to master knowledge of students' needs, but is completely consistent with a view which acknowledges multiplicity and the impossibility of mastery.

What is interesting is students' responses to these differing practices. Pauline as knower of pronunciation was a subject position about which some students were implicitly critical. However, as a knower of Australian culture, and as

dynamic, Pauline received high praise. Thus, Sai'da's negative feelings about the pronunciation did not interfere with the fact that, for her, Pauline was the only teacher to meet her expectations that the course would provide information about Australia.

*On pronunciation, the teacher is very interesting when we are not studying pronunciation. She is the only teacher who really learn us about the Australian culture. She gave us some cultural historical facts of Australia and that's really good. She's the only one who did that (iw9).*

I have already cited, in *Chapter 5*, Dominique's dissatisfactions with the courses generally. Here Pauline is presented as one of the few valuable things she experienced.

*Actually I'm- I'm uh if I've got to make a statement about the [...] courses I'm really disappointed because I haven't learnt not many things uh only when we talked about like the Aboriginals with Paula and uh I think the only class which was a bit like Uum uh a a uh that taught you things were Paula's classes um and that's all! I mean for the rest I haven't learnt anything!! which is amazing! (iw15)*

Similarly Roland found Pauline's classes particularly interesting, citing her as his favourite teacher.

*Roland: Pauline is the better I think*

*Constance: The best?*

*Roland: The best of the three (?) Yeah the best because um I think she has some experience in the domain of speaking because I think she was at the council or she wants to be at the council of the city I don't know. Runs for parliament govenements (sic) government yeah she is*

*dynamic and the course anyway is dynamic because it is pronunciation so it's the two main elements that make the course really interesting (iw12).*

Rie also commented that she enjoyed Pauline's classes because

*Pauline tried to [make the] class more cheerful and rhythmical (iw16).*

Pauline's approach here contrasts interestingly with that of a participant in research by Duff and Uchida (1997). In that research, Carol had a "distaste for and fear of discussing - and thereby possibly imposing - her personal sociopolitical and cultural beliefs on others [which] prevented her from being as close and accessible to her students as she - and they - might have wished" (Duff & Uchida, 1997: 463). Pauline's willingness to discuss these issues can be seen here to make her classes more interesting for most students even though this occurs without her developing personal relationships with them.

Pauline thus provides another variation in 'successful molarisation' and her case demonstrates the transitory stability of discourses. She can be seen to draw both on well established identifications with politician and actor subject positions for her teaching, and on a pragmatic rejection of the subject positions of responsible and controller. Nevertheless she remains 'accessible'. In terms of Deleuze and Guattari's notions of connection and affect, Pauline's dynamism and knowledge provide connective possibilities for students which they perceive as augmentative of their being. These types of connections are perceived as enabling of becoming, a notion which I take up in the next chapter.

♦

### **Student perceptions of good teachers**

In relation to the teacher as the one who is supposed to know, students also expected teachers to inhabit this subject position. In other words, students themselves positioned teachers within the discourse. In class in *Week 14* the following exchange occurred between Helen and Sai'da:

Sai'da: *I don't know how to build my presentation on that.*

Helen: *I don't either [laughs] I'm your teacher. I'm supposed to. [She flops to the desk, laying her head on the table in mock despair] (cHw14).*

On the one hand, Helen here reveals some kind of pressure to be the one who knows, albeit in a self-mocking way. On the other hand, Sai'da's comment to me in interview, reveals her expectation that teachers will conform to this subject position. She is particularly pleased that I was present to 'witness' this event because of her belief, expressed to me elsewhere, that Helen was not competent to teach the course.

*I felt very ill at ease for her last week and you were there, you remember? When I ask her a question like simple words, like I just- I just told her 'you wrote me down one of your comments- were- was- how do you- how will you build a presentation on that?' and [I] just ask her the same question she ask me and she just- she was very dis- she was like 'I don't know I'm supposed to know. I'm teacher' and I loved this sentence especially because you were there. I love this sentence (iw15).*

Sai'da's attitude thus supports the production of teachers as knowers.

*Um um yeah I think frankly I think she's- I mean I'm not a teacher I'm not supposed to know what I have to do I'm just student here to learn so she- she should have told us (iw15).*



Dominique too, is prepared to recognise the authority of teachers. Thus when Dominique complained to me about Susan's class, and I suggested she speak to Susan about it, Dominique's response - that she would "get in trouble" - indicated the powerlessness which marks student positioning in education systems.

*Constance: So would you consider talking to the teacher about it?*

*Dominique: No no no because um because it's a French thing you just say 'oh I don't care' [laugh] [...]*

*Constance: So you wouldn't go and talk to the teacher and say look this is-*

*Dominique: No what do you want to say?.. um.. I don't know if you can do that in Australia but in France you cannot go and say 'Oh you know your class is boring and I think its insulting and-' I think you **could** do that in Australia, I'm sure it's- yah- but um that's not something we could- we could do in France you know or you- you will get in trouble, and I don't want to be mean with her because, you know, she's nice, its not her fault her class is boring so .... (iw3).*

In keeping with the notion that education is about learning how to 'become subject to', it is not surprising that students had conceptions of teachers as authority figures with knowledge and control. Indeed students' inability to know what teachers wanted, and their desire to know so that they can reproduce what is required links to Pratt's notion of "discourses which legitimate bourgeois authority" (1992: 6). Numerous times in interview, students tried to get me to clarify what the teachers wanted from them.

Interestingly, however, some other student conceptions of good and adequate teachers were not, in this site, the discourse of good teacher as performed by the teachers here. Dominique felt Helen was "too rigid" (iw10). Sai'da refers, in the

following quote, to Helen's behaviour as not natural, and to Helen's "other side" which was not the "teacher side".

*Sai'da: This teacher from this morning, I'm very bad at- yeah can't remember the name of people... Helen. Last week she surprised me because she had many jokes. So I've noticed that all of them have two sides - teacher side and the other side*

*Constance: Is that different for teachers in France?*

*Sai'da: Well it's not so relevant because they are not all so serious with their job. In France they behave more naturally in class (iw9).*

We have seen comments from Rie which describe teachers according to their 'teacherliness': Susan, "the most like teacher (iw1) and Helen, "her atmosphere becomes very 'professor' " (ew26). Rie was quite clear about what kind of teacher she preferred

*Rie: The ideal teacher teach me [...] not only the text book, their personal uh(?) experiment(?) experiment(?)*

*Constance: Experience?*

*Rie: Experience I want- because during the class if the teacher explains a sentence from the books, it's very boring, and the- if the teacher said some their opinion or their personal experience, the student freak out (?) - freak out (?) the ear*

*Constance: Flick up? Ah.. pricks up?*

*Rie: Pricks up the ears, yah, and try to listen and focus on their- yeah- no...willing to listen more but, yeah, I think it is a good attractive point to the teachers (iw9).*

Such comments from students referring to the teacher's 'other' side, naturalness, and personal experiences seem to me to imply a desire for the demonstration by teachers of subject positions different from, or at least in

addition to, those with which teachers tended to identify. Such subject positions relate primarily to the pedagogic type of knowledge as defined by Beijaard as including “a teacher’s involvement in or engagement with students” (2000: 751). I will take up this point in the next chapter in relation to connections and interactions.

I turn briefly now to discourses of good students in the perceptions of both teachers and students.

### *Section c: Discourses of the good student*

Like the discourse of cultural identity, discussed in *Chapter 5*, the discourse of good student provides subject positions for students. The discourse of cultural identity operated through students, in their self positioning, as well as in teachers’ positioning of students. The discourse of good student on the other hand, although recognised by all participants, was not generally something with which students tended to identify themselves. One reason, therefore, for including this discourse in this chapter on the production of teacher identities is that, as far as my research was concerned, there was a mismatch between the way teachers positioned students; that is, in the assumptions which teachers held about appropriate student conduct, and the assumptions which students held about their own conduct.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there is an assumption, made from a teaching and institutional point of view, that students want to be in the educational setting and will ‘play the game’ in expected ways. Thus we have no concept of ‘studenting’; the notion of ‘teaching’ conventionally dominates the teaching-learning situation (Pratt, 1991)<sup>35</sup>. In fact, like Thesen’s research which

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<sup>35</sup> As previously cited, *Chapter 2*, Pratt comments (1991:38) “Teacher-pupil language, for example, tends to be described almost entirely from the point of view of the teacher and

found little evidence of the “assumptions that learners are reaching for ‘mainstream’ culture” (1997: 488), many of the students in my research appeared to regard the classroom as a temporary way station which they accepted an obligation to pass through, with relatively little investment.

What seems to be forgotten in the assumptions that students are part of the deal of education is that students are obliged to attend educational institutions. It does not necessarily follow that they are happy about it or that there is any investment in what takes place there. Many of the conclusions drawn by McKay & Wong are thus based on this erroneous assumption. Thus they suggest that a student’s “investment in English writing might have been reduced” (1996: 603) by another source of personal identity, thus assuming that there was investment in English writing in the first place. The fact that a student may ‘hate’ school and does not necessarily see its relevance is not commented upon. The student Jessica in their study writes “I hate going to school a lot [...] I hope I can grow up quickly so I can be a piano teacher or an art teacher..” (McKay & Wong, 1996: 602). This issue was also evident in my research in the views taken by some students of the classes as obligations to be paid out, and the assumptions made by students of their lack of power to shift events in the classroom.

While it might be assumed that language learning was a stated goal of many of the students, and that therefore they would ‘play the game’, in fact, this was not straightforwardly the case. Students’ reasons, as I will discuss in *Chapter 7*, for attending courses in Australia ranged from wanting to find a Caucasian boyfriend, to being ‘fed up’ with France, to needing English for work or wanting to develop a global identity. In addition, as I hope to show, having an investment in language learning in itself derives from a discourse and how that

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teaching, not from the point of view of pupils and pupiling (the word doesn’t even exist, though the thing certainly does)”.

investment plays out is a result of a complex interplay of discourses. I discuss these issues further in the next chapter.

Related to this, and as mentioned above, was students' lack of clarity about the purposes of the teaching they were undergoing. This lack of clarity often meant that they did not see the classroom as a site for language learning. I do not have space here to enter the debate on formal versus informal learning (see for example, Ellis, 1997; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992a; McGroarty, 1998; McLaughlin, 1990; Pavlenko, 1999). However, this discussion of student investment in learning might usefully contribute to that debate.

I first want to demonstrate how teachers see the teaching-learning relationship and what subject position they believe students should inhabit. Punctuality, attendance, participation and motivation are all considered important.

Thus one obvious way in which students are expected by teachers to play their part is by coming to class and being on time.

*They are very good, that's the other thing about them, they are so punctual... It's remarkable how punctual they are really, and they are all genuinely apologetic today about it (Margaret iw3)*

*They seem interested...and they all come on time which I think is important [...] So that that always pleases the lecturer when they turn up and they turn up on time (Susan iw6)*

Rie's comment illustrates the link between punctuality and teachers' conceptions of good students.

*Susan is the most like teacher. Nn she doesn't want[us] to be late, uh she doesn't want student to be late, she doesn't want student be uh go out uh go to toilet in the class or... uh its like Japanese teacher (iw16)*

In fact, Susan had stated in interview that she had “*always wanted to be a teacher*” (iw0) and in terms of discourses of a good teacher, the various aspects of the discourse as already discussed intersected to produce Susan as very conventionally teacher-like.

Indeed, if students do not come to class, they may be seen as not very committed, as Margaret’s language, quoted earlier, describing Roland’s level of participation - “*cruises in*”, “*not very vocal*”, “*doesn't engage*” (iw15) - implies. Roland, however, when I asked about absences, spoke of pressures of the heavy workload from his three mainstream courses and claimed to have had only two absences with Margaret. This was confirmed by the class roll. When I asked him about absences he replied,

*Two absences with Margaret because I have not enough time- I had not enough time to make the two assessments for Margaret.. [...] the two last one was - were at the house so yeah I have print the morning and you know the printer is very difficult ...jam and uh.. anyway I was finishing the morning my assessment because I was- and at the same time one assessment in [my Faculty course] that was really big and erh it is worth, more worth than the assessment in English so yeah I make my choice in choosing this one, yeah so I think it's two with Margaret (iw16).*

Roland’s choice here to focus on the assignment for another course can be seen as a pragmatic solution to the demands of his student life, not, as Margaret believes, a lack of commitment.

On the other hand, some students do avoid absences precisely because they do not want to be positioned as a bad student. In this sense, a discourse of good student operates as a technology of the self such that students self-monitor and self-evaluate their practices. When I asked Antonio about how many absences he had had, he replied,

*I skipped a lot just before in the holidays so I try I really try not to skip any more because [...] I try not to be a- I don't want them to have a bad view of me, I don't want them to feel that I'm not um- that I'm not a good student or something or someone who takes everything as a joke, that's the main reason why I don't skip (iw10).*

Chantal also felt 'bad' if she did not attend classes.

