

# Increasing motivation with possible selves

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## Reference data:

Fukada, Y., Fukuda, T., Falout, J., & Murphey, T. (2011). Increasing motivation with possible selves. In A. Stewart (Ed.), *JALT2010 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.

Over four hundred students from six Japanese universities were asked to imagine their possible selves as related to English with a variety of activities. Possible selves are future-projected identities that can generate goal-oriented behaviors. The study investigated how possible selves might be used in the classroom by examining the interrelationships between the motivations of past-projected and future-projected identities, and effort in learning within social networks inside and outside the classroom. This paper focuses on activities for eliciting possible selves, expanding social networks, developing aspirations, and increasing motivation.

日本の大学6校の400名を超える大学生に、様々な活動を通じて英語に関連した将来像を想像するように求めた。将来像とは、目標に向かって努力する行動を生じさせる、未来に投影した自分の姿である。本研究では、過去や未来に投影した自分の姿による学習意欲、授業の内外での社会的ネットワークでの学習する努力の相互関係を調べることで、将来像を授業の中でどのように使うことができるかを調査した。この論考では、将来像をあぶり出し、社会的ネットワークを拡大し、未来への展望を築き、意欲を増進させるための活動に焦点を当てる。

**S**TUDENTS' IDENTITIES are living, fluid, and emerging through what surrounds them in their physical, sociocultural, and temporal environments. When students think about who they might become in the future—their possible selves—they are making connections with thoughts of themselves in the present and past (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Remembered experiences—including failures, regrets, deeds, and accomplishments—form their present self concepts and expectations of the future. These in turn influence their present efforts for future purposes—including their engagement with resources, tools, and people who can help them learn. And future self images can motivate them to act in the present for working toward what they aspire. In the study reported here, we attempt to take into account all of these motivational influences of past, present, and future selves with our EFL students and observe changes over a semester.

## Antecedent conditions of the learner (ACL)

Students' past-projected identities form a motivational component of the present, influencing their goal-directed behaviors of effort, persistence, and strategy use for achieving goals. This emotional



baggage we call the *antecedent conditions of the learner* (ACL; Carpenter, Falout, Fukuda, Trovela, & Murphey, 2009). Students' ACLs are filled with their lived histories of engaging within a particular domain of study—in this case, EFL—relating to how they feel about their past successes and failures. These self-beliefs help mold their present self-confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), which form motivational beliefs related to what they are capable of doing with English (Murphey & Falout, in press).

ACLs are socially malleable, and can change in two ways. (1) They can be mediated by new perspectives that re-conceive past experiences (i.e., college students' conceptions of their high school classes as something not as bad as they once thought). These new perspectives are also known as re-attributions (i.e., peoples' memories are not completely stable and are continually being re-imagined and changed). (2) ACLs also immediately grow from present experiences, continually developing as pasts are ever being created by the flow of time. Every minute that passes as students are in class contributes to their ACLs. What they are doing, how they are experiencing it, and what they make of it in their present all soon flow into their pasts. In other words, what is happening now creates future ACLs:

Any event in the present is an extension of previous events and is directed toward goals that have not yet been accomplished. As such, the present extends through the past and future and cannot be separated from them. (Rogoff, 1995, p. 155)

## Present investments in learning

Norton (2000) discusses *investment* in language learning to capture the motivational aspects of multiple and continually changing desires and identity placed within sociocultural and personal historical contexts. Investment relates to what language acquisition means to students and what they do in achieving it, within a

co-construction of their academic values and self beliefs. Fukada (2009) found strong correlations between out-of-class investment and possible selves, but a weaker connection between in-class investment and possible selves, suggesting that teachers need to bring more activities into the classroom which address the learners' possible selves so that in-class investment might increase.

