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Foreword

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the Special Issue on English Language Teacher Education and Development: Issues and Perspectives in Asia. This volume brings together wide-ranging theoretical and empirical contributions that explore a number of key dimensions of EFL teacher education and professional development. The papers contained in this volume come from colleagues working in diverse corners of the globe, bringing rich and illuminating perspectives from Asia, The Middle East, Australia, and Europe.

First of all, I would like to thank the authors for the many insights shared, and congratulate them on making the final cut! We have received an overwhelming response to our call for papers, evidencing an enormous interest and currency of issues pertaining to the theme of this Special Issue. I would also like to thank the authors for their patience in what has been a rather lengthy editorial process consisting of two rounds of blind reviews. In the end, I hope we have provided you with a rich tapestry of methodologically and ideologically diverse yet complementary studies.

In the first paper, Caroline Brandt raises a number of critical issues that emerged from her in depth study involving CELTA teacher trainees from 9 different countries. The author argues that, *inter alia*, the competitive nature of the CELTA course resulting from its grading system does not facilitate a 'learning community' culture in the classroom, and that there is a need to deemphasize competition and encourage collaboration. This is indeed an important issue, as principles of andragogy, or adult education theory, have for a long time now emphasized collaboration over competition as more desirable and effective in the adult learning context.

A study into effective peer mentoring in a pre-service EFL practicum is reported in the second paper by Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. The authors present a quasi-experimental design study that investigated the effects of peer mentoring on participants' professional practice in terms of the instructional domain. The results were then compared to a group of pre-service teachers who did not participate in the peer mentoring experiences. Key stakeholders such as school senior teacher mentors, university supervisors and practicing teachers' self-assessments indicated that the participants in the peer mentoring program made significant improvements in their scores for instructional practice compared to their counterparts. Peer mentoring provides an enriching experience that can be applied across teacher education contexts.

Olcay Sert looks at a different aspect of EFL teacher training in the third paper. By reviewing recent studies in Conversational Analysis, Critical Reflective Practice, Teacher Language Awareness and language teacher education in general, the author calls for a more effective language teacher education programs and presents an applicable framework that aims to solve current problems in English language teacher education, particularly in the Turkish context. This innovative framework suggests practical pedagogical implications that could easily be applied to other contexts where teachers could benefit from such an approach.

The fourth paper by Feroze Kasi proposes collaborative action research as an alternative model for EFL teachers' professional development. Kasi finds inadequacy with the current 'knowledge transmission' model in teacher education in Pakistan and suggests that a framework based on conceptual principles of Vygotskian sociocultural theory and Wenger's (1999) community of practice theory provides a more suitable alternative for English language teacher education. The author proposes that once an action research cycle of planning, action, observation and reflection is initiated, it has the potential to continue to re-occur and contribute to the professional development of both pre-service and in-service teachers on a regular basis, resulting in more effective teaching practice.

The topic of 'teacher beliefs' has been of interest to researchers for over two decades now. Stan Pederson's well theorized in-depth study describes a technique featuring perplexing questions combined with paired conversations and written follow-up responses used to elicit teaching beliefs among pre-service teachers. The study aimed to help teachers to share and justify their beliefs as part of a larger process of integrating theory, beliefs and practice. Pederson found this procedure to be effective in generating more explicit beliefs including reasons, conditions and/or contexts, and could easily comprise an awareness-raising component in teacher education programs.

EFL teacher professionalism and professional development in Indonesia is the focus on the next paper by Grace Ika Yuwono and Lesley Harbon. Based on qualitative data obtained from 46 teachers, the authors present a number of findings that they argue are unique to the Indonesian context, and often different from what is constructed by common literature on teacher professionalism. They focus on two areas in particular: teachers' motives for entering the profession and teaching rewards, and examine how these impact on one's professional development.

Rose Senior's paper describes a two-phase study conducted in Australia that led to the development of a teacher-generated socio-pedagogic theory of classroom practice. The theory that emerged from the research proposes that effective classroom teaching involves not only teaching content in a proficient manner, but also developing a relationship with the class where teaching and learning become a collective, collaborative endeavour that lifts the performance of individuals. Rose argues that the notion of class-centred teaching may be a useful means of encouraging locally-trained language teachers in the Asian region to reflect upon their current teaching and class management practices and to modify them in ways that are congruent with their personal belief systems and appropriate for their local educational contexts.