*Chantal: I'll go because otherwise I'll feel bad with myself. I don't like skip classes because makes me feel bad [laughs]*

*Constance: What kind of bad?*

*Chantal: Oh I don't know um Comment on dit? J'ai mauvaise conscience [How do you say it? I feel guilty] Um yeah makes me guilty (iw10).*

Another practice which is expected of students is that they complete assignments. Since this is linked to their results, it is not surprising that it is the practice to which most students conform. However, it was not in fact a subject position with which all students identified. Thus for Giovanni, as discussed in *Chapter 5*, his main focus was to learn English, but this was something he did not link to the marks he received in his subjects.

A third practice which is expected of students is to participate in class activities. Thus Pauline stated "*It's nice to have eager young people who want to play the game*" (iw15). However, as discussed in *Chapter 5*, this norm worked against the

Japanese students since they were positioned as non-participative and by implication not good, or at least “difficult”.

The expectation of participation was clearly expressed, by Margaret, in a comment referring to the French students, Dominique, Sai’da and Antonio. Margaret states that students should do the work required of them, that is, participate, if they are going to demand extra help from their teachers.

*They wouldn’t come to class and they wouldn’t do the kinds of preparation that were required [...] if they were students who were putting in um you know the equivalent of what they were demanding, it would be different (iw15).*

I have already discussed, in *Chapter 5*, how discourses of cultural identity may have contributed to a false sense of confidence in these students by positioning them on the capable side of the binary.

Thus Margaret found the demands of the French students to be unreasonable, in the face of their failure to participate as good students. Alternatively, as we have already seen, Doris’s form of participation, “*she’s right on the ball*”(iw6), was viewed as good student behaviour. Apt here is Dominique’s comment about Doris:

*Like she’s the only one you know to make efforts for the teachers and I think that’s good for the teachers that at least one person is trying to do that (iw15).*

A number of other forms of conduct are expected of students and, like the requirement to participate actively, may entail positioning which is problematic. One major form of conduct expected of students is that they should be motivated to learn. Sometimes teachers imply that this is the



teachers' responsibility. Thus, as we have already seen, for Helen, in her comment regarding her own feeling of responsibility towards what students produce, students' motivation is not in question.

*If the [final assignments] were duds [...] I would end up thinking it's – it's my fault [...] I wouldn't think they were lazy, they didn't work hard enough (iw16)*

Margaret also sees herself as responsible for this and speaks of the difficulty of "this huge task of moving them from A to Z" (iw0).

In contrast to accepting themselves as responsible for motivating students, the teachers also tended to deny such responsibility on the basis of the students' status as international exchange students. Thus, because their sojourn in Australia was expected to be temporary and was relatively short; that is, between one and two semesters, they were sometimes seen as less committed than, say, migrants or those international students who undertook degree courses.

In talking about the migrant students she had taught previously, Helen stated:

*They were looking for a life that was happier or better or richer than the one they left behind. I don't see that aspect here with international students (iw0).*

Similarly, Margaret felt that the temporary nature of the sojourn lessened the impact of the experience and of the students' motivation to learn. Referring to the Japanese students, she said

*In terms of exploring that [...] kind of shock and kind of sense of alienation [...] I can't imagine that would happen as strongly in that situation for*

*example with these Japanese students coming... to Australia where it is a temporary thing, they know it's temporary, some of them don't have very strong motivation even, to learn, you know, to go back as fluent English speakers and so on (iw0).*

We can compare these comments with the Japanese students' intense wishes to improve their speaking skills, discussed in *Chapter 5*, to see that, again, teacher and student perceptions are at odds. On the other hand, most students viewed themselves as responsible for their own motivation and success. We saw in *Chapter 5* how the Japanese students saw their difficulties with speaking to be their own fault or their own inadequacies. This discussion highlights the unfinished nature of the question of motivation and shows that the notion of investment is not a transparent one. The discussion in *Chapter 7* will throw light on this point.



In the first part of this chapter I have tried to demonstrate how a discourse of good teacher impacts on teacher identity. I have shown some ways in which the subject positions available in this discourse are inhabited by teachers, and the ways in which students and institutional factors supported the positioning of teachers in the discourse. I attempted to demonstrate how the discourse of good teacher constrains teachers by reproducing their conduct in terms of normative conceptions and how this amounts to a molarisation or stratification. I have elaborated some differences and similarities in the ways each teacher's identity was produced in the complex interplay between available subject positions and I have shown the impact of the resultant 'identities' on classroom practices. In discussing the discourses of the good student, I have also shown how the discourse of good teacher attempts to position students, and how students accept, resist or ignore this positioning. Above all, this discussion has demonstrated the impossibility of mastery and the radical multiplicity of

student and teacher positions. *Chapter 7* is concerned to extend this multiplicity by looking, through the voices of students, at student self-positioning and identifications, and to discuss these in the light of notions of good student.

In *Chapter 5*, I sought to show how representations of cultural identity which derive from discourses determine teachers' constructions, causing them to make assumptions about students. This is an epistemological issue and as discussed in that chapter, such assumptions are in one sense unavoidable. In this chapter, I looked at consequences of teachers' representations of themselves. Again, I see this process as unavoidable, given the power of discourse to produce subjectivity. In *Chapter 7*, I will suggest one way around this apparent impasse - affect. In this way I seek to "free thought from what it silently thinks and so enable it to think differently instead of legitimating what is already known" (Foucault, 1992: 9).

## *Chapter 7: Discourses of becoming: escaping tyranny*

In which discourses of becoming involving identity change are differentiated from becoming as movements away from subjectification. These movements are proposed as a new way of conceiving agency.

*Everything in the universe is encounters, happy or unhappy encounters*

- Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet



The previous two chapters demonstrated some major ways in which subjectivity is produced and performed as a discursive production in interaction in a second language classroom. They focused on how the operation of discourses, as processes of overcoding and molarisation, contributes to the production of subjectivities. *Chapter 5* demonstrated the operations of molarised cultural identities which positioned students in particular fixed ways, and I showed how these positionings denied heterogeneity and complexity. *Chapter 6* showed how molar processes ‘overcoded’ teacher roles, providing relatively rigid identity slots for teachers to inhabit. Teacher identification with these slots was seen to be variable and uncertain, contingent upon a multitude of factors. Those chapters, then, focused substantially on stasis and constraints on subjectivities, activities of the plane of organisation. At the same time, they flagged that, because of the uneven operation of these processes of molarisation, there is always an excess or an overflow. As we saw, no identity can be completely defined; there are always “relatively free or unbounded points, points of creativity, change and resistance, and it is perhaps with these that we ought to begin in order to understand the whole picture” (Deleuze, 1988: 44). In this chapter, this excess comes into greater focus through a reconsideration of movements of desire and becoming on the molecular plane, the plane of immanence.

This chapter focuses on the role of language learning in students' identity transitions. It shows how their concerns to 'remake' themselves form a significant discursive field which provides yet another way subjectivities were produced in this study. However, the chapter differentiates these becomings which are concerned with mutations of and variations in identity from 'becoming' in the Deleuzian sense. The chapter thus seeks also to show the operation of Deleuzian desire in the lives of these students; that is, it seeks to demonstrate movements of non-subjectified becoming. In doing this, it draws attention to the affective connections which enable becoming through processes of augmentation and reduction in and between assemblages. This micro-level of interactions, what Deleuze & Guattari call the molecular or the plane of immanence, reveals how relations of affect impact on becomings. The chapter shows how language learning opens a space both for identity transitions and for movements of non-subjectification; that is, movements of deterritorialisation or lines of flight.



Deleuze and Guattari's notion of assemblages allows us to see bodies, such as human bodies and classrooms, as assemblages of speeds, durations, and intensities in continual transformation on the molecular plane, the plane of immanence. Three kinds of intermeshed movements - molar, molecular, and lines of flight - occur on this plane. Molar movements, the focus of *Chapters 5* and *6*, are the territorialisations or "subjectification proceedings" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 80) which determine "a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organization" (Foucault, 1977a: 205). It is important to note that molar lines are so much part of the conditions of life, "our organism and our very reason" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 138), that we could not do without them.

Molecular movements are more supple than the molar and are associated with flux and thresholds which can be crossed. In other words, they relate to connections, attractions, and repulsions which occur within the more rigid molar segments; that is, "the forms of madness which are secret but which nevertheless relate to the public authorities" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 125). One thinks here of Helen's or Tomoko's sleepless nights and churning stomachs before the Tuesday class, each seeking to fulfil the demands of the molar lines of teacher or student, but with their secret forms of uncertainty amounting to a kind of 'madness'. These forms of madness are not necessarily uncomfortable; they can equally be "a new type of anxiety [..or..] a new serenity" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002:126). Nor are they necessarily private but can additionally operate within the collective.

The molar and the molecular are inextricably interrelated: "the molar segments are necessarily immersed in the molecular soup that nourishes them and makes their outlines waver" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 225). Thus, on one hand, the social codes, or discourses, "seek to channel and block" (Deleuze, 1995: 19) the primary molecular flows. On the other hand, as we have seen in the students' sometimes critical responses to the well-intentioned efforts of teachers, "the molecular work of the individual classroom makes or breaks the ability of (molar) institutional learning to function" (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2003: 198). The molecular line can in fact be exploited, in "a molecular pattern of relational exchanges" (page 199), to support the practices familiar to us as normative teaching and learning; for example, Albrecht-Crane and Slack describe Ashton-Warner's report (1963) of the use of a particular musical phrase - the first eight notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony - to gain attention in a primary school classroom.

While the role of the rigid structures of molarisation is to attempt to "plug the lines of flight, stop or interrupt the movements of deterritorialisation, weigh

them down, restratify them, reconstitute forms and subjects" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 270), an excess "is constantly extricating itself [...], causing particles to spin off the strata, scrambling forms by dint of speed or slowness, breaking down functions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 270). These processes of 'spinning off,' 'scrambling' and 'breaking down' relate to pre-personal, presubjective desire. Such movements, which cannot be contained on the plane of organisation, allow a theorisation of agency. However, this is not an agency enacted by a conscious subject but is rather *a different doing*. The line of flight carries us "towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 125). It is "pure movement", a kind of blending into the flow; "he blends into the wall but the wall has become alive" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 127). A line of flight does not operate at the level of controlling subject, but is rather "an assemblage of heterogeneous elements that function; it is process as opposed to structure or genesis; it is affect as opposed to sentiment" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 189). Where processes of molarisation work to solidify the notion of subject, lines of flight are movements away from the molar, away from subjectivity; they are the "break line, crack line, rupture line" (1987: 200).

The importance of desire is that it produces, actualises, makes connections, and brings about relations; "it is not produced, an effect of frustration or ontological lack, but is primitive and primary, not opposed to or postdating reality, but productive of reality" (Grosz, 1994a: 195). In fact, Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of desire, becoming, lines of flight, joy, the plane of immanence, and affect are strongly related. Thus, they comment that "joy [...] is immanent to desire" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 155) and that "affects are becomings" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 256) and Deleuze refers to the plane of immanence as "the plane which has only one name - Desire" (2002: 95). In human relations, it is the affect immanent to desire which leads to becoming. Lines of flight are moved along by affective connections and there always exists some kind of

becoming which results from exposure to other assemblages. These concepts have in common, above all, an opposition to signification and subjectification. Since they refer to the excess that evades the “logic of identity” (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2003: 56), the way is opened to a new concept of agency. As we saw in *Chapters 5 and 6*, agency is not something over which subjects can be said to have conscious mastery. It cannot be thought of as a top-down notion of power - that is, power over oneself or others made possible by certain kinds of identities - since the excess to discourse makes such exercise of power indeterminate. In addition, agency cannot be taken to mean resistance since any resistance is also produced discursively. There is thus a disjuncture between my findings and notions of agency which turn on the extent to which subjects are able to enter or reject discourses consciously as well as on the extent to which conscious control over discourses is possible.

Recognising that desire and lines of flight are primary - they are “not phenomena of resistance or counterattack [...], but cutting edges of creation and deterritorialisation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 531) - means that agency can be seen to occur in moments of de-subjectification, moments in which the subject’s sense of self disappears in the face of new, as-yet unknown, possibilities (Albrecht-Crane, 2003a). If we are to recognise the molarising impacts of discourses, then an acknowledgment of desire, of lines of flight, and of affect will facilitate this new understanding of agency.



This section begins by considering literature which relates language learning in a foreign country to identity change, and the extent to which the desire to study abroad is a line of flight. Students in my study were clearly concerned with changes to aspects of their identities and saw the exchange experience, and knowledge of another language, as enabling such changes. In fact, I will suggest that a concern with these changes is paramount, and at times, replaces any



focus on language learning. Through a discussion of *discourses of becoming* which were evident in student statements, the chapter shows how these discourses of becoming most often involve a reterritorialisation, an exchange of one form of subjectification for another. In addition, Deleuze & Guattari's conception of machines in movement provides an expanded notion of identity change which includes the movements and transitions arising in micro moments of interaction.

