



Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal
<http://sisaljournal.org>

EAL Student Capability: Taking a Leap Through The Dragon's Gate

Kerstin Dofs, Ara Institute of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand

ISSN 2185-3762

Corresponding email address: kerstin.dofs@ara.ac.nz

Publication date: December, 2022.

To cite this article

Dofs, K. (2022). EAL student capability: Taking a leap through the dragon's gate *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 13(4), 409–425. <https://doi.org/10.37237/130403>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Please contact the author for permission to reprint elsewhere.

Scroll down for article.

EAL Student Capability: Taking a Leap Through The Dragon's Gate

Kerstin Dofs, Ara Institute of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7551-5269>

Abstract

This ethnographic study, set at a higher educational institution (HEI) in New Zealand, was inspired by the many English as an additional language (EAL)/international students at HEIs prior to the current pandemic situation in the world. The motivation was to understand the students better from a beyond the Language Self-Access Centre (LSAC) perspective and to see if their needs were met competently. Whereas students were using English in a new educational system and in an unfamiliar society, HEIs aim to internationalise in order to provide excellent education for them. The suggestion here is that a transformation through mutual adjustments would benefit both students and institutions. Reflection on measures for both sides to adopt in adjusting to each other is included.

Keywords: EAL, beyond self-access, higher educational institutions, mutual adjustment

The study this article is based on was inspired by the many English as an additional language (EAL)/international students who were part of the demographics at higher education institutions (HEIs) prior to the pandemic situation in the world. In my daily work as a manager of a Language Self Access Centre (LSAC) at an institution in New Zealand, I often meet EAL students who study in regular programmes. Some have previously been studying in the LSAC and then moved on, others are new to the country and the educational system. The motivation to undertake this ethnographic study was to understand EAL students better and to find out if their needs were met competently beyond LSAC studies.

In this article, I will first discuss the internationalisation policies that local institutions have in place, which aim to provide excellent education for EAL/international students. Then, I will point out some conditions for these students as they study abroad using English in a new educational system and an unfamiliar society. This will be followed by the methodology and findings of the study, which include some challenges that students faced as well as the strategies they applied. Finally, I will suggest how transformation through a mutual adjustment approach would benefit both EAL students and institutions.

Literature Review

A general definition of internationalisation at HEIs, and perhaps the most well-known, states: “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of postsecondary education” (Knight, 2003, p. 2). This was also the guide for the internationalisation policy at the HEI in this study. Internationalisation should also represent “a process based on values of cooperation, partnership, exchange, mutual benefits, and capacity building” (Knight, 2013, p. 89). However, this concept has been interpreted differently in recent years, with it increasingly being characterised by “competition, commercialisation, self-interest, and status building” (Knight, 2013, p. 89). The following extended definition of the concept represents a new, more student centred, agenda for internationalisation:

The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society (De Wit et al., 2015, p. 29).

Considering the way that internationalisation is conceptualised by academics from other contexts provides a different viewpoint. For example, according to Gu, (as cited in Ryan, 2013),

The internationalisation of education can be expressed in the exchange of culture and values, mutual understanding and a respect for difference...The internationalisation of education does not simply mean the integration of different national cultures or the suppression of one national culture by another culture (pp. 280-281),

This is seen as a Western imperialist perspective by Ryan (2013). Furthermore, there are changes that everyone faces as a result of the exposure to cultures other than one’s own, but Kim (2015) urges us not to be afraid of cross-borrowing of identities, as it is often “an act of appreciation that leaves neither the lender nor the borrower deprived” (p. 10).

Language challenges play a significant role in EAL students’ adjustment process. This was acknowledged by, for example, Sawir (2005) who stated that

...of all the social and academic issues and problems facing international students that are cited in recent studies - differences in learning style, culture

shock, homesickness, social difficulties - the problem they themselves most often refer to is difficulties with English (p. 569).