Finally, David Litz explores the current thinking surrounding the emergence, evolution, trends, problems and future possibilities in modern distance learning, particularly EdD programs. He argues that the growth of distance EdD programs is closely aligned to the increased popularity, appeal and accessibility of distance or blended higher education programs, yet points out that these have not been devoid of problems such as the quality of instruction, course design and delivery, and technology. The author provides us with several recommendations for future research in this area, and reminds readers that future distance/blended EdD programs need to continue to focus on developing comprehensive, inclusive and thoughtful distance learning models that facilitate true virtual teaching and learning communities.

It is my hope that readers of this issue will be enriched by the scope and depth of these contributions.

With best wishes,

Eva Bernat
Guest Editor

Competition and Collaboration in Initial Teacher Education in TESOL: A Case of a Classic Double Bind

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Bio Data:

Caroline Brandt is an Assistant Professor at the Petroleum Institute, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where she teaches academic communication and research skills to female engineering students taking B.Sc. degrees. She has 28 years of experience in the field of adult second language teaching and has held a number of senior positions in higher education institutions in 6 countries, including Hong Kong, the Sultanate of Brunei, the United Arab Emirates and New Zealand. She specializes in professional development and academic communication. Her publications include two books that reflect these areas of interest: *Read, research and write: Academic skills for ESL students in higher education*, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2009; and *Success on your certificate course in English Language Teaching: A guide to becoming a teacher in ELT/TESOL*, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2006.

Abstract

Recent research examined participant learning on internationally-available initial TESOL training courses leading to award of the Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA). Qualitative methods, used to collect and analyze interview and questionnaire data from 95 participants in nine countries, led to the identification of critical issues related to participant learning. Several indicated a conflict between assessment and group work in Teaching Practice. Teaching Practice is carried out in groups and performance is assessed according to criteria which include participants' ability to work constructively with colleagues. Upon completion of the course, successful participants may pass or pass with distinction ('A' or 'B'). However, these grades are awarded to only 25% of participants, a situation which leads to competitiveness as participants vie for a limited number of distinctions. This competitiveness interfered in particular with the group work required for successful completion of Teaching Practice, resulting in a classic double bind. The implications of this situation are examined, and the need to deemphasize competition and encourage a "learning community" culture is identified, predicated on the elimination of the award of distinctions on CELTA courses.

Keywords: CELTA, ELT training, teacher training, double bind, collaboration, assessment, group work, competition

Introduction

Estimates based on published data indicate that well over 16,000 people worldwide annually enter the profession of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), also known as English Language Teaching, or ELT, by taking one of several internationally-recognized initial teacher training courses for TESOL. Such courses aim to produce teachers who are skilled in teaching English language to adults from different language backgrounds and for whom English is a Second Language (ESL). Examples of courses currently available include the Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults, or CELTA, which accounts for the initial training of over 12, 000 annually people (Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Trainee FAQs, 2009); the Trinity College London Certificate in TESOL (the 'CertTESOL'), taken by over 4, 000 people annually through 120 centres in the UK and worldwide (Pugsley, 2005), and the US-based School for International Training's Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Certificate (the 'SIT TESOL Certificate'), as well as many other comparable courses. These courses are characterized by being centrally-planned but locally-implemented; that is, their curricula, including their assessment criteria and standards, are specified by the central organization or headquarters (the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, in the case of the CELTA, for example), but the courses are run internationally by local centres (often languages schools), and monitored, or validated, through an inspection process carried out by representatives of the central organization.

While much research has been carried out into the induction of teachers into the domestic contexts of primary and secondary school teaching in many countries (see for example, Elliott, 1978 & 1992; Bullough, Knowles & Crow, 1991; Tickle, 1994; McNally, Cope, Inglis & Stronach, 1997; Caires & Almeida, 2005), there has been far less investigation into the initial training of those wishing to teach adult ESL learners in international contexts. Recent research, reported in part in Author 2006a and 2008, set out to address this shortfall. The research, a longitudinal, qualitative research project involving 95 internationally-located course participants and tutors, investigated the 'CELTA experience', initially asking, "How is the CELTA course experienced by participants? How do participants learn on this course?"