Several scholars (Dykman, 2000; Morrow, 1997; Pavlenko, 1998, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000) have drawn attention to the autobiographical writings of bilingual writers and/or second language learners (including Cofer, 1990; Hoffman, 1989; Kaplan, 1993; Kazin, 1979; Novak, 1994; Rodriguez, 1982; Sarraute, 1983; Todorov, 1994; Young, 1989). These texts provide evidence for the complex identity changes which take place when second language learning accompanies migration or sojournment. Pavlenko's notion of the self as "continuous production", as "fluid, fragmented and multiple" (2001: 217), is confirmed in a number of these autobiographies. Thus, for example, Hoffman, in *Lost in translation*, states "If I want to assimilate into my generation, my time, I have to assimilate the multiple perspectives and their constant shifting" (Hoffman, 1989: 164). Kaplan, in *French Lessons* (1993) views the process of language learning as one in which one grows into an "entirely different self". Kamani, in an essay entitled 'Code switching', speaks of "collaborating in the repositioning of myself" (2000: 95). For Todorov, returning briefly to Bulgaria after a long period of absence, it was a case of having a sense of two distinct selves, "two halves", one French, the other Bulgarian, from which it was "impossible to create a whole being" (1994: 212). And in the words of Kazin (1979: 27) "To speak a foreign language is to depart from yourself!" It is in this sense that language learning can be seen as a movement away from particular subjectifications. This movement may involve a resignification of identity: one departs from previous identifications only to 'rediscover' oneself in new

identifications. Or, it may involve a line of flight; that is, a movement away from subjectification altogether. Indeed, the identity translation experienced by some can result in the loss of a sense of a unified subjectivity. Thus, Hoffman, for example, describes her pre-immigrant father as a man “whose resourcefulness has never failed him, who has never been in a situation which he couldn’t get out of”. However, after migrating to Canada, “he can’t find his nerve; he is anxious about making small decisions and anxious that he has made the wrong ones... ‘For what is the purpose?’ he says when somebody asks him to go to a movie or for a walk... ‘I want my peace of mind back’ “ (Hoffman, 1989: 128).

Pavlenko describes the performance of a successful reconstruction of identity as 'border crossing' (Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000) and discusses the processes by which old and new discourses, expressed through first and second languages, interact in a complex interplay to create new ‘third space’ identities (Bhabha, 1990). A major factor in this process is the impact of incommensurable discourses. At these moments the subject is clearly a ‘site of struggle’. Thus Hoffman comments in relation to uncertainties about her sense of herself as a young woman, “I can’t become a “Pani” of any sort....none of these modes of femininity makes any sense here” (1989: 189) and Wierzbicka states of her adjustments to the norms of Australian society, “I had to learn to ‘calm down’, to become less ‘sharp’ and less ‘blunt’, less ‘excitable’ and less ‘extreme’” (1997: 119). Indeed, an individual’s sense of identity “only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty” (Pavlenko, 1998: 4). Being out of one’s usual context means the subject’s normative iterative processes are not occurring and this can result in a sense of identity loss. Thus, subjects “may interpret such discomfort as their own inadequacy” (Mills, 1997: 96) as we have seen in *Chapter 5* with some Japanese students’ sense of inadequacy in their understandings of speaking up. In addition, identity in a foreign culture can

remain uncertain indefinitely. "The foreigner has no self...I do what they want me to, but it is not 'me' - 'me' is elsewhere, 'me' belongs to no one, 'me' does not belong to 'me,'... does 'me' exist?" (Kristeva, 1991: 8). These kinds of 'identity loss' reveal the subject as an 'empty person', dependent for an identity on a productive intersection of discourses. As I show below, in the case of Tomoko, available discourses in the new environment did not provide new identifications, resulting in a sense of aimlessness and a sense of lost identity.

Pavlenko attributes successful 'crossing' foremost to agency and intentionality on the part of the individual (2000: 169). Such an understanding relies on a notion of subjects who can consciously remake themselves in images of their own choosing. However, as I have demonstrated in previous chapters, a notion of agency which implies control of self or others is suspect given the clear impossibility of mastery. Although subjects do change, and constantly, the direction and result of that change is not necessarily predictable. Thus, in the process of learning a new language or culture, any identifications with alternate or additional aspects of subjectivity cannot be said to involve conscious acts of agentic choice. I seek to show that perhaps the only intentionality possible lies in remaining open to connection. However, where that will lead remains unknown and beyond conscious control.



In what follows I show that, for the students in this research, the language learning/exchange experience incorporated a desire to change identity. This change was either specifically desired or assumed - *I'm sure when I go back in France I will be changed [...] even if I don't realise it* (Sai'da iw3).

It is commonly stated that in order to understand another culture, one should be able to put oneself into the shoes of the other (see for example, Roy & Starosta, 2001); language learning is presumed to provide such an opportunity.

Thus it might be expected that the teachers who spoke a second language would have a capacity to see things from the students' points of view. However, teachers' views of student identity change did not appear to relate strongly to their own previous experiences of learning, or knowledge, of other languages. Indeed, in the case of these teachers, there was no apparent correlation between knowledge of a second language and the ability to put themselves in students' shoes.

In fact, the teachers' views differed in relation to possible changes in students. Susan and Margaret, who both spoke a second language<sup>36</sup>, believed that because the students' stay was temporary, it was of less significance. As a result, neither of these teachers expected significant identity changes.

*They are here for a short time so [what they need to learn] is just what's necessary for that short time to survive and to have a good time and to feel successful (Susan iw0).*

Susan, however, did expect some superficial changes:

*The way they dress, the way they behave in class, they might be very formal at the beginning and they become very relaxed, and the way they interact with people, probably less formal, certainly with teachers (iw0).*

In addition, Susan referred to students from past years who resisted change, who had been

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<sup>36</sup> See Chapter 4.

*not willing to come out of their own little world, and it seems a bit pointless to go overseas and try and experience something new without having an open mind (iw0).*

Because these students had the option to return home, Margaret believed that extreme changes and struggles would not apply.

*I think the kind of things that Eva Hoffman describes in her book 'Lost in translation', I can't imagine that would happen as strongly in that situation for example with these Japanese students coming out to Australia where it is a temporary thing, they know its temporary uh some of them don't have very strong motivation even, to learn, you know, to go back as fluent English speakers (Margaret iw0).*

The experience would have been qualitatively different, she felt, for students if they had lost the option to return home. Relating to her own experience, she spoke of

*That sense of no choice, not being able to move backwards and forwards between a culture of origin (iw0).*

In contrast, Pauline, who spoke only English, expected that exchange student status would lead to "substantial" change.

*They'll be changed by that experience [...] I mean you change by all sorts of multifarious experiences and, um, working in or moving in or being in a different culture must- must have a substantial change (Pauline iw0).*

Helen, who had relatively little second language proficiency, viewed the exchange student experience as a relatively straightforward, transparent

process. Thus she spoke of “*trying on*” (iw0) the new culture. This metaphor, in invoking a simple act of putting on and taking off a piece of clothing, elides the complexity of the discourses and power relations which produced students. Indeed, as Kramsch points out (1993: 238), “acquisition of knowledge and competence in a foreign language is not an additive process but a dialectic one”.

Helen compared the students to previous immigrant students she had taught at TAFE. Of the latter, she commented:

*They were looking for a life that was happier or better or richer than the one they left behind, I don't see that aspect here with international students through [our program] (iw0).*

For Helen, the “*whole new start*” (iw0) which immigrant students make was in contrast to the lack of interest displayed by the exchange students: “*I was very struck by how disinterested [sic] they seem to be*” (iw0). However in the light of my discussion in *Chapter 5* which demonstrated the assumptions which arise when teachers misread students’ body language according to discourses of cultural identity, a view of the students as lacking interest must be questioned. As I discuss below in relation to discourses of becoming, the students in my research were strongly concerned with lives that were “*happier or better*”.

In addition, as I am claiming here, it is the interactions and connections taking place at the molecular level which produce students’ subjectivities. In other words, if we are to accept the notion of subjectivity as produced in discourse through the organisation of the molecular plane, notions such as an option to return home or a better life are too abstract to be of great relevance. Students’ subjectivities, forming as they do from moment to moment, do not appear to be strongly impacted by the understanding that they will be able to leave the situation by returning home. Rather, in each moment can be seen students’ struggles to bring together the various aspects of their current context.



The fact that students' statements indicated the desire to become-other as a major aspect of their experience should not be surprising if we accept the notion of subjectivity proposed here. Since subjectivity is produced in interaction in discourse, any changes in surrounding discourses must impact on subjectivity. In fact, the changes desired by students were, they believed, made possible by their distance from norms and routines. In addition, discourses of progress through a life cycle, linked to transitions from school and university, make the early twenties a time when persons are presumed to be establishing themselves for their adult life. In fact, questions of 'Who am I?' and 'Who should I become?' were key for most students in the research.

At least three major discourses in which students expressed desires for self-change emerged from the research, forming a discursive field relating to discourses of *identity* or *becoming-other*. As will become clear, changes which involve becoming-other remain identifications, and, as such, exchange one form of molarised subjectivity for another. This is an important distinction; there can be no neutral ground in subjectivity, no universal identity which provides the baseline for other identities.

One subgroup of discourses related to general desires on the part of students to change aspects of their personality, a discursive field relating to *personal growth*. Thus, for example, desires for an increase or consolidation of maturity and independence were expressed through statements of *independence*. Additionally, discourses relating to *global identity* produced students' desires to learn English, to know the world and to travel. Finally, comments relating to a discourse of

*English-speaking identity*<sup>37</sup>, also discussed in *Chapter 5*, produced the Japanese students' intense desires to speak up and express their opinions as well as a number of other identifications, discussed below.

The student exchange experience is both productive and affirmative of these desires; that is, on the one hand, students' desires to become-other, in conjunction with discourses of travel as broadening the mind, are produced by the opportunity to go on exchange. On the other hand, the interplay of unfamiliar discourses with previous discursive constructions necessarily produces new subjectivities. Most of these movements of desire ultimately involve what Deleuze & Guattari refer to as *reterritorialisation* where the new state is a restratification or a resubjectification; that is, a re-fixing occurs in the drive for a unified identity. This re-fixing may involve augmentation and/or diminution of the assemblage, in ways that imply both power and impotence (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 225). At the same time, students' desires are also desires for becoming, in the Deleuzian sense. Since these presubjective movements of desire are occurring all the time on the plane of immanence, the potential for lines of flight is always present.



While it might be expected that the goal of learning English was foremost for these students, in fact this was not necessarily or straightforwardly the case. For only about half the students was the opportunity to study in Australia equated with the opportunity to improve their English. Such students varied in the reasons they gave for nominating English learning as a primary goal. In the case of some, the benefits arising from a knowledge of English was assumed; there was little comment on it. This is, I am suggesting, evidence of a discourse

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<sup>37</sup> This discourse at times morphed into a European cultural identity for some Japanese students.



in which 'everybody knows' that it is useful and important to know English; it has become an unquestioned assumption for many of these students.

Evidence for this assumption can be seen in the students' erroneous belief that English is the most commonly spoken language in the world.

*English is really common, it's common language in the world in this time so it's better to study English than any other language to communicate with the foreigners (Li iw3),*

*Everyone speaks English in the world. If I go to Germany I won't have any problem because, like, most of them- like all over Europe, people speak uh English. Apart from France [laugh] (Dominique iw15),*

*I think it broaden my possibility to know many people because English is the language most spoken in the world (Noriko iw15).*

However, and more importantly for my argument here, the desire for English is associated with becoming-other in that it provides immediate aspects of identity. One attraction of English to students was their perception of it as less formal, more relaxed and more easy-going than some other languages. This egalitarianism was seen as being realised in the grammar.

Student desires to become-other through English were evident in the following statements.

*I really like it that you don't have the- in Germany you have the difference [...] you say 'you' and you mean it formal and informal, and in Germany [...] you have two different words for it and so it's- every situation is more serious and here even if you use 'you' it's like- I don't know, it's not so formal and English is um- you have a lot of expressions that makes it um*

*kind of- especially with spoken language - easy going. It's not- I think it's a bit more cooler or- yeah [laughs] than German (Ursula iw16).*

Noriko likewise saw English as allowing a relaxed informality which contrasted with the levels of formality and gender-specific language required in Japanese.

*English culture is more relaxing so it's very convenient to use only one type [of language] to everyone (iw15).*

Sai'da also experienced English as 'easier' and less formal than French.

*It's a very easy language because I can express everything in simple words which is not true in French um and I love- I love words like 'just like', 'you know' and stuff like that because it makes the- the- the simple words means a lot of things and it makes the conversation more easier to come and stuff like that. I love this expressions. In France, 'like', you can't say that. [...] It's really easy to express yourself, its much easy to express yourself, even for me now, it's much more easy to express myself in English sometimes than in French (iw13).*

This aspect of English was heightened for some students by their perceptions of Australia as a country which they experienced as being more friendly and relaxed than their own.