Moreover, Kettle (2017) highlights the key role of language in students' learning interactions with teachers, classmates, and texts, drawing attention to the profound anxiety and reticence that many EAL students experience when having to interact in their second language. She argues that pedagogy generates powerful opportunities for learning, and that international students should be perceived as "authoritative, engaged and agentive" (p. 174). Therefore, it is important to see EAL/international students as not in deficit in relation to the HEI culture. This is also asserted by Marginson (2014), who states that these students are, in fact, very capable of using their agency to form their new lives in this unfamiliar situation. He also advocates for staff to view students as capable and self-forming and to give them opportunities to contribute, arguing that the HEIs and students need to engage in mutual adjustment. Examples of how the curriculum could include mutual adjustment by providing students with options and negotiating learning tasks are presented by Tran (2011, 2013). She suggests a "dialogical pedagogic model for mutual adaptation" (Tran, 2011, p. 91) in her study of academic writing by EAL students. She places the concepts of public-private, and collective-individual, on two cross axes; the process goes from interaction, via appropriation and repositioning until practices may be transformed.

EAL students are typically also faced with second language identity development. According to Benson et al. (2013), this "entails a certain 'destabilization' of established language identities" (p. 9), which means that it affects students who engage deeply in learning while using a second language.

Methodology

The following research problem areas guided the study:

- (1) Adjustment in socio-culture and academic environments
- (2) The role of language in adjustment
- (3) The role of the HEI and its teaching and learning approach for adjustment

The study took an ethnographic approach, and it also included a case study. Data were gathered between 2016 and 2019 and involved the following: interviews on three occasions, with nine students from a range of countries (four students from India and one student from China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Germany, and New Caledonia), five teachers in the Business

School, and two learning advisors; focus group discussions, with three groups with a total of seventeen students. (These were not the interviewed students but also from a range of countries); three classroom observations in the Business School; and a study of official institutional documents. See Table 1 for a description of the documents.

Table 1.

An Overview of the Documents Analysed in This Study.