## Possible selves for the classroom

*Possible selves* are future-projected identities that can generate and sustain goal-oriented behaviors. The images people have of what they wish to achieve—preferred selves—direct them to make certain choices. At the same time, the negative images that people have of what they might become—feared selves—also affect their decision-making. All of these images constitute possible selves. Like our ACLs, our possible selves are socially malleable, which means that how we see, admire, or disapprove of others, can change the images of possible selves. This occurs naturally as people construct their own identities through making comparisons with peers, role models, and heroes; people they read about in magazines, see on TV, in movies, and online; and of course people who are close to them, their family, friends, and intimate partners (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

The motivational power of possible selves entreats use in the classroom. When students see others who are using English, it brings opportunities for modeling (cf. near peer role modeling, Murphey & Arao, 2001) in the present and for imagining a possible self in the future who can act similarly. Even sharing future possible selves in a group can lead to students imagining a variety of futures and provide them with alternative pathways to their goals (Snyder, Cheavens, & Simpson, 1997). With new hope for the future they address the present with greater motivation. Through present interactions with peers, students can even reframe past experiences, their emotional baggage, and find their potential abilities with and uses of English in the future.



In the present study we attempted to increase motivation with possible selves in the EFL classroom through several activities. First we will show the results of this study, then reflect upon how some of the activities used in our classrooms may help learners cultivate, explore, and share their possible selves, expand social networks, and develop aspirations.

## Method

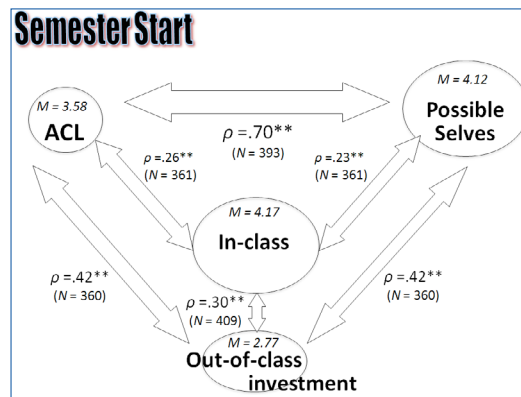
The participants were 466 students from 25 departments in six universities. During one semester we did a variety of activities (some described in more detail below) with students to generate aspiration contagion and possible selves. We administered 6-point, Likert-scale based surveys at the beginning and end of one academic semester to measure changes in their self-beliefs regarding ACL, in-class and out-of-class investment, and possible selves. Also an open-ended question elicited descriptions of their possible selves relating to using English (Appendix 1). Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed with SPSS and NVivo software, respectively.

## Results

Figure 1 shows that even in the beginning of the semester, the correlation between ACL and possible selves was large, that is, the relationships were strong between these students' views of their past experiences and who they could be in their futures. But the correlation between possible selves and in-class investment was weak, indicating that students might not have seen much connection between their possible selves and the classroom activities. The correlation between possible selves and out-of-class investment was moderate, which meant that even though their possible selves may have been strong, they were not making extensive use of them to motivate their out-of-class activities to learn English. The correlation between ACL and in-class investment was weak,

suggesting that their identities and engagement in relation to their present in-class learning situations were minimal. The correlation between ACL and out-of-class investment was moderate, which could have meant that their past experiences motivated them only somewhat to invest out-of-class. The correlation between in-class and out-of-class investment was moderate, showing that those making effort inside the classroom may make about the same effort to learn English outside.

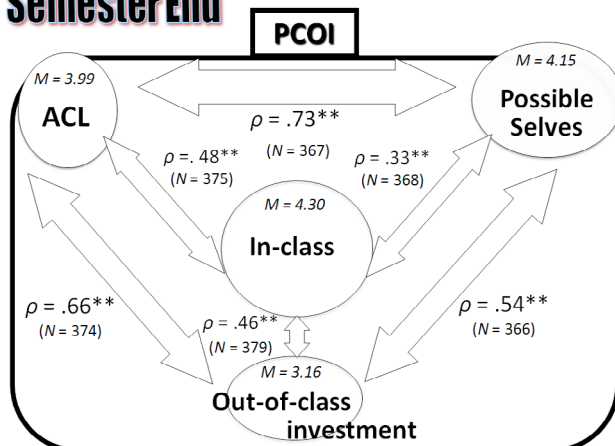
After one semester of various activities to elicit and share possible selves in the classroom, and other pair and group activities to learn English that involved rich social interaction, we believe that most students had formed a positive *present community of imagination* (PCOI), which we describe as a space of proactive engagements in lived and imagined development toward preferred futures (Murphey, 2009a). There were positive gains in their ACLs, and in-class and out-of-class investment (Figures 1 and 2), with statistical significance in the differences, although the effect sizes were small (Table 1). All the correlations among these factors increased.