*When I compare to Japanese, they speak a lot. When I'm walking down the street, they smiles at me. In the bus, even if they are stranger, they speak each other. It seems really friendly for me (Katsuyuki iw2),*

*People are very, very friendly and it was very striking for me (Antonio iw3),*

*I guess my opinion is of more, you know, um.. mm..you [Australians] make more of your life, you don't live to work, you live to life more. It's another way to live here, you don't have- you are not so busy, you are not so stressed or.. (Ursula iw2).*

Another of the identities which English provides is a 'cool' identity.

*It's very cool to speak English, just smooth, it's like- it's- I like the- uh uh- how can I explain that.... uh..... uh I like- I like the way like- uh using different part of your mouth while you speak another language you know and I think it's um- just feels good, speaking English [...] like you can say- you can say anything in English and it's gonna sound good or cool, like you- you just like have to hear your songs and when you translate them into French, they sound stupid, like some of them, like 'I love you so beautiful' you know but it sounds good because English sounds good (Dominique iw15).*

For Katsuyuki, the desire to learn English was linked to his desire to have Caucasian friends and to be, himself, in some way, Caucasian.

*I don't know... ..... it's not good thing to say but... ... I want to have Caucasian friends, they are, in a way they are superior, in my opinion, just in my opinion. It doesn't mean that I don't like Asian or something, but especially I like Caucasian. I want to be Caucasian as well [...] I started to listen to American music since I was in junior high school, I found that the singers quoted between Japan and America is really different. America is much more better and it makes me think that American music is great and it also makes me think Americans are great. Maybe.. I guess.. I'm not sure.*

*Also I had opportunity when I was in junior high school to speak to American teacher. He was cool [laughs] and I- I don't know - yeah that kind of small things, was- became a reason that I think Caucasian is better [...] I used to have blond hair and you know coloured contact lenses, as well. At that time I was trying to be Caucasian. Really! [laughs] ah, but I don't think that the personality of Caucasian is perfect. I think looks, um, appearance is perfect (iw15).*

As Katsuyuki's comment "I don't think that the personality of Caucasian is perfect" reveals, this attraction to Caucasians was not undifferentiated. Indeed he commented,

*Sometimes European thinking is... strange, right? Sometimes they don't apologise much, so it sometimes annoying and I still believe that they should apologise. I know that it's just a difference of the culture but some things- sometimes I think that European people should learn from our culture as well. We have a phrase, goo ni ireba goo ni shitagae, that means when you go into the culture that you're not familiar, you should follow the rules of that culture, and we think that we do that, but European people even who is in Japan has a really strong background of their culture and they never try to follow the rules of us. It's not good thing I think (iw15).*

Another of Katsuyuki's motivations for coming on exchange was even less related to learning English.

*Because I like Caucasian a lot, that's a part of the reason I came here too if I can get a boyfriend here and if I want to stay here, with my boyfriend, I can get a visa, right? In Japan I can't, even if I can find a Caucasian boyfriend, he can't get a visa (iw2).*

In *Chapter 5*, I detailed some Japanese students' desires for an identity which was characterised by an ability to speak up and express opinions. While this desire was couched in terms of learning English, it can be seen above all to be an issue of identity. We saw that this identity was perceived as proper to Europeans and intrinsic to English; that is, it was not a quality considered to be 'Japanese'. Thus, Rie differentiated speaking behavior appropriate in Japan from that required or possible in other countries.

*If the person who have studied another country and go back to Japan, that feel little bit differences, different gap, and very uncomfortable, because in other country, they speak a lot, speak their opinions but in Japan, they should be not, not 'quiet', but they should not speak too much, so little bit uncomfortable feeling (iw9).*

Rie's understanding is that the "aggressive" speaking skills which she associates with English speakers will need modification once she returns to Japan. However, for her, a complete identity change in this matter is required if she is to become as 'international' as she desires.

*Rie: I want to be international, I wanna be a world international student, it means I get out of the Japanese culture [...]*

*Constance: Do you- but there must be things about Japanese culture that you admire so you don't want to forget Japanese culture do you?*

*Rie: Mmm*

*Constance: Or you want to forget it and just completely change?*

*Rie: A complete change*

*Constance: You want to change completely ?*

*Rie: ...Nnnnnn ....but if I- if I go back in Japan, I will be a Japanese style [...] I don't mean that Japanese culture is bad, I don't mean that, but if I study or work in the international world, I need a skills to be*

*international person so I have to study or learn the more skills to develop English or speak out- out my opinion so... (iw9).*

The variety of reasons given by students for wanting to learn English can be seen to relate to issues of identity. Concern with their identities in terms of personal qualities and personality characteristics was also evident in the other goals and hopes which they held for the exchange experience.

One of the primary goals for most of the students in the research was that of independence and maturity. Questions of how to live free of family constraints, what to study, who to become, and an insistence on being recognised as mature, were evident in students' statements. Also evident was a discourse of authenticity, implying the students' concern with personal qualities which they sought to develop in themselves.

For some students, the desire for independence from their families was a clearly stated goal.

*First purpose is English skill and another thing is [...] living in another country, it makes me more good experience [...] so all of my experience in Australia makes me more confident [...] Everything happen here is I have to manage by myself. [...] In Japan [...] if some trouble happens, my parents will resolve [...] but here my parents can't help so I think many things happen here I have to manage by myself (Tomoko iw1),*

*I'd like to study English but not only English but also I want to be ... independent from my parents. Because I live with my family for 22 years from my birth to now and I'm ... I can't- Sometimes I rely my parents so this program is so good experience for me to [be] independent and choose by myself [...] I can choose and I can- I have to act by myself. It need for me...yeah (Noriko iw2).*

For Chantal, coming to Australia meant a measure of independence from her boyfriend.

*Constance: And is there anything that you would like to achieve in terms of your personality while you are here? [...]*

*Chantal: [...] be more independent perhaps.*

*Constance: In what way?*

*Chantal: I- I'm used to live with my boyfriend in France and living together for three years so in the beginning it was hard to be alone in the flat that's why but I'm getting used as well*

*Constance: So are you enjoying it now?*

*Chantal: Yeah, yeah, it's good to be alone sometimes [laughs] I can watch whatever I want on TV, no, but yeah, that's good, and six months is all right, not more not less (iw4).*

We have already seen comments from some of the European students which expressed resentment at their perception of being treated like children by teachers on the program. These, and Dominique's comment that this university in general was "too paternalist" (iw3), seem to express a sense of denied maturity. In this way then, students expressed a desire to be recognised as mature. We see here how positioning by others can lead to the need for a continual refixing or a restratification which marks the instability of identity. This is evident in the students' felt need to insist on their maturity.

For some students, the desire for independence was linked to personal qualities or characteristics. For Rie, independence, strength of character and an ability to think deeply were qualities which could be gained from the exchange experience.

*I can develop my personality and be stronger [...] maybe I will um develop and very think- person who- I can be the person who can think more deeply or..... about something to happen or why is it happen or why the person say so or why did I do that or mmm [...] yeah I think travelling is also good chance to check myself what kind of person I am, [...] I have to do by myself [...] but to have some problems and solve it, I- I can be a more stronger and independent [...] I think its good thing to be a more think person or to be a stronger person..mm I think (iw1).*

For Dominique the experience was an opportunity to change aspects of her personality which she did not like.

*Dominique: I think I'm going to make the most of- um yeah it's going to really change me.*

*Constance: In what way?*

*Dominique: Being more- um more nice, just more- and um not letting [my home city] and [its] people make me become someone rude or aggressive (iw3).*

Shyness, combined with a sense of lacking confidence, was a personal quality which a number of students wished to change. We have already seen comments from the Japanese students which expressed a lack of confidence in their ability to speak out and to express their opinions. We have additionally seen Katsuyuki and Chantal identifying themselves as shy. Antonio and Sai'da also saw themselves as lacking in self-confidence, stating that they would like to be: "less shy and..uh..to be more self confident" (Antonio iw3), and "um to have more confidence in me [in] any situations, in my studies, uh with guys [laughs] um, yeah, things like that" (Sai'da iw3).

These desires for changes in personal qualities and personality aspects can be clearly seen to be desires for new identities. However, they remain desires for



molarised identities since they arise from “signifying desire” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 22). Thus, students seek to inhabit the positive term in a binary, thus desiring a preferred slot or position in a hierarchy of qualities which derive from the discourses to which they have been exposed. In other words, in the examples above, students are seeking to become-other in terms of available discourses. To become ‘a very think person’, someone who is ‘confident’, or someone who is attractive by virtue of their blonde hair all involve identifications with positive terms which are assumed to produce more powerful positions in the world. However, an analysis of the negative term in each binary demonstrates the artificiality of the binary pair. Thus, for example, if deep thinking is opposed to shallow thinking, and confidence to shyness, skills such as patience, good listening, and equanimity, tend to be neither recognised nor valued.



A number of students named the desire to travel or see the world rather than the chance to improve their English as the only or main reason for participating in an exchange program. Australia was appreciated by some European students because it is distant from Europe and was therefore seen as unlikely to be visited again. This distance from their normal routines would force or enable them, they felt, to develop some new globally-relevant personal qualities and to ‘broaden their mind’. This desire to broaden the mind, which I refer to as a *discourse of global identity*, has been seen in Rie’s desire to be “*a world international student*”. This international personality was clearly linked to being able to speak and express opinions.

*If I study or work in the international world, I need a skills to be international person so I have to study or learn the more skills to develop English or speak out- out my opinion so [...] to- mm.. admit or know the differences each cultures through the world, not stick of*

*the our own Japanese culture but also the- the admire the each country's culture and the way of thinking or not close mind, open minded (iw9).*

Roland echoes Rie's desire to be open-minded. He spoke of wanting

*To change my mind [...] I think the world now is global, in studying we heard that each day, and if I am be able to go in each country of the world, I do that, because we are no longer narrow minded and it's open our mind [...] Because if Doris or Giovanni or Antonio or anybody..er...impose our culture, impose our mind, it's not a good thing because we are here to discover all the countries and achieve in a new mind, in a new kind of thinking... global thinking, global mind (iw3).*

Some students saw an inextricable link between learning the language and learning the culture, and a concomitant opening of the mind. For Giovanni, learning about another culture gave "new eyes".

*I think is good for my mind for a learn a new- [...] I think only when you learn a new things [...] okay, you have a lot of tools for judicate [...] and if you have lot of tools is better for you because you- you- is possible you have a- make a good decision. [...] The skills is the tools for take a good decision and I think the skills is only if you learn new things...the new things is not only the uni.. every day is possible you learn, but if you live in Italy and you don't move out of the Italy, you only learn the Italian things. I don't know, if you live for a lot of time in India or, I don't know, other culture, when you come in Italy you think lot of difference than before [...] You have another eyes, only because you have learned a new things (iw4).*

For both Noriko and Dominique, the experience was an opportunity to broaden their minds.

*I can understand the difference from the country position and this understanding the different thinking [...] is good chance to broad my mind and we have many chance to talk another students [...] I'd like to listen many way of thinking or many opinion from culture and I'd like to broad my mind and I broad my perspective and I'd like to use these perspective to solve problem in the university or the company or to talk with friends or something. Maybe I think this point is one of the important and my desire to be here (Noriko iw6),*

*I think it like opens your mind when you speak another language because [...] like, for example, in English, you've got a totally different persesh-perspection of uh, time, like in French, the way you use tenses, and I think its like when you- when you're able to understand it, then you can understand really the culture, so I think it's just- it opens your mind (Dominique iw15).*

These desires for 'another eyes', 'global thinking, global mind', and to be 'open- or broad-minded' can be seen to be grounded in lack and opposition; the seeking after 'a new kind of thinking, global mind' is about avoiding a self-conception as being narrow-minded and not capable of understanding different thinking. It is in this way that any new identity is a reterritorialisation and molarisation is unavoidable.

Whereas the motive of achieving 'a global mind' can clearly be seen as a desire to fill a lack, for four of the French students, the initial reason for applying to come on exchange appears at first sight to be something of a line of flight. They stated that they were 'fed-up' and wanted a change. However, Deleuzian becoming is not a line of flight from subjectivity but rather a flight to the real.

“The great and only error lies in thinking that a line of flight consists of fleeing from life; the flight into the imaginary, or into art. On the contrary, to flee is to produce the real, to create life, to find a weapon” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 49). In other words, a Deleuzian becoming does not involve a reterritorialisation onto a new subjectivity but rather seeks to ‘find a weapon’ which will enable resistance to the molarising effects of significations. To ‘create life’ and ‘produce the real’ means to recognise and allow the flow of desire on the molecular plane.

Both implicit and explicit in this state of being ‘fed-up’ was a desire to know a different way and the rejection of unwanted identities. This view also reflects what might be called a discourse of French complaint, referred to on one occasion by Sai’da as “*French cynicism*” (iw3) and expressed by Kim to Susan: “*when I said- told Kim about the students complaining about the exam, particularly Dominique, she said ‘Oh the French always do that’*” (Susan iw16).