As part of the research, comparisons were drawn between the CELTA course and other comparable courses, in particular with the CertTESOL and the SIT TESOL Certificate (see Author (in press) for a summary of the features of these courses). The three courses were found to have several key features in common. Of particular relevance and interest here is the inclusion of an assessed teaching practice component using classes of genuine language learners. All three courses require participants (frequently referred to elsewhere as 'trainees') to 'practice-teach' for a minimum of 6 hours, all of which is assessed according to clear criteria specified by the central organization. All take a criterion-referenced approach (Glaser, 1963) to assessment, in that the focus is on what participants can do, not on how they compare to others. However, the CELTA differs from the other two courses in one significant respect. It is the only one of the three to award a pass certificate endorsed with distinction; participants may be awarded pass 'A', pass 'B', 'pass', or 'fail'. Both the CertTESOL and the TESOL Certificate, on the other hand, simply award all successful participants a 'pass'; further details regarding the standard of their performance are supplied in a separate descriptive statement, which graduates may show to prospective employers.

Research outcomes indicated that on CELTA courses there exists an unspoken assumption among both participants and tutors (and it is supported by statistics), that only a select few can earn a pass with a distinction. It is widely understood that the majority will graduate with a 'pass' and data showed that participants are generally warned to expect this during interviews and/or at the beginning of their courses. Outcomes also indicated significant degrees of competiveness among CELTA participants as they strive to earn a distinction, which is paradoxically counter-productive behavior in the context of the collaboration required for the successful completion of the Teaching Practice component.

This situation raises a number of interesting questions. Why do tutors apparently apply 'bell-curve' thinking to a criterion-referenced situation? Why do participants behave competitively in a criterion-referenced situation? How does competitiveness affect the collaboration required for successful completion of the Teaching Practice component?

This paper sets out to address these questions.

CELTA Courses

Entry requirements

Approximately 900 CELTA courses are held annually in 286 centres in over 50 countries (Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Trainee FAQs, 2009). Cambridge is therefore one of the largest single providers of entry-level training in TESOL. Applicants should be over 20 years old, and while expected to have a standard of education equivalent to that needed to enter higher education, they may or may not have either work or teaching experience. They are required however to have proficiency in English sufficient to enable them to teach a range of levels of English.

Aims, syllabus and assessment

CELTA courses aim to develop both participants' teaching skills and their knowledge of language − English in particular. The syllabus is organized into 5 units, each of which is expressed in the form of several learning outcomes. In all, a total of 86 learning outcomes are specified, and training leading to demonstration of these outcomes is carried out through three obligatory components: 1) Contact between participants and tutors which includes input, tutorials, feedback on Teaching Practice, etc.; 2) Six hours minimum of supervised Teaching Practice; and 3) Six hours minimum of guided observation of experienced teachers, during which participants are required to complete a task while observing qualified and experienced teachers in the classroom. CELTA participants can expect to receive at least 120 hours of training. Assessment is continuous and there are no formal examinations (Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Syllabus, 2009). Though centrally-planned, tutors are allowed some flexibility, particularly with regard to course intensity and scheduling, to enable them to respond to local market conditions. As a result, around the world courses are offered over 4 weeks, 6 weeks, 12 weeks, or longer, in response to local working patterns. In all cases, however, course aims and length remain substantially the same, while their centrally-planned structure seeks to maximize the overall standardization of participant experience and qualification.

The supervised Teaching Practice component

The supervised Teaching Practice component is one of two assessed components of the CELTA course, the other being written assignments, of which there are four. The 6 hours of Teaching Practice must be arranged to allow each participant the opportunity to teach adults at two different levels, to include at least two hours at each level, with one being below intermediate level. Centres are required to timetable this component to occur on a "continuous basis" and ensure that participants are able to practice-teach for at least 40 minutes on two occasions (Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Syllabus, 2009). The documentation further specifies that participants must be given the opportunity to teach different types of lessons. There are various approaches to establishing classes of language learners for Teaching Practice purposes. Many centres advertise "free English lessons" internally, which generally attracts sufficient students from the enrolled population.

Collaborating to learn

CELTA participants are normally organized into groups for Teaching Practice purposes. There are both practical and pedagogic reasons for doing this. From a practical perspective, tutors, who are required to set up classes of language learners for Teaching Practice purposes, are far more likely to be able to attract language learners if the classes offered are of a standard length, such as 60 or 90 minutes, than if they are of 20 minutes' duration, or less. As many tutors feel that it is unreasonable to expect a novice teacher to teach for an hour in the early stages of his or her training, participants are arranged into groups of four or five, with each scheduled to teach for 10 or 15 minutes of a one hour lesson, for example. This is gradually increased as the course progresses, such that towards the end of the course, two participants may be responsible for both planning and teaching a 90 minute lesson, or one participant may teach for an hour. In all cases involving groups or pairs of participants in Teaching Practice, however, participants must endeavor to plan and teach lessons that are cohesive from the language learners' perspectives. Clearly, in the planning stages in particular effective collaboration is more likely to lead to effective teaching. However, cooperation is also required during the lesson itself as

participants need to ensure that their part is adequately executed, as their colleagues' sections are likely to depend on it or at the very least relate to it.