\*\* Correlation is significant at  $p < .01$

Figure 1. Semester start measurements

## Semester End



\*\* Correlation is significant at  $p < .01$

Figure 2. Semester end measurements

Table 1. Wilcoxon signed ranks test for the differences of means between pre- and post-survey measurements, plus Cronbach's alpha for reliability.

| Variable                | Sig. | R   | $\alpha$ (pre-survey) | $\alpha$ (post-survey) |
|-------------------------|------|-----|-----------------------|------------------------|
| ACL                     | .000 | .34 | .89                   | .91                    |
| Possible Selves         | .327 | .04 | .92                   | .94                    |
| In-class Investment     | .018 | .08 | .76                   | .76                    |
| Out-of-class Investment | .000 | .28 | .84                   | .85                    |

## Discussion

We hypothesize there is an ongoing co-construction of past selves, present in-class and out-of-class investment, and possible selves. These co-constructions are shaped by social interactions in the present. We believe the classroom is a place for students to share and co-construct their past experiences, values, dreams, and identities. As their imaginations interact and develop in the PCOI, they can envision pathways they might take to reach their emerging possible selves (Murphey, 2009a).

By sharing their aspirations in a friendly environment, new experiences with English are created, perhaps more positive experiences than those in their pasts, and therefore our students experienced an overall increase in their ACLs. They shared their pasts, their aspirations, and their strategies for learning. Through being more in touch with their peers' attitudes and values towards EFL in the past, present, and future, students formed, re-formed, and adopted emerging attitudes and values that allowed them to increase their investments and valorize their ACLs as well as their futures. Thus, any following efforts they made became more meaningful and further aligned with their attitudes and values. We suggest that such dynamics help explain the strengthening of correlations across one semester among the four co-constructions of possible selves, ACLs, and in-class and out-of-class investments.

The statistical analyses show that these co-constructions became more resonant, vibrating together like combined harmonic waveforms, with resulting increases in their amplitudes. Similarly, our students reported increases in their motivations, particularly in more positive ACLs, from 3.58 to 3.99, alongside increases in their efforts in studying English both in-class and out-of-class, from 4.17 to 4.30, and 2.77 to 3.16, respectively. These results indicate more than simply a boost in motivation or effort from our students, but also their raised awareness about the connections between present effort and possible selves,

possibly as a result of their engagement with class activities. This could also be an effect of feeling more agentive in striving for a better future—i.e. they felt they had more control over and confidence about their futures—after hearing others talk of their futures, then seeing how they could act with more autonomy. Thus these increases among the correlations—the resonations—display an increase in pathway thinking, which is seeing possible routes to goals (Snyder, Cheavens, & Simpson, 1997), plus greater actions toward these future selves. Or put another way, the PCOI encouraged the spread of emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994), what we could call a “critical cognitive and emotional group agency” (Murphey, 2009b).

Miller (2010) focuses on how discourse helps individuals position themselves and become positioned as potential agents. She regards agency as the “discursively mobilized capacity to act” (p. 465). As teachers, we can organize and scaffold interactive activities in which students can mobilize their capacity to act through describing their pasts, presents, and futures with each other and in doing so model each other and learn to use language to position themselves in their worlds. As Miller states, “the desire to act and the capacity to act toward learning English is not individually mobilized desire or action” (p. 485), but action that is socioculturally co-constituted through discourse and the physical environment. We think that we have helped students to discursively interact and stimulate each others’ imagination, partially through the nature of our activities and through creating an interactive environment which invites them to position themselves more agentively.

### Activities for eliciting possible selves

The findings indicate that regardless of the type of academic major, visions of possible selves correlated with motivation and learning behaviors. These students developed as EFL learners working towards their possible selves in relation to their

imagined future communities of practice (Norton, 2000) using the stimulus of their PCOI. Sharing possible selves can lead to a robust expansion of social networks, developing aspirations, and increasing motivation in their current lives. In the following section the authors of this paper will individually illustrate some of the activities that teachers might organize in classes to allow their students to stimulate each others’ aspirations and motivations. Our hope is that teachers will build upon these few examples and reflect upon the social dynamics in our respective classrooms and eventually explore further ways to stimulate possible selves.