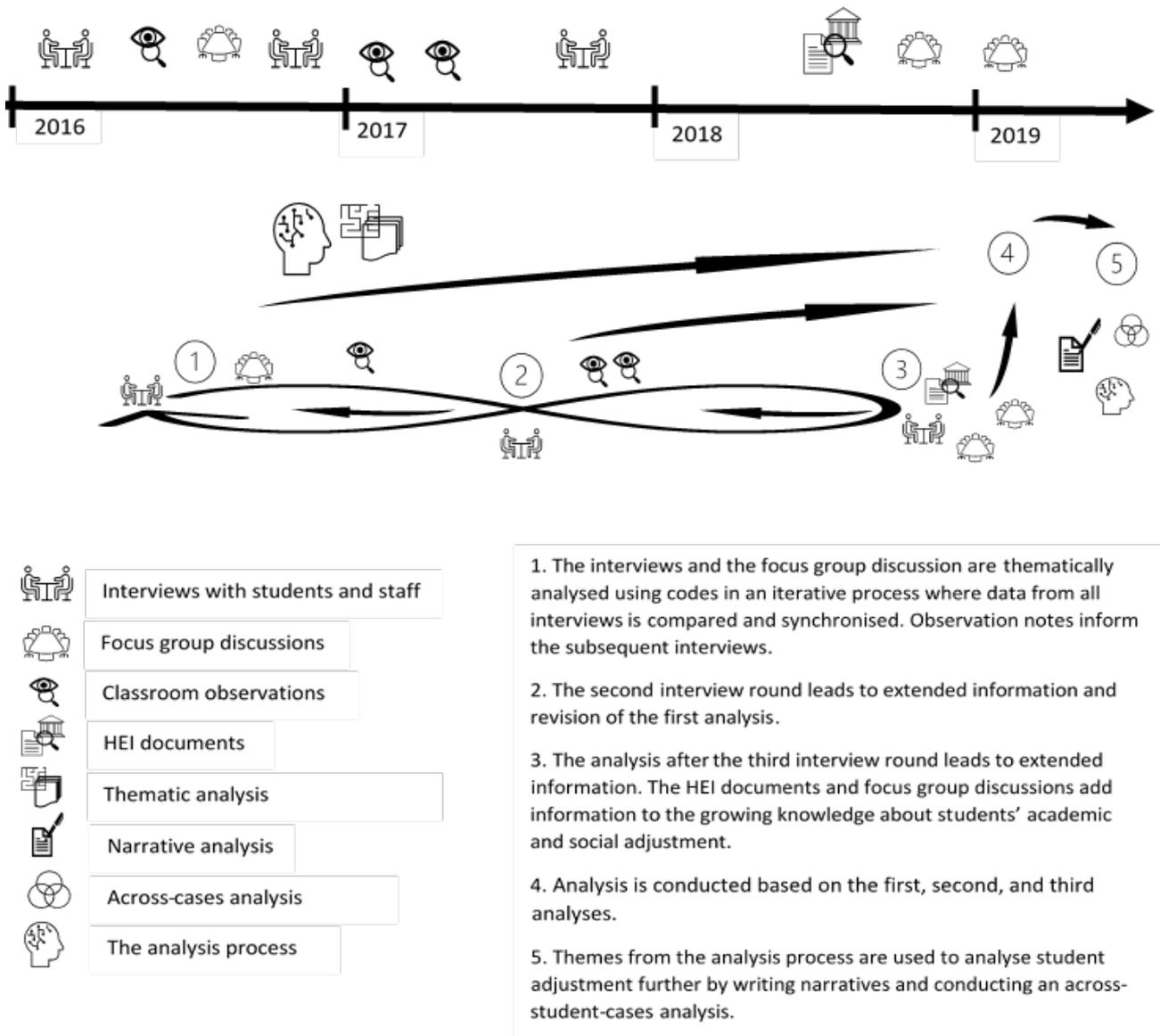
Document	Description	Comments and how the documents relate to each other.
1. Internationalisation Charter annual report 2019	A charter for internationalisation of the institution.	It describes intentions regarding internationalisation of the institution.
2. Strategic Focus Area and Priorities 2020-2021	The strategic intentions of the institution 2020-2021.	General intentions regarding the educational approach of the institution.
3. Investment Plan 2019 to 2021	The investment plan of the institution.	Only the publicly-available pages of the institution's investment plan were part of the analysis.
4. Annual Report 2019	An institutional report	Reports on equal education and employment opportunities, achievements, economy, and service performance, etc.
5. Preparing to Study - A Guide for International Students	A student guide for international students.	Students can access this online before they take up studies at the institution.
6. International Study Guide 2020	A student guide for international students.	Students are informed about where to access this at the compulsory orientation sessions at the beginning of their studies, and in number 5
7. International Mainstream Student Handbook	A practical handbook for international students in mainstream classes.	Students are informed about where to access this at the compulsory orientation sessions at the beginning of their studies.
8. Learner Support – Document App511a	A model of the learner support structure at the HEI.	This document outlines the content and responsibility regarding support by academic staff, as the primary support.

9. Student Magazine, nine issues from 2018-2020	A magazine for students at the institution.	This magazine is produced by current students of the institution.
10. Leadership Statement for International Education (New Zealand Government, 2011)	A Government statement on international education	The institution relates its internationalisation intentions to this government document, especially in respect of revenue.
11. Tertiary Education Strategy - Growing International Linkages (Ministry of Education, 2019)	A Government-produced strategic document on internationalisation.	The institution relates its internationalisation intentions to this government document.
12. International Education Strategy: He Rautaki Mātauranga A Ao 2018-2030. (New Zealand Government, 2017).	A Government-produced strategic document on international education	The Government's intentions regarding internationalisation are outlined in this document.
13. The New Zealand International Education Industry Strategic Roadmap, final summary. (Education New Zealand, 2014)	A Government produced roadmap for the New Zealand International Education Industry.	The institution relates its internationalisation intentions to this government document.
14. Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (New Zealand Legislation, 2016).	A Government code of practice for pastoral care of international students.	All educational establishments must follow this code of practice and it is referred to in the 1-8 documents. Students are also informed about this at the compulsory orientation sessions at the beginning of their studies, and via leaflets.