There are also sound pedagogic reasons for requiring participants to work in groups as part of their training. A group is characterized by interaction among its members and by each individual's awareness of group membership (Schein, 1980), and for our purposes may be defined as a collection of individuals with a common goal or goals who collaborate and behave as a system that in some respects is greater than the sum of its parts, enabling them potentially to produce enhanced work. Collaboration refers to the processes in which a group engages in order to achieve its objectives. Several writers have drawn attention to the numerous benefits – individual and collective – of collaborating with others in a group towards a common purpose. These include enhanced knowledge creation as a result of the integration of complementary individual perspectives, through dialogue and discussion, which combine to form a new and more developed collective perspective (Nonaka, 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), as well as the enhancement and reinforcement of one's own knowledge or the overcoming of barriers to learning through reflection and exchange with others. Collaboration also appears to encourage identifying and sharing tacit knowledge, which is often at the centre of personal learning and insight, and it can also provide valuable insights into learning processes, both one's own and those of others, including the opportunity to learn how to work in groups and how to make groups work (Riel & Fulton, 2001).

Many writers have pointed to the benefits of group work for teachers in particular. Shulman (1988) regards collaboration as a powerful tool for exposing and developing the knowledge of teaching in particular. Knezevic and Scholl (1996) discuss team teaching, defining collaboration in this context as "…shared responsibility inside and outside the classroom [which] gives teachers an opportunity for heightened reflection" (p. 79). This provides a number of opportunities for teachers:

> "The need to synchronize teaching acts requires team teachers to negotiate and discuss their thoughts, values and actions in ways that solo teachers do not encounter. The process of having to explain oneself and one's ideas, so that another teacher can understand them and interact with them, forces team teachers to find words for thoughts which, had one been teaching alone, might have been realized solely

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through action. For these reasons, collaboration provides teachers with rich opportunities to recognize and understand their tacit knowledge."

<div align="right">(Knezevic & Scholl, 1996, p. 79)</div>

These writers suggest that collaboration enables individuals to appreciate and listen to others whilst benefitting from an enhanced combined product:

"For us collaboration meant consistently working together to accomplish a task; it was a series of actions that complemented those of our partner. [….] plans we created together were greater than those we might have developed individually. Contributions from both of us led to more creative and complete lesson plans."

<div align="right">(Knezevic & Scholl, 1996, p. 93)</div>

Other writers have drawn attention to the benefits of collaboration in the planning stage. For example, Clark and Peterson (1986) note that collaborative planning allows participants to:

- "Coordinate actions and build a team identity;
- Think through techniques for organizing the events of a class period;
- Practice reflective dialogue; and
- Think creatively"   (p. 255-297)

CELTA course participants, in being required to collaborate to plan and produce effective lessons in Teaching Practice, are therefore offered a number of key opportunities, such as: the opportunity to learn more effectively; to recognize and understand their tacit knowledge; to learn about their own learning processes and those of others; to practice and improve their skills of reflection and group work; think more creatively, and ultimately to create a superior product, in this case, a better lesson. All of these opportunities and benefits will in theory lead to enhanced performance and consequently the award of a better grade than participants might otherwise have earned.

Assessing teaching skills

Of the 86 learning outcomes specified in the CELTA syllabus, 43 are substantially assessed within the Teaching Practice component. At pass level:

"….successful candidates [….] should show convincingly and consistently that they can:
- prepare and plan for the effective teaching of adult ESOL learners by:
    1. identifying and stating appropriate aims/outcomes for individual lessons
    2. ordering activities so that they achieve lesson aims/outcomes
    3. selecting, adapting or designing materials, activities, resources and technical aids appropriate for the lesson
    4. working constructively with colleagues in the planning of teaching practice sessions
    5. reflecting on and evaluating their plans in light of the learning process and suggesting improvements for future plans.