### Possible selves sharing activity—Yoshi

The possible selves sharing activity that I created was specifically designed for rudimentary level English learners to encourage their sharing of possible selves through simple EFL interactions.

This activity transpired in three steps. First, each student was asked to brainstorm their possible future careers imagining at the same time if there are any settings or situations where they could use their English skills in those careers. In case they came up with more than one possible future career, they were asked to choose the ideal one for sharing. Second, the students chorally practiced one simple English conversation pattern (A: What would you like to be in the future? / B: I would like to be a/an \_\_\_\_\_.) necessary to share possible future careers. Third, the students were asked to collect as many possible selves as possible from their classmates. They were required to jot down all of the possible selves they collected in one word or phrase on a handout (Appendix 2). To expand their social network in the classroom, I insisted that they could not interview students who were sitting within one seat’s distance from them (who were their close friends in most cases) since they tend to hesitate talking with unfamiliar students.



I offered this class activity in three different English communication courses targeted for freshmen: one course for the international studies department at one university, and two courses for the life science and animal science departments at another university. Students in the international studies department had a wide variety of possible selves; however they took much longer to come up with them and did not seem to actually visualize them specifically. Examples of their possible selves included “actor,” “business person,” “homemaker,” “hotel clerk,” “NGO staff member,” “police officer,” “pro-tennis player,” “security guard,” and “travel agent.” The science students on the other hand wrote their possible selves with no hesitation. They had specific careers like “clinical engineer,” “researcher,” and “nurse at an animal hospital.” Thus this activity became an opportunity for the humanities branch of students to consider seriously their own future after graduation, while the science students were able to recognize that many of their peers were striving to accomplish the same goals.

### **Possible selves list—Tetsuya**

After the first survey at the beginning of the semester, I made a list of possible selves from the students’ answers. In the middle of the semester, I gave them the list and asked them to discuss their goals. There were some students who laughed at some ideas such as becoming an international businessperson or a pilot. There were, however, others who found their peers had the same dream job. As a result, they had a clearer future self after one semester. For example, one student commented at the beginning of the semester in Japanese, “日本に住んでいる外人の相談にのりたい,” which roughly means, “I would like to help foreigners living in Japan.” She discussed her own idea with her classmates and at the end of the semester, she commented in English, “I want to be a public employee. And I want to help foreigner who can’t understand Japanese language well or if I

must work with foreigner, I support my boss to interpret English to Japanese.”

Others were inspired to learn English harder or have a new dream job through discussing the list of possible selves. Another student wrote at the beginning of the semester in Japanese that he wanted to become an architect, but didn’t know how much he would need English in his future career. At the end of the semester, however, he answered in English, “I’ll get a job about the building trade because I’m studying that. Probably, I’ll have to speak English through work of the building trade.” This activity may have helped students think and learn about their future jobs.

### **Social network maps—Joe**

Students drew social network maps (SNMs) at the beginning (SNM1) and end (SNM2) of one semester. These are free-form mind maps of their ongoing interpersonal relationships (Appendix 3). The development between the two maps indicated that the classroom is an ideal place to make friendships. This is crucial, because studies show bonding with others at school can influence personal and academic development (e.g., Harter & Pike, 1984; Wentzel, Barry, & Caldwell, 2004).

In college, students form new connections mostly in classrooms, as indicated by the developments of my students’ SNMs across one semester. Individually they wrote their reflections upon these developments. What struck me in these reflections was the tone of appreciation for their newfound friends and corresponding depth of humility. They were grateful for learning in class on a regular basis, and for meeting outside of class on social occasions. Furthermore, they expressed hope for continuing these interactions after the course was over. One student commented in English:

I became more positive during presentation work. I got very reliable members so I could make success in work.





I talked many students in English for questionnaire and grown communication skills. I was proud of studying with this class.