Table 1 shows that a range of documents were analysed: institutional documents, documents produced by the Government, as well as those produced by students for students. These institutional documents were analysed using the “three concurrent flows of activities” (p. 10) as suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994), i.e., data reduction - the process of selecting suitable documents; data display - an organised compressed assembly of information, permitting conclusion drawing; and the last activity was drawing conclusions and verifying findings. Other data were analysed using a thematic iterative process as described by Miles and Hubermann (1994), across-student cases using a model by Stake (2006), and narrative analysis, inspired by Polkinghorne (2006). (See figure 1 for more details)

Figure 1

A Timeline for Data Gathering and the Analysis Process



Findings

In this report, data were generalised to reflect the qualitative approach of the study, i.e., it is not always stated precisely who said what. Nevertheless, some quotes are included to exemplify the findings.

Internationalisation by HEIs

The study of the institutional documents showed that sharing and learning about cultural features seem to be prioritised by the HEI. Well-being was promoted as part of the

pastoral care policy that all institutions with international students in NZ must adhere to (see Table 1). Therefore, counselling and medical support were available for international students. The main priority for the institution, however, seemed to be to maintain its reputation as a high-performing institution with excellent teaching and learning so that it could continue to attract students, which in turn contributed to enhanced economic benefits.

At the HEI, teachers have the responsibility of implementing internationalisation as part of their teaching role. However, this study found that they received limited guidance on how to achieve this as they delivered the curriculum. In fact, all of the interviewed staff members wished that they had more information about typical EAL student adjustment challenges, as they were willing to meet the needs of the students if they knew what these were. This was expressed like this by Teacher 4,

... it would have been really nice when I first got thrown in, in the deep end. In that, in the NZ education system, of, the amount of fee-paying students in business courses, has been pretty much my whole career, of teaching here. It would have been really nice to have some support with that when I first started. What do you do? How do you go about it? What are some strategies you can adopt? That sort of thing... (Teacher 4, interview 1)

The range of challenges that emerged in the interviews with the five teachers in the study are shown in Table 3. Not all teachers experienced all of them; however according to this study, these seem to be the most typical ones that teachers meet in relation to EAL/international students. Here they are divided into three different categories. Firstly, learners facing emotional challenges, such as homesickness, anxiety about coping with novel food, experiences and requirements, or lack of confidence. Secondly, those that challenged teachers' teaching in the classroom. The third category were challenges associated with learners' language proficiency levels.

Table 2

Students' General, Academic, and Language Challenges as Experienced by Teachers.

General/socio-cultural	Academic	Language
Study and work balance	Group work	Understanding key ideas & explanations

Homesickness	Critical thinking skills	Worry that other people will not understand them
Lack of confidence	Classroom discussions	Not understanding New Zealand concepts
	Assignments	Relatively silent in the classroom
	Engagement and contribution in the classroom	They need thinking time
	EAL students generally do not want to argue against the teacher	English proficiency - progress
	They want the teacher to tell them what they need to know	Problems expressing themselves, both orally and in writing
		Pronunciation

Despite not always receiving adequate guidance, the teachers in this study were very committed to supporting the EAL students' study success. As pointed out by Teacher 4, "When you've got a class of 70% L2, you have to adjust your teaching somewhat to suit their learning needs." All the teachers adjusted their speech by speaking more clearly and slowly. Teacher 2 gave definitions of unusual vocabulary, and Teacher 1 often explained New Zealand-based concepts. Teacher 3 adjusted to the lower-level EAL students by explaining words in much simpler language, as well as giving examples of how to use academic language. All the teachers also made themselves available before and after lessons for questions and discussion. They were aware of many of the personal challenges the international students faced and also their own teaching challenges.