Thus, Dominique stated her reason for coming on exchange.

*I was a bit fed up with [my home city] and with France in general and um I just wanted to- I’ve been to England like 4 or 5 years ago and I wanted to go back, because I don’t like [my home city] (iw3).*

Sai’da’s reason was similarly not related primarily to the desire to study and improve her English.

*I was really fed up of uh the- the study the studies I w- I was doing and I wanted to change for communication and journalism, that is really [what] I want to do, so really it was a great chance for me (iw3).*

Similarly, for Antonio, his motivation was a rejection of his French lifestyle and his university.

*It wasn't really a choice to come to Australia. I wanted to go out of France because I was sick and tired of French university ...umm... people in France. I was sick and tired of them. I just wanted to go out (iw3).*

This disgruntlement appeared to be related to a negativity toward some French people, a sentiment Dominique and Sai'da also shared.

*French people, they are not friendly, they are cold and selfish and I don't like them, most of them (Antonio iw3),*

*French are very cold with people, they're not very touchy umm and I think Portuguese people have got this um honesty and um they're really true people. French people are not true I think (Dominique iw3),*

*We are fed up with French people, you know, they- even all of us together, when we are not really French (Sai'da iw3).*

The diasporic identities of these three students differentiated them from what Dominique and Sai'da called 'real' French: "*we are not really French (Sai'da iw3), "real- um in brackets, real French people"* (Dominique iw3). Indeed, Dominique's desire to be 'nice', mentioned above, was couched in terms of being different from the French people as she knew them in her home city.

In a similar way, rather than wanting to practise her English, Chantal gave her reason for coming on exchange as based in a desire to escape from the familiar, from a "*routine*" (iw4).

*Constance: So did you only come here because you wanted to practice your English?*

*Chantal: Well basically [laugh] no because I wanted to change. I was fed up with my home university, it's been my fourth year at the same place and it was not planned so I just applied and- (iw4).*

These students' desires to escape from their routines, study choices, and, for the diasporic French, from what they saw as the negative qualities of French people and France, provided the impetus for their exchange experience. Implicit in their statement is the understanding that an escape from routine enables new possibilities to open up, seen in Dominique's comment that she wanted to be "more nice". However, a close bond existed between the three friends, Dominique, Sai'da and Antonio. As previously stated, these three students came from the same city and knew each other well. This meant that previous discursive constructions were 'transplanted' and that their similar perceptions of France are part of a jointly constructed discourse. Thus, in some senses, their attempts to 'remake' themselves were thwarted. In fact, Sai'da appeared to sense the need to break from habitual discourses if she was to ensure change.

*Also we've noticed with Antonio and Dominique, being stay together it makes us being more lazy and things like that yah (iw9).*



The students' motivations for coming on exchange and the motivations which lie behind the level and type of participation in the classes can be seen to be hugely varied. Indeed, for some of the students, learning English appeared at times to be only marginally relevant. This radically complicates Schumann's (1978) relationship between language learning success and the importance of acculturation through social and psychological integration. It is not surprising

then, that students found some of the classes unrelated to their needs and interests. In other words, in significant ways, these students are produced in discourse as seekers after a global identity, after status as adults, and so on, and curriculum needs to address this. At the same time, as this discussion of student desires has shown, students can lean in any direction; their desires are rhizomatic, rather than linear or arborescent. Nevertheless, that they are seeking to change themselves is undeniable and my discussion above has demonstrated numerous and varied ways in which this was so.

We are returned here to the problem of the belief in mastery, and in the impossibility of a knowing and controlling subject. While the desire to change may be an impetus, it is impossible to say how things will turn out. Neither students nor teachers can determine the progress or the conclusion.



In the discussion above, I have shown that students' desires to come to Australia - as part of a student exchange program which was ostensibly about learning English - did not always prioritise such learning. Instead, their desires more often relate to their own identity changes. These identity changes, as I have discussed, involve alterations to aspects of subjectivity; they are ultimately forms of reterritorialisation in which desires to escape from particular identifications are, at the same time, desires to escape to other identifications. In contrast to reterritorialisation, Deleuze and Guattari propose deterritorialisation. Here, desire, in the Deleuzian sense, is no longer the motivator of identity change but is, in some sense, the change itself. This kind of desire - an asubjective force - does not seek reterritorialisation or resubjectification; that is, a new identity, but rather it "make[s] us vibrate" (Guattari, 1996a : 205).

I turn now to discuss such becomings by looking in more detail at events during the semester in relation to two students, Ursula and Tomoko, whose stories parallel those discussed so far. Both students began the semester with optimistic views of the changes they could expect in themselves. Ursula stated that,

*Yeah the most important thing will be that I think more about myself, about my way to live.. um.. which is the better way? or which makes it easier to be comfortable with yourself? [...] another important thing is to see how you can live in another country where you don't know anybody and how you react, how you feel, how you can handle your bad situations when you can't speak in your mother tongue and you have to express yourself and it's sometimes very difficult because you don't know all the words you normally use so...(iw2).*

This opportunity for a new beginning would not have been possible, Ursula felt, had she stayed in Germany.

*Ursula: [In Germany] you have your.. your um.. you um.. you are limited in your possibilities because you go everyday the same way, it's not that you use the same street but you go- you have your life, you have your same- the same friends*

*Constance: Your routines?*

*Ursula: Yeah your routines and it's very hard to- to get out of this routine um in the same country. We have to change and lots of people wouldn't understand it, it's definite more easier to go to another country and to make it there too, it's like a new beginning too, maybe you change some things you don't um.. you don't like or you wouldn't have done or you would be- you wished they have never happened in Germany and you try to a new beginning yourself (iw2).*



One factor which appeared to contribute to Ursula's sense of freedom from routine was separation from her family. In her first interview, she expressed an awareness that living away from home could provide opportunities to develop herself.

*I've a very big family, I have 6 brothers and sisters and I am the oldest and I feel sometimes a little responsible for them when it's um- um- I have never lived alone without friends or family and that is very important for me to look how can I handle it and am I strong enough to get through it and I what um- what um advantages can I- can I take from the situation to develop myself. To be strong and to get 'yes, I can do it!' (iw2).*

In her second interview, Ursula expressed delight in a sense of expansion in mind and personality and described the ease with which she was making social contacts. This description demonstrates the importance of affective connection with others for becoming.

*I feel so relaxed and I feel that I'm- that my mind grows, it's like I feel it's my personality grows, I never um um.. I'm so communicative at the moment and met so many new people and I don't have any problems to talk to them and to um yeah when I remember or when I look back in the past I was always sometimes a bit shy and was a bit 'Oh my God what shall I say?' and 'Am I interesting enough?' and that's not a problem at all mm its like.. great! and I really feel the change (iw10).*

This sense of expansion was marked by a feeling that there were no limits to what she could do or achieve.

*I realise that it's like I feel so free and I feel so um.. now I can do everything, it's- there are no limits, it's like only in my mind or my- that makes me limit and not my studies or my..my language or so, it's whenever- it's like I feel- when I have a game or a goal I can achieve it if I want, it's only my- my.. um mind that may give me a limit..but now I feel it's like 'wow!' [unvoiced] it's like I could fly!! [laughs, then spreads her arms and rises out of the chair] (iw10).*

This limitlessness is indicative of a line of flight. The only limit is felt by Ursula to be in her mind, in other words, in language which limits and fixes through its representational, signifying nature. In fact, at one and the same time, this limit is challenged, and the sense of limitlessness is expressed, by the unvoiced “wow!” and Ursula’s recourse to gesture. At this moment, she is carried towards the unknown, the unforeseeable, as “pure movement” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 127). I want to argue that this is an asubjective experience which exemplifies Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of desire.

*Ursula: It's like a knot that it's undone suddenly*

*Constance: You can go anywhere.*

*Ursula: Yeah [laughs] I feel this [laughs] It's like 'Okay, that was the first step. What comes next?' (iw16).*

Although both Ursula and Tomoko began the semester hoping for independence and confidence, their outcomes were very different. Like Ursula, Tomoko expressed, in her class writing and the interviews early in semester, her optimism about the possibility of good changes occurring in herself. She predicted that “*all of my experience in Australia makes me more confident*” (iw1).

In the first interview, when I asked her about her personality, Tomoko described herself as a positive thinker.

*Constance: Umm how would you describe your personality*

*Tomoko: Mmmmmmmmm ^ I mmmmmmmmm v I don't have negative thinking. I don't have negative thinking. I'm positive thinking. If I failed or don't – if I experienced bad things, I dep- depress- depressed once*

*Constance: You got depressed once*

*Tomoko: Yeah I once but after that I can never mind.*

*Constance: Okay so you can let it go*

*Tomoko: Yah. So I think I'm positive (iw1).*

However by *Week 9*, this positivity appeared to have been compromised by the impacts of the discursive positioning discussed earlier. Thus, in *Chapter 5*, we heard Tomoko's reaction to the suggestion that Doris not attend the class:

*I'm not sure it is good or bad [um] choice or not but I feel good  
[laughs] (iw9).*

And in *Chapter 6*, we heard Tomoko's comment about the 'depression' produced in her by the LA class. In relation to this class, she spoke about the need to develop a positive attitude.

*Tomoko: But we Japanese students have to get like a-a-attitude mmm  
... positive positive (?) positive attitude for class*

*Constance: Hmm mm you have to?*

*Tomoko: Mm I think so*

*Constance: Why? v*

*Tomoko: Ah but Japanese students including me have not so positive attitude (iw9).*

By this time, then, Tomoko's earlier perception of herself as a positive person had changed. She found herself feeling unhappy more often, and attributed this

to not having enough to do. In Japan, she had been involved in a number of extra-curricular activities, including part-time paid work and volunteer work as a temple guide; in Australia, these options were no longer available.

*Tomoko: Mmm in Japan I didn't depress so many times but after came to here I depress more often about my pers- charac- character ... Mmm mmm so I like in – I like my lifestyle in Japan. I have to attend many classes but I'm- I have to part-time job and I attend my club activity. I'm very busy but I like my lifestyle in Japan but now I don't have enough..*

*Constance: To do?*

*Tomoko: Enough to, yeah. Many free time, much free time (iw9).*

She felt responsible for motivating herself to fill this free time: *“I have to find good way to using my time” (iw9).*

*Tomoko: just three months had already passed since I came here, so I got used to this life and I go used to- to be- to no[t] many friends, and teacher, and my- I got used to my life, home, family, all things good, is going good but [...] we don't have any special problem but I feel something lack, I have to something new thing, I have to start something new (iw9).*

However, she referred to difficulties with self-motivation which I argue derive in part from the loss of identity due to the absence of familiar discourses such as those provided by her participation at home in Japan in activities such as temple-guiding. Drawing on discourses familiar to her, Tomoko named this malaise as being similar to the experience, common among her peers in Japan,

of 'May sickness', a motivational slump which occurs after the excitement of Golden Week<sup>38</sup>. She referred to this experience as "a kind of disease" (iw9).

*Tomoko: And after that we feel we can't have motivate or- we can't have motivation or we don't mmm sorry [checks dictionary] ...mm .....we tend to- we tend to become do- dour- we tend to become durable or uh... aah sorry .....don't motivate.*

*Constance: Oh demoralised!*

*Tomoko: Demoralised... yeah ...many people feel that.*

*Constance: After Golden Week?*

*Tomoko: After Golden Week in Japan got used... but lack of something*

*Constance: Mmhmm, something's missing*

*Tomoko: Something missing or after new situation got used to the situation after that we feel*

*Constance: Yeah, [a feeling of] 'so what?'*

*Tomoko: Yah so I feel kind like situation at the moment I have to find new things new motivation or new opportunity to start something (iw9).*

This lack of motivation had resulted in a situation of conflict, producing Tomoko as a site in which she struggled to develop strategies to manage her new situation.

*Tomoko: Very bad [said in an undertone] [laughs] I don't like this situation this mmm... I eat too much or I [eat] too much or I got enough sleep or I don't have .... opportunity or assertive- to [be] assertive for everything*

*Constance: Right right yeah*

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<sup>38</sup> Golden Week is a highly significant holiday in Japan, made up of a series of national holidays which start at the end of April and end in the first week of May.

*Tomoko: I have to get- I have to erase- I have to get off this situation. I have to remove this situation (iw9).*

In Tomoko's case, then, her isolation from the discourses which normatively produced her led to a loss of identity. In the light of the fact that the exchange experience involves the disruption of students' normative discourses, in this case, it appeared to realise a becoming which entailed "a major risk to the subject's integration and social functioning" (Grosz, 1994b: 174). However, unlike the joy produced in Ursula and the sense of openness to the new in her "What comes next?", Tomoko actively seeks reterritorialisation in her attempts "to get off" or "to remove" the situation. As Deleuze says, we cling to "[o]ur security, the great molar organization that sustains us, [...] the binary machines that give us a well-defined status, [...] the system of overcoding that dominates us - we desire all that" (1987: 227). Tomoko's 'retreat' to the molar line, I would argue, was supported by the discursive positioning of the Japanese students' cultural identities discussed in *Chapter 5*. In that chapter, I drew attention to the fact that Tomoko was one of the students to speak early in the semester, but that this initial 'speaking-up identity' did not reappear.