Chances of students meeting new people at my college are not commonplace. Classroom members across the usual four years are confined to those within the same academic department and the same year in school. The common practice of assigned seating further limits chances of becoming familiar with new faces. The exceptions are some electives, such as the English classes that I teach, where students can mix as they work on group projects (Falout, 2010) across departmental course scheduling divides.

Many freshmen at my college report disinterest in taking classes with others outside of their own department and year in school. However, after completing a semester in my mixed classes, they have acquired a contrastive frame of reference. Then their opinions change—mixing with other kinds of students and learning together becomes highly valued. For the EFL setting, one study (Carpenter, Falout, Fukuda, Trovela, & Murphey, 2009) reported that students maintained and regained motivation through friends, a key factor for academic success. As indicated on just about every SNM2 in my classes, students who made friends were doing so by crossing borders, making friends in other academic departments, and thereby expanding their perspectives about themselves in the present and the pathways to their preferred futures.

### ***The ten-year class reunion party—Tim***

Organizing a mock ten-year class reunion can stir up a lot of wonderful possible selves and aspiration contagion. I usually do the activity near the end of a term when we will soon be saying goodbye and it is natural to think about staying in touch.

As a scaffold, I get my students to fill out a questionnaire (Appendix 4) in the class before we hold the party in the next

class. They take the questionnaire home with them to complete and rehearse and to finish making a business card (meishi) more elaborately. I ask them to come to class looking older and wearing their work clothes that they think they will wear in ten years. Some really go overboard on this by designing new fashions for the future or coming really dressed as a doctor or professor and even putting some grey highlights in their hair (still a bit too early, I tell them, wait for the thirty-year reunion).

In the prep class we practice introducing ourselves saying things like—A: “Excuse me you look familiar, do I know you?” / B: “My name is Hiro.” / A: “Not Hiro Tanaka! [scream!] Wow, you haven’t changed a bit! Well, maybe you have gotten even more handsome! What are you doing now?” The questionnaire prompt gets them to fill in one ten-year possible self story. However, since I am doing research on possible selves I ask them to add a few alternative scenarios on the back of the sheet. On the day of the party, they engage each partner for about five minutes, act at first like they do not recognize them, ask a lot of the questions from the questionnaire, then make pairs with another for a similar conversation.

After meeting four or five pairs, they sit down and write reflections about all the different things that people became and what other options might have opened up for themselves. Once I had a young woman who said that she had become a commercial airline pilot and several other women in the class said that they had never considered it as a choice until then.

Being able to talk about the good ol’ days also does wonders for the group dynamics of the class. They realize that perhaps the class reunion may never really happen and that they do treasure their times with their classmates and it will soon be over. This ability to displace oneself in time and realize how it might feel is an imaginative act that they find worth doing. And this is partly what we think Quinn (2010) means by her term *imagined social capital*, which is “the benefit that is created by



participating in imagined or symbolic networks” (p. 68), influencing identity and motivation change.

## Conclusions

We believe that the concept of possible selves can be incorporated more into EFL pedagogy as a motivational source. Mainstream psychology and education have been using the concept to great advantage in the past few years (Dunkel & Kerpelman, 2006). We predict that an increased use of possible selves activities in EFL classrooms will have a positive effect on students (see Appendix 5 for a list of activities).

Our research supports the ideas that (1) teachers can help organize students so that they learn a lot from peers and inspire each other; (2) when students know about classmates’ past experiences learning languages, their possible selves and social networks, and can imagine how they might become in the future, they stimulate each other’s investments in-class and out-of-class and their motivation increases; (3) imagining hopeful futures turns otherwise mundane presents into fruitful pasts worth telling someday. We invite teachers to consider using possible selves in the classroom as a way to position themselves and their students through discursive interaction to become more agentive for increasing their motivation to learn and reach for ever higher goals.

## Bio data

**Yoshifumi Fukada** specializes in applied linguistics. His recent research interests are Japanese learners’ L2 identity, their agency in their English-learning and English social interactions, and also World Englishes. He has been working on studies related to these fields aiming at Japanese students’ more agentive English-learning inside/outside the classroom, and also their more active use of their own English varieties with strong confidence and pride in the context of international communities.