Adjustments by the Students

One of the challenges in the EAL student adjustment process concerned understanding the teaching and learning requirements in the new academic environment. Other challenges were language-related, especially in the first months, even though these students had passed the English language requirement and many of them had a high level of English from the start. Some also experienced challenges in establishing themselves in society, finding jobs, and making Kiwi friends. These challenges are outlined in Table 2 and will be elaborated on in more detail below.

Table 3*Challenges – Experienced by EAL Students*

General/Socio-cultural	Academic	Language
Building new supportive networks	Adapting to new teaching approaches with a more active student role	Understanding New Zealand English
Finding employment	Learning new academic practices, e.g., groupwork and assignments	Understanding the teacher, mostly in the beginning The speed at which teachers spoke
Understanding Kiwi culture and adjusting to new cultural behaviour – Kiwi directness	The different level of responsibility for own studies	Understanding new vocabulary and concepts related to the subject and following the lesson as some vocabulary may be missed
Finding their way in the new city, e.g. taking the bus	Learning new assessment methods	Speaking in front of the class
Managing on their own and relying on themselves to adjust	Understanding the relationship between students and teachers in New Zealand, as teachers were more approachable in this new educational system	Answering teachers' questions
Coping with the many new commitments, e.g. learning time management		Use of Academic language, written and spoken Paraphrasing and referencing
Finding accommodation		Understanding locals, e.g., bus drivers
Building confidence		Using and developing English outside of the HEI
Social belonging		Appropriate use of English at work, formal vs informal and local slang

The students in the interviews were in their late 20s to early 30s and had come to New Zealand to study at the HEI to improve their lives and work prospects, either when returning to their countries of origin or in New Zealand. Some hoped to get a resident visa to stay in the country after their studies. Most had high professional qualifications from their home

countries and had passed the English language requirement for their courses. They had arrived in New Zealand in the same week as they started their courses, and they soon discovered that the adjustment challenges were many, especially as they had left their familiar support network behind. In this new situation, their lives became focused on studying, eating, working in part-time jobs, and sleeping.

You just have to improve your time management and improve your language to overcome those difficulties... You just have to go home, get up, study, go to class, go to work, go back home and shower, and then just make it tight [Student 3, interview 1]

In the classroom, where everything was new, the EAL students tried to understand how they could engage and learn. Because they were very motivated to succeed, they decided early on to put lots of effort into passing the chosen programmes and realised that it was especially important that they understood all new English vocabulary and concepts in their area of the business courses. Many of their classmates were international students, but there were also some domestic students. To feel safe in the beginning, they preferred to sit with students from their own countries. "I think it's a kind of security, we think, so we are very comfortable with our own peer groups. So, it's quite comfortable with them, I think." [Student 5, focus group discussion 1] One of the issues was how they could approach the teachers, since for example, in the past, some had never used their teachers' names, as exemplified by Student 5,

... in India the nature of the culture is very different from the teacher here. Like here we open it up with the teacher here. We can directly speak to the tutor with their name, but in India it is totally different. We have to give them respect. We can't take their name, "Mr Singh", or something. We have to give respect, we have to show respect in our nature, so we are hesitating to speak with the tutor. [Student 5, interview 1]

When the interviewee, Student 5, discovered that the domestic students called teachers by their first names and that they joked with them, he felt rather confused since, by his standards, this was very disrespectful and rude. Eventually, he decided to start using his teachers' first names.

After a month or so, many had adjusted somewhat to the classroom situation, including the fact that they had been obliged to take part in group work and speak in front of the class, which they had not done much before. However, they became aware of some

language barriers. For example, the interviewee, Student 8, became aware of language challenges in relation to group work: “In the first semester, ahm, it’s a lot more challenging. You can’t express yourself and they probably don’t understand you enough, and that’s the language barrier that we face.” [Student 8, interview 1]

By then, they had also faced the first assignment, which, for some had been a struggle, because they had never done an assignment like that before.