- demonstrate professional competence as teachers by:
    6. noting their own teaching strengths and weaknesses in different teaching situations in light of feedback from learners, teachers and teacher educators
    7. participating in and responding to feedback"
[Extract from Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Syllabus, 2009 (numbering altered)]

This is a criterion-referenced (CR) approach to assessment. Vogt (1999) defines CR assessment as that which: "examines a specific skill (the criterion) that students are expected to have learned, or a level (the criterion) students are expected to have attained. [….] it measures absolute levels of achievement; students' scores are not dependent on comparison with the performance of other students" (p.62). Hughes (2003) describes the purpose of CR tests as being to: "[….] classify people according to whether or not they are able to perform some task or sets of tasks satisfactorily. The tasks are set, and the performances are evaluated" (p. 21).

The CELTA outcomes describe the skills that participants are expected to be able to demonstrate by the end of the course. Tutors design instruction to enable participants to understand, develop and demonstrate these outcomes. Their performance is measured against these outcomes, because these outcomes, as determined by experts, represent the skills considered essential for effective classroom practice. Appropriate instruction combined with initial selection of applicants for places on the course should ensure that the majority is able to

demonstrate mastery of these outcomes "convincingly and consistently" and so succeeds in passing the course.

In this situation, there is no interest in – and nothing to be gained from – establishing the difference in level of skill between participants on a course. Assessment of an individual's performance is not influenced by the performance of others; the focus is instead on the extent to which each individual can demonstrate the desired outcomes, which is ultimately described on CELTA courses, as we have seen, as one of four levels of performance. Interest in how students' performances compare with one another requires a norm-referenced approach (NR) to testing rather than a criterion-referenced approach. Hopkins, Stanley and Hopkins (1990 describe the different functions thus:

> "Individual differences are the major emphasis of norm-referenced testing (NRT), but they are of no concern in mastery or criterion-referenced testing (CRT). If everyone scores 100 percent on the test, so much the better (assuming the test is valid). CRT assessments should reveal what competencies an individual student does and does not possess, not how he or she compares with norms or peers (NRT)."
>
> (p. 184)

Various writers have pointed out that a criterion-referenced approach makes it theoretically possible for all participants to earn the highest grade, and that consequently, normal distributions of grades cannot be expected. Bachman (1990) notes that in CR assessment, "students are evaluated in terms of their relative degree of mastery of course content, rather than with respect to their relative ranking in the class. Thus, all students who master the course content might receive an 'A', irrespective of how many students achieve this grade" (p. 74). Hughes (2003) observed that this was beneficial to students as it "[….] means that students are encouraged to measure their progress in relation to meaningful criteria, without feeling that, because they are less able than most of their fellows, they are destined to fail" (p. 21). Brown (1995), writing about criterion-referenced tests (CRTs), noted that:

> "Teachers will be comforted to know that a normal distribution (commonly known as a bell curve) may not necessarily occur in the scores of their classroom tests.... In addition, on CRTs, the ideal distributions would occur if all of the students scored zero at the beginning of a course (indicating that they all desperately needed to

learn the material) and 100 percent at the end of the course (indicating that all of the students have learned all of the material perfectly). Neither of these ideals is ever really met, even with a good test, but the scores might logically be 'scrunched up' toward the bottom of the range at the beginning of a course and toward the top of the range at the end of the course. Hence for a number of reasons, expecting a normal distribution in classroom testing is unreasonable. Nonetheless some administrators expect just that, usually in the name of 'grading on a curve'. "   (p.17)

A criterion-referenced approach to assessment is an ideal approach for use on CELTA courses for a number of reasons. The outcomes are descriptions of what teachers need to be able to do which are independent of cohorts of CELTA participants. They provide a clear and consistent focus for tutors, who are able to coach participants towards performing to the highest standard possible, regardless of the performance of others on the course. They also enable tutors to justify to participants the assessment decisions they have made. From the participants' perspectives, the list of desired outcomes can be motivating as they are able to see clearly (or be guided towards seeing clearly) where their strengths and weaknesses lie and what they have to do to succeed, which can help them to understand that they are not in competition with others. The approach is also likely to be of use to future employers, as it provides them with a standard set of skills that they can expect successful CELTA graduates who are applicants for positions to possess, regardless of where they trained.

The research that explored the 'CELTA experience' identified a number of difficulties for participants created by the juxtaposition of the collaboration requirement and the possibility of earning a distinction. The research and its outcomes are described below.