**Tetsuya Fukuda** is now interested in motivation strategies that Japanese university students employ in English learning. He is also interested in sociolinguistic aspects of English learners in Japan, especially how they perceive varieties of English, such as American and British Englishes, when they choose their model as an English speaker.

**Joseph Falout** researches developmental motivational variables of language teachers and learners in EFL sociocultural contexts. He edits for the *OnCUE Journal*, published by the JALT College and University Educators Special Interest Group (CUE SIG).

**Tim Murphey** researches agency and hope within sociocultural and sociocognitive theories by asking students and colleagues: “Do you realize the different ways you control your daily life?” and “Do you realize the positive impact you make on others?” Their answers usually allow them to see things they have not noticed and develop their agency and hope.

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## Appendix I

### Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M / F Major: \_\_\_\_\_

TOEIC Bridge: \_\_\_\_\_ TOEIC: \_\_\_\_\_ Eiken Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions about your English learning. Circle the level of your agreement with the statements. **(1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Slightly agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly agree)**

(s) I regularly used English in class with my classmates this semester.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(t) Even if the teacher was not close to me, or could not hear me, I still spoke English with my classmates in class this semester.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(u) This semester, I made an effort to speak more English with my classmates outside of class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6



(v) I supported my classmates and we supported each other's English learning reciprocally, and/or talked about our English-related future careers outside of class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(w) This semester, I made an effort to speak more English with other people (high-school friends, English teacher at language school, parents, etc.) outside of class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(x) This semester, other people and I supported each other's English learning reciprocally, or talked about our English-related future careers outside of class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(a) Generally, I think that I enjoy learning English in class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(b) Generally, I think that I enjoy learning English out of class.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(c) I like studying English now.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(d) Even if English were not a compulsory subject, I would choose to study it.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(e) I am confident in learning English now.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(f) I like studying or practicing English with friends or classmates.

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(k) To what extent would you like to use English in **your daily life after graduation?**

Not at all Very much  
1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(l) To what extent would you like to be using English in **your daily life in 20 years?**

Not at all Very much  
1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(m) To what extent would you like to get a **job** using your English abilities after graduation?

Not at all Very much  
1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6

(n) To what extent would you like to be using English in your **work in 20 years?**

Not at all Very much  
1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6



(o) Could you describe in your own words a possible job, or jobs that you might have using English? What exactly would you be doing in the job and how would you use your English? Give as many details as possible.

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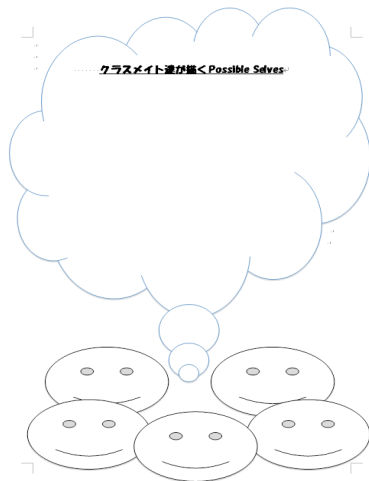
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THANK YOU!

N.B. Items in this survey are not ordered alphabetically due to combining items from earlier versions of our surveys without re-lettering them.

## Appendix 2

### Handout for the possible selves sharing activity



## Appendix 3

### Instructions for the social network map

INSTRUCTIONS: On the reverse side, please draw your English Learning Social Network Map. This map shows your current resources for talking to someone in English, asking questions about English, and English learning. Examples: friends since childhood (getting advice on how to study English), classmates in English classes (having conversations in English), English teachers (asking questions about English grammar), friends in your school club (study for English exams together), foreign customers at your part-time job (taking orders in English), friends in your laboratory (writing a short paper in English together), internet friends (exchanging English messages), friends through your hobby (watching English movies together), etc. Write specific names and how they support your English learning. You can also draw pictures, use different colors, and be creative.