Interestingly, Tomoko was nominated as one of the most interesting students in the class by Ursula in her first interview in *Week 2*. Speaking about her impression of the first day of classes, Ursula referred to a small group whose members included Katsuyuki, Tomoko and herself (fPw1).

*Constance: Um so who is 'more open' already among the Japanese?*

*You said some of them are already 'on the right way'*

*Ursula : I don't know all the names [...] There was um- two people were in- in my last group in the course where we have pronunciation and um it was these two, girl and the boy, they were very open to the other people, their English is much better than the other people (iw2).*

In these two examples we can see the differential movement of lines of flight. While both students began the semester optimistically and with the expectations of identity change, the results were not the same. For Tomoko, a conjunction of contingencies produced negative affect and these led to “a black hole” of despair (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 229) which in turn limited further connection and positive affect. As Deleuze comments, “[S]adness, sad affects, [...] reduce our power to act” (2002: 61). Indeed, any line of flight can lead equally to “degradation or success” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 126). Additionally, it is never necessarily clear what success is. For Ursula, a conjunction of positive affect and connection appears to have produced a line of flight as an experience of joy. Importantly, Ursula’s experience was an asubjective one. “Far from presupposing a subject, desire cannot be attained except at the point where someone is deprived of the power of saying ‘I’ ” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 89). And this is the moment in which agency appears, for Ursula. The subject has dissolved and openness to possibilities remains.

A consideration of the discursive production of the subject in conjunction with a Deleuzian notion of desire, as demonstrated in the example of Tomoko, also goes some way towards addressing Hall’s (1996b) question regarding why subjects identify, or do not identify, with the positions to which they are summoned. In Tomoko’s case, a web of intersecting discourses and material influences appeared to produce her ‘failure’ to identify with available discourses.



However, it is also important to note that Ursula’s ‘becoming’ was performed in interview, not in the classroom. This is not to say that such becomings did not or could not occur in these classrooms; affective interactions are occurring all the time at a subterranean, molecular level although they are not necessarily evident to observers. Given the constraining impacts of representation in

language, the question remains regarding the extent to which these kinds of affective becomings are possible in classrooms. As Ellsworth comments, educational discourses among others “consistently and insistently construct and use teaching as a representational practice. That is, as a language-based practice of describing or representing things in the world in ways that strive to be truthful and accurate across contexts and moments. As a result, the performative aspects of teaching and learning that exceed questions of truth and accuracy have barely been explored by educational researchers” (1997: 160).

Whereas the primary school classroom described by Ashton-Warner (1963) appeared to allow the molecular life of the students, it may be that the highly molarised identities of teachers and older students precludes the overt expression of this molecular level of existence. It is not clear that it is possible to take these kinds of movements of desire and affect into account in the classroom, or whether teachers and students who present strong emotions, excitement or confusion can be responded to adequately within the hierarchical, fixed positionings common in the classroom. In a discussion of O’Connor (1996), Albrecht-Crane suggests that he “escapes the molar forces that produce the hierarchical distance and antagonistic positions of teacher and student” because he “expresses the depth of his concern for the lives of his students” (2003: 208). However, this expression of concern is not a matter of creating a caring/sharing classroom environment but rather a ‘doing with’ such that O’Connor actively engages with and is profoundly moved by the stories of his students.

Two events in the classroom in my research might, at first sight, be considered to display movements of desire and becoming. However, as I will show both ultimately confirm the powerful impacts of molarisation on subjectivities. In one instance, Helen spoke to me about a class in which she perceived the



Japanese students behaving differently from her usual perceptions of them; that is, “joking and laughing” and “asking me questions” (iw16). She observed that it was “the first week of all three Europeans being absent and the atmosphere was just completely different” (iw16)<sup>39</sup> 40.

*The Japanese students’ body language was much more relaxed; they were looking me in the eye when they were talking to me, instead of fiddling with papers or doing that twirling thing with pens that they do [...] We were all laughing about something, I mean there was noise in the classroom [...] you know, there was a real buzz so... (iw16).*

We have already seen Helen’s preference for a noisy classroom in *Chapter 5*; her positive view of this class is not surprising. As a result of this “completely different atmosphere”, Helen concluded that for the Japanese students to speak up in front of the French students “was a losing face issue” (iw16); in other words, the presence of the French students in the class caused the Japanese students to be inhibited.

The Japanese students, however, were not so unequivocal; overall they did not see the class in the same light as did Helen. We have already heard Tomoko’s comment:

*I like French, Dominique, Sai’da and uh Antonio (?) I like talking with them so if they- if I attend their group in class I feel very comfortable atmosphere so I can easy to say something (Tomoko iw9).*

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<sup>39</sup> Only the six Japanese and three of the French students were enrolled in this class so the unexpected absence of the French students meant that there were only Japanese students in class that day.

Tomoko here expresses no discomfort in relation to speaking up in front of the European students. Noriko and Yoko, on the other hand, did acknowledge a certain sense of discomfort in relation to the European students in general. However, their strong desire to become speakers meant that they believed they needed the European students to support their language learning and identity changes. In other words, their dominant desires were strongly to resignify in terms of new molarised identities as speakers and expressers of opinions.

*I don't feel mmmmm I can't mmm speak my opinion well in only Japanese class...if I am in the class with European or foreign country people I think I can't do well in the class but this is sometimes so stressful but maybe this force me to study [...] I rely on Japanese [language] if there are only Japanese in the class (Noriko iw6),*

*If I got used to the atmosphere of the all-Japanese students class maybe I wouldn't improve my English skill it- when European students, sometimes I feel sometimes- I sometimes feel frustrated or nervous to European students but I think I get used to more, more after (Yoko iw6),*

Noboru also clearly preferred the presence of the European students. As we have already seen, he expressed a strong desire to spend time with students from other cultures than Japan.

*Noboru: Having French students and German students [means] very happy but I'm not happy to have lot more Japanese*

*Constance: So you would like to have fewer [Japanese]?*

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<sup>40</sup> Although I was also not present, this was not considered by Helen to have any impact. When I asked her whether my presence in her classes generally had inhibited her in any way, she said “No, sorry [laugh]” (iw16).

*Noboru: We'd like to be have- we have a tendency- we like- we likely to get together in lunchtime, Japanese .....um go to the cafeteria, it's good in Japan, it is good in general but this is [name of university] and my time is limited so... I have to try to make a friend with some[one from] other country (Noboru iw2).*

These students thus tended to prefer the presence of the European students, even if it made them uncomfortable or stressed, because they believed this would help them achieve their goals. In this case then, it was the powerful desires of the students to reterritorialise which appear to negate or resist the deterritorialisation made possible by the absence of the French students. In other words, the Japanese students were strongly focussed on their belief in and need to become speakers 'like the Europeans'. Thus any possibility of achievement or progress was linked, in the perceptions of the Japanese students, to the presence in class of the European students. Although in this particular class the students were actually speaking more than usual, according to the teacher, this fact was less prominent to them than the fact of the absence of the French students.

In a second example, I return to a previous discussion in relation to teachers' molarised identities. In this example, the resonances and affective connections which mark the presence of desire again seemed to be in evidence. I referred in *Chapter 6* to an information gap task which Dominique and Antonio were required to complete while having their body language observed by Noriko<sup>41</sup>. The task lasted about thirteen minutes. During this time, Helen, Noriko and I were silent observers. I wrote in my field notes at the time that the experience of watching this interaction was highly pleasurable. Indeed, it was redolent of Albrecht-Crane's discussion of the strength, potential and vitality of the affective links which can occur in and between bodies in interaction (2003a).

Dominique was the focus of our attention during this activity. She had been given the blank sheet and therefore took an active, questioning role. I commented in my field notes.

*Dominique's movements are sudden, eager, quick. She laughs, smiles, grins, has lots of facial expression, clear gazes, biting lips, eyebrows, exasperation, mock indignation, teasing, mock seduction, taking pleasure.*

*Helen enjoying it. Watching how it develops. Her being is involved. She half nods, half shakes her head, tiny imperceptible movements. Looking, straining to look at Dominique's map. She grips one wrist with the other hand, leaning forward on the desk, willing success, [she mouths] inaudible 'no' and 'yes' to participate.*

*Dominique's "up" is a sudden jerk with absolute balletic direction.*

*Helen says 'no' to something [asked by Dominique] then smiles satisfied when Antonio says "which is the point I have just indicated".*

*We are all enjoying it. I am loving it (fHw7).*

Helen's vicarious involvement in the students' task can be seen in her body language as she leans forward to see the map, and in her half-conscious participation, answering the questions as if she herself had been required to do the task. This involvement, and giggles from Noriko, I would suggest, are the manifestation of the connection of these two observers to the vitality of the

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<sup>41</sup> In this instance, all other class members were absent due to their participation in another program.

affective link between Dominique and Antonio. Indeed, our receptivity to this interaction allowed augmentation of our beings in this moment.

However, this affective interaction between Dominique and Antonio was not remarked upon or acknowledged by the teacher, most probably because there is no discourse with which to do so. As Albrecht Crane discusses (2003a), in the pedagogical context we are limited to discourses which sexualise positive affect between students, or between teachers and students. In addition, the operation of other discourses constrains emotional expression in most pedagogical sites since “emotions are a site of social control” (Boler, 1999: xvii). Thus, Helen’s subsequent comment, “*Listen to us analyse, we’re going to analyse you*” (cHw7), is not able to take account of the wondrous vitality witnessed here. In this example, then, the affective connections and vitality that mark desire appear to be in evidence in a classroom interaction between students. However, there is no classroom discourse available to either acknowledge or further support the flow of desire here. This confirms the powerful impacts of molarisation on teacher subjectivity since the teacher did not bring alternative discourses into play here. It also brings into question the extent to which, in current classroom practices, such desire can be given space to be expressed.



If the classroom is viewed as a machinic multiplicity of affects, then assemblages/bodies are always in relation with each other; there are always conjunctions, disjunctions, breakages and flows between bodies. The classroom can thus be seen as a mass of interconnecting currents, in which flows of differing intensities travel in multiple directions, establishing and breaking links. Positive connections, positive affect, and positive conjunctions reinforce a sense of identity and enable becomings. Negative affect, failure to connect, and interruptions to connections challenge identity. This is not necessarily without value, since negative flows can themselves provoke subsequent positive flows.

However, subjectivities are created as sites of struggle where negative affect and interruptions to connections predominate. This occurs in the face of the drive for a unified subjectivity and our 'practice of forgetting' (Taussig, 1993) which both represent attempts to avoid the chaos of non-self.

Becoming occurs as a result of interactions which affect us; it is not individuals who 'become' as a product of their own desires. "Life is not composed of pre-given forms that simply evolve to become what they are, as though becoming could be attributed to the becoming *of* some being" (Colebrook, 2002: 133). Rather than being defined in terms of binaries or slots in a hierarchy, bodies should be defined by "what they can do, the affects they are capable of in passion and in action" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002: 60). The body as so conceived "resurrect[s] the question of the centrality of ethics, of the encounter with otherness" (Grosz, 1994a: 196). Indeed the matter of connections was often mentioned by students. Ursula spoke of the importance of making connections with other students. She saw this as being more important than knowledge of English.

*The big difference is how- how the people try to get in contact with [others], even with um, especially- Giovanni's [English] especially is not the best like mine is, but he's uh- he's not so shy, he gets in contact with other people and that is more important than the English (iw10).*

In fact, students worked on making connections with each other from the first day of semester. The teachers' nominal introductory activities, common in ESL classrooms throughout Australia at least, were deemed inadequate for this purpose by some students. Thus Antonio commented to me privately during the break on the first day of his first class that before students could do the set tasks, they needed to be given more time to get to know each other better

(fHw1). Since the teacher had carried out an introductory activity, Antonio's comment points to the perfunctory nature of many language class activities.

Rie for instance referred to positive affect in the form of the "*kind words, phrases*" which she received from both Margaret and the three French students after her first seminar presentation. On that occasion, she said, she was not able to present the seminar as required.

*I didn't prepare well and in- uh- yeah- when I present I forgot everything and I- it stopped but [Margaret] suggests uh- me very kind - she gave me very kind- oh, word for me and also as another French friends also gave me very kind words, phrases and very happy - I was very happy yah (iw16).*

Students also referred to teachers in terms of the levels of connection which were possible. Sai'da experienced "*more positive interaction with*" Margaret and Pauline (iw13) and Margaret's responsiveness, in other words, a capacity to interact, was given by Rie as one reason for her naming of Margaret as her "best" teacher.