Research methods

A qualitative approach to the enquiry setting

Having found the experience of taking the CELTA course very rewarding in the early stages of my career, and being an experienced CELTA tutor, course director and external assessor, I had, over the years, developed an interest in understanding initial training. My interest was refined over time to a focus on the CELTA experience from the perspective of its participants. The context of these courses was therefore of

paramount importance. Such a research setting was information and variable-rich: as a researcher I brought my own broad experience of the course to the setting, and the desired outcome was a deeper understanding of others' perspectives. As such, the study was not considered to be a suitable target for the application of a classical logical positivist approach. Instead, it called for a focus on the nature and the quality of the data, requiring an "interpretive science in search of meaning, not an experimental science in search of laws" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). A qualitative approach to the enquiry setting was therefore taken. Van Maanen (1979) discusses the meaning of the term "qualitative methods" and notes the imprecision of the term:

> "The label qualitative methods has no precise meaning in any of the social sciences. It is at best an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world." (p. 520)

This approach with its "array of interpretive techniques" at its disposal was congruent with the complex and social nature of the focus of the study. Qualitative methods or techniques have several characteristics relevant to and compatible with this study. The focus is on interpreting data rather than quantifying it; the emphasis is on process, not product (and hence there is a focus on context and an emphasis on flexibility and responsiveness on the part of the researcher); the research calls for a holistic, rather than atomistic, description (consequently there is less call for the identification, analysis, or quantification of variables); recognition is given to the influence of the researcher and the research process on the participants and to their contribution to the process; and the research is experience-based with emerging emic themes rather than guided by predetermined, or etic, themes or outcomes (see Cassell & Symon, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam; 1988; Patton, 1987). Thus, context and behavior are viewed as interdependent and intertwined. It follows that fieldwork activities are central to qualitative research; in particular, those activities that involve the researcher in direct, personal involvement and contact with the participants in the research context in real time. This study, then, was grounded as being data-based rather than theory-based. The methodology included two fieldwork phases with 95 people in 9 countries, over a period of 4 years, from 1998 - 2002. 63

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of the people involved were past or present course participants and 32 were tutors at the time of the research. Both part-time and full-time courses are represented in the data.

Phase One: A case study

Due to the focus of the research and its context, the investigation immediately lent itself to a case study approach. Broadly speaking, case study research:

> "… consists of a detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of one or more organizations, or groups within organizations, with a view to providing an analysis of the context and processes involved in the phenomenon under study. The phenomenon is not isolated from its context (as in, say, laboratory research) but is of interest precisely because it is in relation to its context."
>
> (Hartley, in Cassell & Symon, 1994, p. 209)

Patton observes that case studies are particularly useful when:

> "... one needs to understand some particular problem or situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information – rich in the sense that a great deal can be learned from a few exemplars of the phenomenon in question. For example, a great deal can often be learned about how to improve a program by studying selected dropouts, failures, or successes."   (Patton, 1987, p. 19)

A case study is not a research method, however. Instead it is an overall strategy or approach to the situation, encompassing a collection of complementary techniques:

> "A case study approach is not a method as such but rather a research strategy. [….] Within this broad strategy, a number of methods may be used – and these may be either qualitative or quantitative, or both, though the emphasis is generally more on qualitative methods because of the kinds of questions which are best addressed through case study."
>
> (Hartley, in Cassell & Symon, 1994, p. 209)

The case study focused on 18 course participants and 5 tutors involved in a 12-week, part-time course in a large language teaching centre in South-East Asia. The complementary case study research techniques employed included the following: conducting interviews with course participants and tutors, collecting journals from course participants and tutors, shadowing participants throughout a complete course, including attending teaching practice and lesson preparation, and keeping notes, as

well as collecting all documentation relating to the course such as the syllabus, participants' evaluations, and final grades. All data were gathered according to an ethical framework of 7 criteria (Patton, 1990), including informed participant consent, guaranteed anonymity, and confidentiality. These data-gathering techniques generated an enormous quantity of data. After a number of alternatives had been considered and rejected, their analysis was carried out as follows:

Step 1: The preparation of chronological data corpora

Using a word processor and voice recognition software, the first step taken was to enter all data emerging from the interviews, journals and researcher's notes. This provided two complete chronological data corpora.

Step 2: Annotation of data in relation to research question

The data were reread with the research focus in mind. Annotations which related to participants' learning were added in the margins of the data corpora.