The assignment, here each lecturer expect different, they give different type of questions and they expect different answers, so we have to understand what they're expecting, so for each lecturer, each subject, for the first assignment then you get to know what they're expecting, but in the first assignment I lose marks. [Student 9, interview 2]

Before the next assignment was due, the interviewee, Student 9, decided to ask for help from the teacher. There was also a difference in how to write essays. Previously, they thought that they could learn what the teachers/lecturers said and replicate that in essays, but in New Zealand, they soon understood that this was not the case. They realised they had to come up with their own critical thoughts and ideas and use paraphrasing. One teacher pointed out that they had a great deal of knowledge, but that they sometimes had difficulties expressing it, “...what I found out was that most of them, they understand the material, they understand what’s asked, but they can’t articulate it back” [Teacher 3].

Language Challenges

Despite these students having passed the English language entrance test, they discovered that using the language was not as easy as they had thought. For example, they realised that they did not understand all of what the teachers said, and felt a bit lost, due to the teachers speaking very fast, with an unfamiliar Kiwi English accent.

The thing is, I can’t understand something, like what they are telling, like the accent. That’s what is different. If they are speaking slowly, I can understand but if they speak continuously, like faster, I cannot understand. [Student 7, interview 1]

This was also experienced by Student 4 in the focus group discussions. “Erm, I haven’t learnt NZ English. We study American English and when I, first time I came here, I

couldn't understand a word, so I just smiled and said 'yes'." [Student 4, focus group discussion 1]

During the first months they were relatively silent in the classroom since the domestic students were often very quick with their answers. The EAL students on the other hand, had to process first the questions and then rehearse their answers; often, before they dared say something, the opportunity was gone. As noticed by Teacher 4

You have students whose mind, I believe, works in this basic way, they listen to English and translate it to their own language, think about it in this language, re-translate it to English and then talk, so there is a difference sometimes in the how fluent, or how, smoothly that process works
[Teacher 4, interview 1]

They were also quiet in the groups because, despite having a lot of prior experience and knowledge, the other students seldom gave them enough time to contribute. Consequently, they became even quieter, and, in the end, they simply left the reporting of the groupwork to native speakers. [Classroom observation by the researcher]

Second Language Identity Development

Another language-related challenge was the second language identity development that the students experienced in the first two years. Students in this study typically went from using English sparsely to gaining more confidence and speaking more fluently over time. Students 3, 5, 6, and 9 stated, for example, that they had improved their English proficiency considerably in the first six months. In these first months, they were aware of their English language shortcomings, but were not overly concerned because they had recently arrived in the country and the institution. Subsequently, their confidence grew, and after approximately six months they did not feel so lost any more and began to ask teachers to slow down their speech, took the initiative to work with Kiwi students in groups so as to help their language development, and became more able to share their knowledge. However, as their use of English improved and they started using English more, they also recognised more of their shortcomings, and they became more sensitive to others' judgement of their use of English. Students 2, 3, and 4 who had not cared much about others' judgement in the first stage, became more sensitive to this. and Student 1 said she felt embarrassed by the mistakes that she made. These are examples of the 'destabilization' phase described by Benson et al. (2013), during which they felt a bit low in their mood and disappointed. In Student 3's words,

I just of kind of, like breaking down a little bit because I'm not ever going to catch up, after a few months you realise it is impossible for you to catch up that native speaker level, because they will catch the meaning straight away.

[Student 3, interview 2]

However, this stage also triggered their adoption of improvement strategies. They autonomously used a range of strategies to improve their English and learn what was required of them. They typically more often took the initiative to talk with native English speakers. They took advantage of all their opportunities to talk to Kiwis at work. They watched the TV news and listened to the radio news, and some became very inventive by, for example, talking with elderly people since they seemed to have time to spend with them. Student 2 also adjusted her English to sound more like local New Zealanders, by copying their accent.