## Appendix 4

### Questionnaire for the ten-year class reunion party

**10-Year Class Reunion Party at University. The year now is 2020, 2021, 2022 or 2023**

Imagine you are at to your 10-year class reunion party of your university. You are about 31 or 32 years old now. You graduated from university 10 years ago. Imagine the best possible life you could have had. In a few minutes you will **BE AT THE PARTY.** It IS 10 YEARS LATER! Make a **business card** to show old classmates. Look older! Pretend you are 32 years old. Have conversations as if it were ten years later! Greet people with something like: "You look familiar. Do I know you? Oh it's you Hiro. You have changed so much. You look great!" **To prepare, answer the questions below.** Write in past tense mostly. (You

cannot come to the party unless you show this paper completed at the door!)

**Remember:** What we visualize often directs our efforts and comes true in some ways. What would your Ideal Life be like for the next 10 years? Dream for the best.

1. What did you do **immediately after graduation** the first few years?

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2. What **jobs** have you had and what are you doing now?

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3. What is your **family situation**? Are you married? Do you have children?

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4. What are the **highlights** of your life for the last 10 years?

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5. What are your **best memories** of your university life?

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6. What do you hope will happen in **the next 10 years of your life**? What are your plans?

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This is Tim's Meishi

Make your Meishi below

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## Appendix 5

### List of activities for stimulating students' possible selves

1. Sharing Job Aspirations: Students share their possible selves, expressing their career goals, and collect what they hear about their peers' aspirations by taking notes (see handout in Appendix 2 and a fuller description in this article).
2. Possible Selves List: Make a list of dream jobs based on the comments made by students. Then, give them time to read it and discuss the ideas (see a fuller description in this article).
3. Social Network Map: Students draw mind maps of their social networks, particularly of people who can help them with learning English. They might draw these twice or more, first at the beginning and again at the end of a semester, to compare changes (see instructions in Appendix 4 and a fuller description in this article).
4. 10-Year Class Reunion: Tell your students that in the next class you will have a pretend "10-Year Class Reunion" and they have to pretend they are 10 years older and do not recognize their classmates (see handout of questions to answer in Appendix 4 and a fuller description in this article).



5. Possible Selves Tree: Students draw a tree made of roots, trunk, branches, and leaves, representing their hoped-for, expected, and feared possible selves (see Hock, 2006, p. 213).
6. Future Language Learning History: Many students write their language learning histories for their teachers, describing what they liked and did not like in previous classes and learning situations. Now get them to imagine they are ten years older, then they write their Future Language Learning History, dated ten years into the future, and start talking about the ways they learned their foreign languages and where they traveled to, etc.
7. Preferred Job Characteristics: Students rate what they think are the most and least important characteristics in their future jobs.
8. Preferred Future Boss: Students rate what they think are the most and least important characteristics of their future bosses.
9. Preferred Future Coworkers: Students rate what they think are the most and least important characteristics of their future coworkers.
10. Overseas Study Article: Job hunt keeps students from overseas study—students discuss. <<http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201009240200.html>>
11. Job Hunting Article: Recruitment policy confusion / Firms divided over benefits of delaying job hiring process—students discuss. <<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/business/T101031002297.htm>>
12. Three Possible Selves Activity: Students write what they might or would like to become, share these in rotating pairs, report their final partner's possible selves to the class, and write a reflection.
13. Survey on TOEIC Test-Takers: Students look at data from TOEIC test-takers, who are professionals in business, engineering, etc.—their “future selves.” This data is not about their TOEIC scores, but about how they *use* English in their professional lives. After discussing the data that most surprised them, students can report about how they might use English when they become professionals (see Falout, 2010). <<http://www.toEIC.or.jp/info/img/003/questionnaire.pdf>> and <[http://www.toEIC.or.jp/toEIC/data/kat-suyo\\_2009.html](http://www.toEIC.or.jp/toEIC/data/kat-suyo_2009.html)>
14. Project-Based Learning: Doing project work that relates to their field of interest (described in Falout, 2010). Groups can be assigned randomly—professionals don't always get to choose who they work with. They can work on their communication skills to cooperatively conduct the project—in practice for communicating in a professional environment. And they can report their process and product to the teacher—allowing for metacognitive reflection of communication processes in small groups, and for languaging ideas, meaning practicing English output, with future work-related material.