Step 3: Collation of annotations into categories

Study of the annotations suggested that each could reasonably be assigned to one of six categories: verbal feedback, teaching practice, collaboration, assessment, course design and a miscellaneous category.

Step 4: Collating similar concerns

Similar annotations were brought together, and one was removed.

Step 5: Setting aside annotations which were not shared

Annotations not shared with others were set aside.

Step 6: Combining related annotations

At this stage it was noted that certain annotations could sensibly be merged.

Step 7: Removal of raw data

All raw data were removed. The six categories and their annotations were retained.

Step 8: Checking convergence

In this stage each annotation was studied in conjunction with the complete data corpora and expounded upon, largely avoiding raw data.

Step 9: Horizontal comparison

The six vertically arranged lists were compared with each other, leading to the observation that three further categories ran horizontally across the 6 vertical categories. These three categories were labeled: 'Development', 'Authenticity' and 'Learning'.

Step 10: Identification of intersections between vertical and horizontal categories

This stage involved the identification of one annotation to exemplify, summarize and represent the points at which the vertical and horizontal categories intersected. The intersection between feedback and development, for example, is to be found in the summary line: "*Feedback on Teaching Practice is often found to be more valuable at the beginning of the course than towards the end of the course.*" The intersections took the form of 20 such summary statements, which informed the direction of Phase Two of the research.

Phase Two: Questionnaires

The aim of Phase Two was to triangulate by using different research methods to determine the extent to which the 20 Phase One statements applied to the broader CELTA community, allowing for the rejection, substantiation, modification, and supplementation of the statements according to the new data gathered. As informed by the 20 summary statements, two parallel questionnaires were prepared – one for tutors and one for course participants. While data were actively sought from tutors in both phases of the research, the central focus of the research was on course participants' experiences. Tutor data were therefore studied in order to provide an alternative perspective on the information found within participant data.

Access to a large number of potential respondents from within the broader internationally-located CELTA community was sought. To facilitate access and increase response rate, an approach termed 'generative networking' (Brandt, 2004)

was developed. This process is similar to 'snowballing' (a referral approach to developing a respondent base, whereby existing respondents identify further potential respondents from among their colleagues and acquaintances), but distinct from it in its reliance upon electronic means of communication. The process facilitated access to 237 contacts and the eventual receipt of 72 completed questionnaires (45 from current or former course participants and 27 from current tutors).

Analysis of the questionnaire data was carried out through the preparation of two data books, one for tutors' data and one for course participants' data. All responses to the same question were collated and annotated, and themes were sought within the annotations. These themes were coded to facilitate subsequent identification of patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This process led to the elimination of several Phase One issues, as they were found to be poorly supported in the new data. Conversely, a number of new issues were suggested in Phase 2, but unsupported in Phase 1 data. However, only issues supported by both fieldwork phases were considered further, and these were termed 'critical'. Through this process, 26 critical issues for the preparation of TESOL teachers emerged (see Author 2007), several of which are of interest here.

Outcomes

Besides the 26 critical issues mentioned above, the research outcomes include information about Teaching Practice arrangements and the distribution of grades worldwide.

Teaching Practice Arrangements

At the case study centre, which ran part-time courses over 12 weeks, participants began teaching for 30 minutes; this increased to one hour after four or, in some cases, five lessons. Teaching Practice classes were long from the learner's perspective. A typical lesson lasted from two to two and a half hours. Participants were arranged into Teaching Practice groups, each with four or five members and a tutor. Participants were also required to observe all of each other's Teaching Practice. On the case study course, for example, those participants in groups of five observed 24 hours in total of their four peers' Teaching Practice, accounting for 19% of the total course length.

Time spent thus is generally assumed to be a useful learning opportunity and counts legitimately towards the course contact hours. Teaching Practice was followed immediately by feedback for those who had taught, and this aspect of the course was again attended by all group members. In the early stages of Teaching Practice, participants were given considerable guidance with the preparation of lesson plans and materials. However, this guidance was reduced as the participants developed.