How native speakers talk. I alter my accent ... so now it is more of a local, so it's my way of improving my English. That's my way of improving my English. Listen, always listen to the way they talk and their sentences structures and their habit when they talk and then I try to alter mine.

[Student 2, interview 2]

Since they were EAL students, they spent extra time learning all the unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts. This contributed to their achieving a deeper level of understanding of the topics they were studying. Moreover, in order to practice their use of English and improve their language proficiency, they built up new networks and made friends with local Kiwis; some of them even prepared topics to talk about with classmates. Student 8 explained, "We had a lot of group members from different backgrounds, so what I did was that I tried to you know, think of some common topics to talk to in common free time." [Student 8, interview 2]

Student 8 also called 'Helplines' so she could practise her listening and speaking, always making sure to avoid the peak times.

The call centre, you just call in and ask some questions and talk to them so you practice and that's a good way, I think, although, although, I think that I might have, you know, wasted some time of that call, call consultant, but you, you pick the off peak hours, don't call during the peak hours you know, you know, during lunch time they are very busy. [Student 8, interview 2]

After about two years, many of the students had developed a very proficient and near-native level of English language use, and most of them felt satisfied with their capability and by this stage, few of them were worried about their accents. Student 1 even thought that she became more interesting as her accent made her unusual in comparison to others: “I am different, it is okay if people know that I am not from here, yeah...It makes me interesting.” [Student 1, interview]

Other Findings

Interestingly, nobody in this study utilised the LSAC for language improvement. They seemed to be too busy with their subject study to also have time to focus on formal language improvement, as exemplified by Student 5.

Here? [LSAC] No, because it is very already, very scheduled, my things. Like, I have a leave for 3 hours because of tutorials. I need to spend 5 hours, so even if I have not completed a thing I need to go home and try to more, access things, and I have to spend again 3-4 hours. So, I've no time for, to learn more English here more. [Student 5, interview 2]

One unexpected finding was that, since these EAL students needed to allocate time specifically to learning unfamiliar vocabulary and concepts, this might have resulted in their understanding the topics on a deeper level, which in turn might have led to their excellent study results. It is to their credit that none of them failed to achieve a balance between work, life, and their studies. In reality, the students in this study were highly successful: six of the nine were top students in their classes, two achieved excellent results and the ninth student passed with average results. It was a privilege to follow these students' adjustment processes and see that they were very capable, self-forming, autonomous, active agents, in charge of their own new lives.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There is no doubt that studying in a new education system while using English as an additional language and trying to establish themselves in a new society, created adjustment challenges for the EAL students in this study. The student interviews and group discussions revealed that they experienced socio-cultural, language, and teaching and learning challenges.

However, the students in this study used a range of strategies to improve their English and learn what was required of them. However, had the HEI also made some adjustments to its teaching styles and approaches, this would have lessened the impact of the challenges on the students, especially in their first six to twelve months. Regardless of these hurdles, the study success rate was high amongst the student interviewees, as measured by their excellent outcomes, and the fact that nobody in the study failed to find a balance between work, life, and their studies.

Internationalisation at the higher education institution appears to revolve around maintaining a good academic reputation in order to obtain ongoing economic benefits, exchanging cultural knowledge, and supporting students in adapting to the new educational system. This study showed that, although institutional policies focus on providing excellent tuition and high-quality learning experiences for international students, the intentions embedded in these policies do not always filter down to the teaching staff responsible for internationalisation. In particular, the study identified a lack of guidance for staff in strategies for adjusting their pedagogic strategies to better accommodate international students. It also identified a need for better support for international/EAL students.

The following are comments and recommendations in relation to the three categories of challenges in Tables 2 and 3.