*Nnn she- she- uh- she change or she try to respond quickly and so nnn I- nnn- I can ask her easily (iw16).*

The importance of being open-minded in order to make these connections was also mentioned by students. Speaking about Noboru in relation to the importance of making connections, Ursula said

*He's on the right way he's um... [laughs] he's more open to the other people (iw2).*

Indeed, the notion of open-minded for Ursula appeared to equate with an ability to make connections.

*Constance: What do you mean by open-minded?*

*Ursula: Um um- they um more open to other people, to get- get in connect with them (iw2).*

Interestingly, in terms of my previous comments about the power disparity between teachers and students, teachers' perceptions of open-mindedness in students appears to relate more to notions of the good student. Thus Susan's notion of open-minded appears to equate with being 'not critical' as the following comment demonstrates.

*Dominique she's a difficult kind of a character [...] she's always ready to jump on you if you- she thinks she's being, you know, not treated well or fairly, you know, she's the first one to say it, but, um, yeah, I think the others are reasonably open-minded (iw16).*

The connections which students were seeking function both on the molar and molecular plane, and occur momentarily, contingently and with specificity. There is no integrated subject masterminding this process and thus able to fully acculturate, but a fragmented, impermanent subject produced momentarily in interaction.

♦

This chapter has attempted, on the one hand, to demonstrate the major role played by students' concerns with identity change. In terms of the classroom, then, it is important to be receptive to these concerns if we, as teachers, wish to form assemblages with students which augment rather than diminish. In other words, an acknowledgement of the complexity of student concerns with their



own identity changes provides direction for a syllabus content focus which is not merely authentic but also highly relevant to students' interests.

The chapter has also demonstrated some of the events and practices which contributed to, or precluded, connection and becoming in the classroom. It has shown change operating on two planes. We have seen how discourses operating on the plane of organisation reterritorialise students' desires to become other through language learning and through sojournment. The chapter has been concerned also with the flows and movements occurring on a plane of immanence which produce a non-subjectified, Deleuzian desire. This provides an excess which has the potential to escape discourse. The chapter looks at how the reception or repression of desire - the capacities to affect and be affected - plays out in the classroom. I have shown how this kind of desire or becoming is non-signifying, and not produced in discourse. In this sense, it is a 'pure' form of agency. As previously mentioned the positivity of the Deleuzian notion of desire offers a way to think agency which neither reduces it to resistance, nor aligns it with a position of power which can be shown to lack conscious mastery. As can be seen, if we recognise the existence of the plane of immanence and the molar movements which code it, we must also recognise the existence of desire and the always-already possibility of lines of flight occurring on this plane.

The notions of reterritorialisation, deterritorialisation and desire allow us to see the complexity of the production of subjectivity in relations of power. It is not a simple top-down notion where, for example, the right to speak can be claimed, but rather a process in which, on the one hand, subjectivities are the result of momentary, contingent and specific interactions, and on the other, processes of asubjectification are always occurring in the context of these interactions.

## *Chapter 8: An immanent end to the story...*

In which the story so far is summarised and some new directions are offered.

*You can't see what to do, you can only see what not to do. The total negation of that road is the new beginning, the other road. The other road is not on the map, nor can it ever be on the map. Every map is a map of the wrong road, the old road.*

- U. G. Krishnamurti



This thesis has attempted to operationalise the notion of subjectivity as performed, as an event, and as becoming. Two main conceptual tools, deriving from the philosophical work of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, were used to develop this notion. These tools, discourse and desire, were employed to investigate the production and performance of teacher and student subjectivities, and the presence of agency, within a second language classroom. The conception of the subject as previously conceived in second language teaching and learning was questioned. The discussion demonstrated that the drive to present the subject as coherent, unitary, and stable disguises the diversity, ambiguities and contradictions produced through the intersection of conflicting discourses. In showing “the clash of different discourse types for ascendancy within interaction” (Mills, 1997: 154), the thesis has sought to challenge taken-for-granted understandings of classroom events and practices, and to reveal something of the active ‘underlife’ of students in classrooms (Canagarajah, 1993: 613). Expectations of teacher mastery in the classroom and fixed notions of good practice come into question in the face of ambiguities in these taken-for-granted understandings. Additionally, the discussion has highlighted the profoundly interactive nature of subjectivity, and its contingent production.

*Chapter 5* demonstrated the multiple ways discourse worked to produce the Japanese students as non-speakers. We saw how describing students in terms of binary categories, such as active or passive, led to a misrecognition of actual behaviour and positioned students in fixed ways. We also saw how the identifications of the Japanese students with the subject position of non-speaker were produced in an interplay between the cultural scripts provided by early discursive construction and current discourses in this language classroom. A radical multiplicity of subjectivity was illustrated, indicating that, if we as teachers are in any way to accommodate the multiplicities of students in classrooms, we must question Nelson's statement, discussed in *Chapter 3*, that we "cannot not classify" since it is "what our brain does" (1998: 798). Thus, while the cultural scripts provided by discourses can be seen to have powerful impacts, the radical heterogeneity of subjectivities - the complex intersection of discourses in interaction - precludes any simple or deterministic mapping of cultural identity onto particular individuals. Given the power of representation to determine thought, a possible stance may be to live in a climate of constant questioning of all representation systems and to be wary of any naming at all.

*Chapter 6* demonstrated how a discourse of good teacher constrains teachers by reproducing their conduct in terms of normative conceptions and how this amounts to a molarisation or stratification. It showed how the complex interplay between available subject positions within this discourse, while producing teachers' subjectivities variously, nevertheless formed relatively rigid teacher identities towards which students often demonstrated some form of resistance. The chapter also discussed how the discourse of good teacher impacts to position students in particular ways, and how students accept, resist or ignore this positioning. Above all, this discussion demonstrated the impossibility of mastery and, once again, the radical multiplicity of student and teacher positions.

The focus in these two chapters was on processes of molarisation or stratification; that is, on fixations or codings of the flow of becoming. These processes of molarisation can be seen to effect a kind of symbolic violence which acts through teachers on students, through students on each other, and through institutional processes on both teachers and students.

Becoming was the focus of *Chapter 7* which sought to examine the excess which escapes discourse and to look at how the reception or repression of desire - the capacities to affect and be affected - plays out in the classroom. A recognition of desire and affect opens the way for a pedagogy which resonates with subjects' experiences of themselves. Indeed, the concept of desire seeks "an/other pedagogy that would attend to the excess overflowing any binary opposition" (Davis, 2000: 18). We saw how discourses operating on the plane of organisation reterritorialise students' desires to become-other through language learning and through sojournment. We also looked at the flows and movements occurring on a plane of immanence which produce a non-subjectified desire, Deleuzian desire. I showed how this kind of desire, this kind of becoming, is non-signifying, and not produced in discourse. Thus, while the teachers tended to perform in the classroom according to conventional teacher roles, some non-teacher roles leaked performances to which students were able to make connections. Those leakages demonstrated the existence of Deleuzian desire, as did the students' desires to become-other through the language exchange experience; that is, desires to become are immanent to life. The positivity of this notion of desire offers a way to think agency which does not reduce it to resistance, through an acknowledgment of the remainder or excess to discourse, which is desire. Thus we also looked at the role of becoming as non-subjectification and I argued that this type of becoming is a more pure kind of agency.

Throughout the thesis, I sought to elaborate a notion of subjectivity as performed, as an event, and as becoming. The discussions in *Chapters 4 - 7* demonstrated how roles were performed according to available discourses and how identifications with particular discursive constructions produced subjectivities which were performed as discourses collided. Thus, the Japanese students performed the identifications with non-speaker, in a conjunction of past and current discursive constructions. These discourses thus came into operation in interaction with others. In this sense, subjectivity can be seen to be an event, occurring in particular moments of connection with the others who express, either implicitly or explicitly, those discourses. Subjectivity, then, is not marked by fixed, essential characteristics which are brought to a situation by a coherent, stable individual. Rather, it is impermanent, contingent and interactively produced.

In the light of this notion of subjectivity, and the possibility of a non-subjective agency, the thesis foregrounds a number of issues in this classroom which have consequences for second language teaching and learning. One issue, arising in the light of the heterogeneity of the classroom, is that a thorough mastery of pedagogical knowledge - who students 'are' and what they want - is clearly an impossibility. Indeed the expectation that teachers should know this, even through tools such as needs' analyses, is a transcendent one, implying a hierarchy of control and responsibility. The subject position of responsible teacher, in particular, makes some teachers feel, as we have seen, that they are not doing enough if they do not prepare their lessons in great detail and take full control of what occurs in the class. However, the assumptions which underlie teacher approaches are often erroneous. The fact that students responded with cynicism to many of the materials which teachers prepared so arduously demonstrates how teachers' attempts at mastery may be misplaced.

This relates to a second issue, the struggle to allow difference and to see the flow of difference for what it is. In terms of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the molecular plane, the sense that is made of things is a process applied to the complex flow of pure difference or becoming. In other words, our understandings of the world exist in the form of names or representations of what would otherwise be an undifferentiated flow of energy. This process, which brings the world into being, is one of "contractions of flows of becoming" (Colebrook, 2002: 126). In order to avoid these contractions, we need to recognise ourselves as a flow of images rather than as the origin for the interpretation of them; that is we need to 'become-imperceptible' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 248 ). Becoming-imperceptible is "the challenge of abandoning or transforming the perceived image of thought or point of view from which we judge and order life" (Colebrook, 2002: 129). This relates to the notion of agency, proposed here, as that which "evades a logic of identity" (Albrecht-Crane, 2003b: 56), and which requires the possibility of simultaneously acknowledging and disarming the constructs of language. Deleuze's (1987:25) notion of difference responds to this by seeking to foreground the logic of 'and' in place of a logic of 'is' which implies attribution and evaluation. This is useful for rethinking the representations discussed here since it allows us to see the intense multiplicity of subjectivities, and the necessity of abandoning perceived representations and fixed points of view which reduce this heterogeneity to something 'manageable'.

The discussion thus points to the importance, for those of us who teach, of finding ways to escape from the hermetic seal of our own culturally produced subjectivities; that is, of finding ways to see and know more than what we have "already seen and [...] already learned" (Shumway, 1995: 258). Otherwise, it seems, our assumptions lead us to enact 'symbolic violence' both on ourselves and on others. However, this need for teachers to step outside their own assumptions as much as possible is limited by available discourses, and by

discursive constraints on self-awareness and self-knowledge as demonstrated in this thesis. In response to this, the thesis proposes desire as one way 'something different' can occur.

The thesis demonstrated some ways that subjectivities are co-produced in interactions between bodies and discourses where the power to affect and be affected plays a key role; that is, it focused on events and practices which contributed to, or precluded, connection and becoming in the classroom. It became clear that, since we live in a world in which "relation is primary" (Veyne, 1997b: 177), it is important to fully recognise that affective connections and disjunctions necessarily exist among students, and between student and teacher, and that it is vital to recognise this "power to affect other forces (spontaneity) and to be affected by others (receptivity)" (Deleuze, 1988: 101).

Acknowledging affect is an affirmative process which resists the rigid identity effects of molarisation. It foregrounds what bodies actually do, in terms of the capacities to affect and be affected, rather than focusing on what they are supposed to be, and on being held "hostage" (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2003: 201) to notions of molarised, binarised identities. As Deleuze states, "to affirm is not to take responsibility for, to take on the burden of what is, but to release, to set free what lives" (1983: 185). Acknowledging affect means acknowledging that desire is immanent to the classroom, just as it is immanent to all existence. Although processes of molarisation and the capture of desire occur in spite of efforts to withstand them, the pedagogical repertoire needs, as Johnson points out (2001), to include joy and pleasure, if we are to avoid the disengagement often demonstrated by students in my research. The institution needs to become more "porous" (T. Johnson, 2001: 637) in order to allow and to recognise such movements of desire. It requires what Ellsworth calls "teaching through holes in language" (1997: 187).

Although a notion of affective connection has been acknowledged in numerous previous studies (for just two texts which deal with this, see, Arnold, 1999; Moskowitz, 1978), it is not a simple matter of the teacher creating a caring, sharing space. This is not only because conceptions of caring differ widely but also, as we have seen, the teacher's mastery of the classroom situation is necessarily suspect. Affecting and being affected does not necessarily equate with being excessively concerned with students' needs. As we saw in the case of Pauline, her knowledge and dynamism provided connective possibilities which augmented students' beings. In fact, the power to affect or be affected appeared to be often diminished by strong identifications with the discourse of good teacher or good student. Thus, the actual practices of the Japanese students in small group discussions were contingent on who was present; particular others could not only enhance or reduce participation but also create sadness or joy. In terms of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of assemblages and machines, we can see how the conjunctions and disjunctions between the machinic parts augment or block the flow of desire.

We saw in *Chapter 2* that the notion of immanence and a firm rejection of transcendence underpins the philosophical approach of Foucault and of Deleuze and Guattari. This implies a way of thinking which rejects hierarchies and external solutions. A transcendent concept of education is one in which the teacher stands above and apart from a body of students; is presumed to have a greater knowledge than the students; takes responsibility for imparting that knowledge to them; and does this through a control of the teaching context. Such a conception has long been criticised and notions of negotiated curriculum and student-centred learning have been regularly proposed (see for example Nunan, 1988). These ideas have been reiterated more recently by, for example, Kumaravadivelu who suggests that teachers should "seriously 'listen' when language learners speak" (2003: 49) and by Van Lier who seeks to "allow learners to be the perceiving, thinking, acting and interacting person that they



have the right to be" (1998: 142). However, in the classrooms in my study, a transcendent concept of teaching continued to prevail. This disjuncture, and the fact that a negotiated curriculum was only taken up by these teachers in a limited way, may indicate the powerful impact of the discursive constructions of teacher identity in terms of the discourses to which these teachers were exposed as learners. It may also indicate the power of notions of 'good teacher' as expressed through the discourses operating in this research site, discussed in *Chapter 6*. This disjuncture opens the way for a more 'rhizomatic' teaching.

In recognising the importance of connection, a rhizomatic teaching would call identity into question, and in doing so, would open the way for becoming. It would acknowledge the multiple heterogeneity which is produced and performed in a classroom as a result of a proliferation of diverse relationships, ruptures and linkages. Rather than insisting that groups of people operate as molarised structures, or as fixed and rigid wholes, which they are not, rhizomatic teaching recognises the impossibility of ever really 'meeting student needs' by a top-down control imposed by one person, the teacher. Rather, an absence of teacher control allows differences to coexist without the pressures to Sameness. Allowing differences to coexist means recognising the different capacities of each body to affect and be affected. "[B]odies are individuated by particular affective thresholds and thus enact variable investments in social space [which] exceed the molar coding of institutionalized learning *and* the coding of bodies as particular molar identities" (Albrecht-Crane & Slack, 2003: 201). Questions which a rhizomatic teaching would address include: What links can be made? What transformations can be undergone? What enhancements can be produced? Above all, rhizomatic teaching would recognise that there is no fixed route to follow but rather "an experimentation in contact with the real" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 12). It requires mapping a new route since a "map is open and connectable in all its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. ... a map has multiple entryways, as

opposed to the tracing, which always comes back 'to the same' " (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 12). This may amount to the need for "every true pedagogue [to be] in effect an anti-pedagogue (Felman, 1987: 72). Rhizomatic pedagogy is marked by impermanence and instability; it seeks to respond to 'what is' rather than to what is already 'known'; it does not seek 'a settled practice'.

A rhizomatic teaching would require a balance in the identifications required of teachers with the role of absolute and superior knower. To some extent, everything would be open and student knowledges would have greater status. In addition, allowing student knowledges to be expressed would make their perceptions and assumptions accessible for discussion and available to challenge teacher perceptions and assumptions. As we saw in *Chapters 5 and 6*, teachers' knowledge of the impact of the cultural backgrounds of the students was restricted to hegemonic discursive constructions. Knowledge which is able to take heterogeneity into account builds up only slowly over time in serendipitous circumstances. Those circumstances rarely exist in most classrooms, particularly when teachers feel constrained by a curriculum. This constraint, whether 'real' or not, can be seen to block an awareness of the many ways in which the demands of the curriculum could be met within a rhizomatic teaching framework. A rhizomatic teaching would see the opportunities for teaching from within the issues presented in the class, because they are, in fact, 'under our noses', and would not see the teacher as losing face through being a 'not-knower'.

A notion of rhizomatic teaching also draws attention to the constraints of self- and other-representation, and provides a reference point for decision making. It does not demand of teachers that they partake of a kind of soul-searching about the extent to which they are locked into discourses of good teacher: Am I taking too much responsibility? Have I got everything under control? Do I know enough? Rather, it also asks teachers to be aware of this present moment: What

is it in this moment now which is relevant? What, of the new and spontaneous, might arise if connection is allowed? Otherwise, when we seek to settle the matter of identity, for ourselves or others, we have become molarised and have cut off possible lines of flight. This indicates a need to stay open; “in a world of becoming what something ‘is’ is always open to what it is not yet” (Colebrook, 2002: 126). And staying open is a matter of mapping connections. A rhizomatic teaching thus seeks to avoid solutions and interpretations, and to remain within uncertainty and experimentation. It seeks to “live with the paradoxes of teaching” (Ellsworth, 1997: 195). This relates to the idea that learning of any kind can only occur when the self has been subverted (Ellsworth, 1997: 147). Since what is already known is also already fixed, any moment of learning must occur on a line of flight. Even learning then, can be seen to be a matter of mapping connections with the new since the desire to know arises in interaction and the intensity of that desire derives from the capacity to affect and be affected.

In *Chapter 4*, I discussed how, in a poststructuralist approach, knowledge and reality are thought in particular ways. Neither the performance nor the writing of research can be accepted as straightforward, transparent processes. Nor can the subjectivities of participants, including that of the researcher, be considered to be self-evidently describable. Thus, the notion that objective and generalisable statements of truth can be derived from the ‘data’ was rejected. This thesis, then, must be seen as providing a subjective truth which cannot claim a transparent, objective relationship to the research site and its participants. In this sense, this thesis is ‘a story’, a fictional construct ‘created’ by a “crowd” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 3), a haecceity-otherwise-known-as-Constance. The thesis, itself a molarised form, has expressed, through a heterogeneous conflux of discourses, particular molarised representations of the meanings, values, uncertainties and misconceptions in circulation in a particular time and place. It seeks to make available, through observations of

these discourses, an alternate way to think what may occur in some second language classrooms. The thesis has sought to demonstrate the need for and the possibility of thinking differently. Where that will lead is unknown.



### *Appendix A: Attribution of quotations and transcription codes*

#### **Attribution of quotations**

i = interview

c = recording of classroom interactions

f = field notes taken by myself during the observations

g = recording of small group work

e = email

w = written work produced in class

H, M, P, S = refer to the teacher on that class: Helen, Margaret, Pauline, or Susan

Numbers refer to the week of semester in which the statement was made.

Note that Week 0 refers to the week prior to commencement of the semester.

*For example:*

fPw1 = field notes, Pauline's class, week 1

gSw1 = small group, Susan's class, week 1

iw6 = interview week 6.

#### **Codes used in interview transcriptions**

[...] - some original text omitted

[text] - not stated by interviewee, but inserted by researcher to ensure clarity of grammatical or referential meaning

text- - speaker self-interrupts

| text | - overlapping dialogue

. - pause of one second

... - pause of three seconds

**bold** - indicates emphasis by speaker

[text] - includes description of the non-verbal (laughter and gesture), researcher's clarifying comments (where appropriate), and English translations of other languages

(?) - rising tone to indicate question to interviewer, usually in relation to choice of grammatical form or lexical item

↓ - falling tone

↑ - rising tone

### *Appendix B: Schedule of interviews and classroom observations*

Interviews show name and number of interview. Classroom observations: ☞ plus teacher's name.

Wk	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
-1					Helen 1
0		Margaret 1		Pauline 1	Susan 1
1	☞ Susan & Kim-orientation	☞ Helen	☞ Susan Margaret 2	Tomoko 1 ☞ Pauline	Rie 1 Margaret 2
2	Ursula 1	Noboru 1 Yoko 1 ☞ Helen	Noriko 1 ☞ Susan	Katsuyuki 1 ☞ Margaret <i>Margaret 3</i> ☞ Pauline	
3		Antonio 1	Roland 1 Sai'da	Dominique 1 ☞ Margaret	
4		Chantal 1	Giovanni 1 ☞ Susan (not taped)		
5	(Semester break: weeks 5 & 6)				
6	Yoko 2	Helen 2 Katsuyuki 2	Susan 2		Noriko 2
7		☞ Helen	☞ Susan		
8		Li 1	☞ Susan (not taped)		
9	Noboru 2	Sai'da 2 ☞ Helen (not taped)		☞ Pauline	Rie 2 Tomoko 2
10	Pauline 2 Ursula 2	Antonio 2	Chantal 2 Dominique 2		
11			Giovanni 2 Roland 2		
12					
13				☞ Pauline	
14		☞ Helen	Tomoko 3		<i>Li 2</i>
15	(Final week of semester: week 15)	☞ student presentations – Helen & Margaret  Sai'da 3	<i>Margaret 3</i> <i>Chantal 3</i> ☞ student presentations – Helen & Margaret  ☞ Susan	Dominique 3 Pauline 3 ☞ Pauline	Katsuyuki 3 Noriko 3
16	Helen 3 Noboru 3 Roland 3 Yoko 3	Ursula 3 Rie 3	Susan 3	Kim 1 Max 1	

## *Appendix C: Standard questions: semi-structured interviews with students*

### First interview

Why did you choose to come to Australia? What was your purpose in coming here?

What sort of contact have you had with other cultures? What did you like/not like about that culture?

How would you describe your personality? Do you think/feel you are typical for a (person from your country)? What kinds of personality do you admire? Who, in your class, has these qualities?

What sort of impact do you think being in Australia might have on you?

What do you think of the classes so far? Are they what you expected? Is there anything which you found unusual? Is there anything which annoys you or bores you?

How do you feel about being tape recorded?

### Second interview

Do you need to get credit for these courses at your home university?

What is an ideal student like in (your country)?

What do you think of the classes lately? Are they what you want?/ helpful for your English? Is there anything which annoys you or bores you?

What do you think of the other students? Is there anyone in the class who you particularly admire at the moment? Is there anyone in the class who particularly annoys you at the moment?

What are you wanting to achieve in your life at the moment? What are you most happy with in your life at the moment? And what are you most unhappy about in your life at the moment?

What strategies are you using?

What sort of impact do you think being in Australia is having on you? Have you noticed any changes in yourself?

What is your ideal teacher like?

Who do you feel is responsible for your successful learning?

How is the achievement of your goal going? *Goal from last interview*

### Third interview

Did the course meet your expectations?

How are you feeling about the classes now?

What did you find most enjoyable/problematic about being here?

Have you noticed any changes in yourself?

Did you make any new friends in this class/someone you would like to keep in contact with?

What do you like about speaking/knowing English?

What is your opinion about the interviews?



## *Appendix D: Standard questions: semi-structured interviews with teachers*

### First interview

What kinds of contact have you had with other cultures/languages?  
How do you see the relationship between learning language and learning about a culture?  
What kinds of skills do you feel it is important for students to gain from the course you are/will be teaching?  
To what extent do you think students are likely to change during their time in Australia?  
What dimensions of this study interest you in particular?

### Second interview

How are the classes going?  
How do these students compare with past years' students?  
How would you describe the differences in the classroom? What's the impact on what students need to learn?  
How do you see your role as a teacher in relation to this diversity?  
How well do you think the course/the curriculum meets the diversity of needs?  
Have you noticed any specific effects of particular individuals on the group?  
Who are the key players? Who would you say are the "good" students?  
What are you most happy with in your teaching at the moment? And what are you most unhappy about?

### Third interview

Generally, how did the class go?  
How do you decide what to teach? What do you feel you need to know about these students in order to teach to your satisfaction?  
How do you evaluate a class in terms of your own sense of satisfaction with it?  
Do you think the students like you? Is it important to you?  
What are you most happy with in your teaching of this course? And what are you most unhappy about in your teaching of this course?  
What aspects of this group of students do you find particularly easy to respond to/ particularly difficult to respond to?  
Could you say which students seem to have made more/less progress?  
To what extent did you have a choice about the course you taught?  
What are the effects of the casualisation of teachers on you as a teacher?  
Have there been any occasions when something happened in class which you simply could not compute?

How did you feel about having me there in class?

*Appendix E: Collated student data*

<b>nationality</b>	<b>gender</b>	<b>age</b>	<b>age started learning English</b>	<b>years of English study</b>	<b>pseudonym</b>	<b>enrolled in these course(s) within the program</b>
Japanese	female	21	13	8	Noriko	A B C
Japanese	female	20	10	10	Rie	A B C
Japanese	female	22	12	10	Yoko	A B C
Japanese	female	21	13	9	Tomoko	A B C
Japanese	male	20	13	7	Katsuyuki	A B C
Japanese	male-gay	23	13	10	Noboru	A B C
French	male	22	12	10	Roland =	A
French - Brazilian	male	24	?	10	Antonio =	A B
French - Portuguese	female	22	12	10	Dominique =	A B
French - Moroccan	female	23	13	8	Sai' da =	A B
French	female	21	11	10	Chantal =	A
German	female	24	13	6	Ursula =	A
German	female	33	?	?	Doris =	A*
Italian	male	27	14	3	Giovanni =	A
Chinese-(Japanese?)	male	24	11	11	Li	A B

Key:

Course A - *Academic English for Tertiary Study* AETS. Consisted of 3 segments:

*Listening/notetaking, Critical reading/writing, Conversation/pronunciation.*

Course B - *Learning about Australia* LA.

Course C - *Australia in context* AC

\*= Doris had been exempted from 1/3 of the AETS course: *Conversation/pronunciation*

= = these students were also enrolled in mainstream English courses in other faculties

Note that Li joined the course almost two weeks late.

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