1. Socio/cultural challenges - This is probably generally well catered for, as all institutions in New Zealand have an obligation to proactively follow the pastoral care code of practice, which means providing support in the form of counselling and international advisors.
2. Language challenges - Institutions need to have clear English language requirements and support structures so that, if they discover that they have enrolled students with inadequate levels of proficiency, they can provide the required English language support. Students on the other hand should use their agency to develop their language proficiency. For example, if they learn about the language identity development, how it affects them, and what strategies to apply in the destabilisation periods, they might be less stressed about the process and recover more quickly. Learning more about this could be accomplished by student mentors, i.e., previous students can share their ways of dealing with this.
3. Teaching and learning challenges - These challenges might provide opportunities for mutual adjustment, as forward-thinking institutions could use them as indications of areas suitable for negotiations with students. For example, when teachers discover

student challenges, they could ask themselves if students need to learn in such a way that this creates problems, or whether their pedagogy is adequately flexible to enable them to modify their approaches and reduce the challenges. Internationalisation policies, which target these students, should view them as responsible, autonomous individuals. Students on the other hand, need to realise their self-efficacy and harness their sense of personal agency, so they may adopt strategies to help themselves become more proficient language users and feel free to use any efficient learning approaches, both earlier acquired and learn new ones, especially ones attuned to the new educational system. To assist learners with this, the institution and their teachers could create an individualised learning module in which learners feel free to discuss their obstacles and discover what learning approach works best for each of them.

A successful transformation involves awareness of challenges, possible negotiation areas, and a willingness and commitment to make changes to suit EAL/international students as well as the teachers. The practice should involve dedication to student-centred teaching and learning, and support based on meeting individual needs.

Employing a mutual adjustment strategy is preferable for its intrinsic values of mutual respect and appreciation. It may even give institutions a marketing edge as knowledge of student-centred approaches spreads. Naturally, most teachers working with international students in higher education do try to meet their students' needs, but as shown in this study, they also seek greater guidance on how to internationalise their teaching practices and curricula. In the future, mutual adjustment could be achieved by adjusting the prevailing "Western" pedagogy to also include approaches from other educational cultures. For example, if EAL students' native ways of learning produce successful results, perhaps the domestic students could learn from them. Moreover, teachers might be able to identify opportunities in their day-to-day teaching where their approach could be negotiated, creating a system where negotiating the learning approach and assessment strategies with the students are commonplace. This begs the question whether higher education institutions are prepared to "take the leap through the dragon's gate" and transform the educational experience they offer as a result, or not.

References

Benson, P., Barkhuizen, G., Bodycott, P., & Brown, J. (2013). *Second language identity in narratives of study abroad*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- De Wit, H., Hunter, F., Howard, L., & Egron-Polak, E. (2015). *Internationalisation of higher education*. Study requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education.
- Kettle, M. (2017). *International student engagement in higher education: Transforming practices, pedagogies and participation*. Multilingual Matters.
- Kim, Y. Y. (2015). Finding a “home” beyond culture: The emergence of intercultural personhood in the globalizing world. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 46, 3–12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.018>
- Knight, J. (2003). Updated definition of internationalization. *International Higher Education*, 33, 2–3. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2003.33.7391>
- Knight, J. (2013). The changing landscape of higher education internationalisation - for better or worse? *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 17(3), 84–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2012.753957>
- Marginson, S. (2014). Student self-formation in international education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 18(1), 6–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315313513036>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2006). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(1), 5–23.
- Ryan, J. (2013). Listening to ‘other’ intellectual traditions: Learning in transcultural spaces. In J. Ryan (Ed), *Cross cultural teaching and learning for home and international students: Internationalisation of pedagogy and curriculum in higher education* (pp. 279–289). Routledge.
- Sawir, E. (2005). Language difficulties of international students in Australia: The effects of prior learning experience, *International Education Journal* 6(5), 567–580.
- Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. The Guilford Press.
- Tran, L. T. (2011). Committed, face-value, hybrid or mutual adaptation? The experiences of international students in Australian higher education. *Educational Review*, 63(1), 79–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2010.510905>
- Tran, L. T. (2013). Transformative learning and international students negotiating higher education. In S. Sovic & M. Blythman (Eds.), *International Students Negotiating Higher Education: Critical Perspectives*, (pp. 124–141). Routledge.