Although course lengths varied, a similar approach to Teaching Practice arrangements was taken on all courses surveyed. This is the approach described in the documentation of one centre:

> "How is teaching practice (TP) organised? TP is a two-hour block daily M − F, or a two-hour, 45 minute block M-Th. Trainees are divided into TP groups of five or six, and each TP group, with one tutor, is responsible for a class of students. Trainees teach initially for short periods (e.g. the six trainees in a group teaching for 25 minutes each), and then teach for longer periods as the course progresses (e.g. later TP blocks could consist of three trainees teaching 40, 50 minutes or 1 hour each, with the other trainees in the group not teaching that day). All timetabled TP is observed by one of the tutors.
>
> There is a considerable amount of lesson-planning guidance from the tutors in the early stages of the course. As the course progresses, formal lesson-planning guidance decreases, as trainees are expected to take on increased planning responsibilities [….]"
> (Cactus Language, Cambridge CELTA Part-Time, Madrid, Spain, 2009).

Teaching Practice arrangements, therefore, with lesson lengths of two hours or more (divided up among group members) and progressively less tutor support, clearly require participants to work closely with their peers to produce cohesive lessons.

Final grades

CELTA documentation specifies the criteria for the award of grades at 'pass', 'pass B', 'pass A', as follows:

> "A **Pass** is awarded to candidates whose performance overall in the teaching practice and in the written assignments meets the specified criteria.
>
> They will continue to need guidance to help them to develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post.

A **Pass (Grade B)** is awarded to candidates whose performance in the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of achievement significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
• demonstration of the criteria for teaching skills and professionalism. They will continue to need some guidance to help them to develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post.

A **Pass (Grade A)** is awarded to candidates whose performance in the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of ability and achievement and a level of awareness significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
• planning for effective teaching
• teaching skills and professionalism
They will benefit from further guidance in post but will be able to work independently.

Candidates who fail to meet criteria in any or all assessed components will receive a **Fail.**"
(Extract (adapted) from Cambridge ESOL Examinations, CELTA Syllabus, 2009)

The criterion-referenced approach makes it theoretically possible for an unlimited number of participants on any one CELTA course to earn a pass with a distinction. However, while a search for more current statistics failed, those available for previous years suggest that results display a comparable distribution from one year to the next. During the early years of this research, I had access to the 'Joint Chief Assessors' Report' of what was then known as the 'UCLES / RSA CTEFLA (Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults)', the precursor to the current CELTA. This document included a breakdown of grades worldwide for seven consecutive years. The report shows significant consistency in grade distribution from one year to the next:

Table 1: Extract from University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate / RSA Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults, Joint Chief Assessors' Report, 1995/1996; averages added in last row

Years	Total courses	Entries	% Pass	% Pass B	% Pass A	% Fail	% Withdrew
89/90	368	4700	62.2	27.3	2.7	5.2	2.6
90/91	408	5355	62.9	26.9	2.1	6.0	2.2
91/92	494	6295	64.2	24.9	2.3	6.1	2.6
92/93	588	7362	65.9	24.3	1.8	5.4	2.6
93/94	622	7538	67.2	22.7	1.7	5.5	2.9
94/95	581	7012	66.2	23.5	2.3	4.8	3.2
95/96	608	7417	65.3	24.7	2.1	5.0	2.9
Average			**64.9**	**24.9**	**2.14**	**5.43**	**2.71**

The research outcomes, relating to the period from 1998 – 2002, confirmed that a 'pass' was by far the most commonly awarded grade, and most tutors reported that this fact was emphasized to participants in the early part of their courses, in an effort to engender realistic expectations. To date, staff at many centres inform prospective participants that they are most likely to graduate from a CELTA course with a pass. The Berlin-based Akademie für Fremdsprachen (2009), for example, states on its website that "it should be noted that PASS is the most commonly awarded grade on CELTA courses", while Bell International in Poland (Bell International, Cambridge CELTA Application, Registration and General Course Information for Applicants, n.d.) refers to data from 2000, informing applicants as follows:

> To give a general idea of the worldwide distribution of grades, here are the figures published by Cambridge ESOL for the year 2000.
> > Pass: 63%
> > Pass B: 25%
> > Pass A: 4%
> > Fail: 3%
> > Withdrew: 5%

While Cambridge ESOL currently publishes such statistics as those in Table 1 above on its website for a wide range of its examinations [For example, the statistics available for 2007 include: the 'Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)'; the 'Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT)' and the 'Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults (DELTA)' (University of Cambridge ESOL examinations, Grade statistics,

2007)], unfortunately no current statistics appear to be available for its more recent CELTA courses. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to expect that a comparable grade distribution would still be apparent. This is a proposition supported by anecdotal evidence suggesting both that some tutors believe that Cambridge expects its CELTA centres to award grades in line with the distribution above; and that there is an implicit grade "quota" in place, which is a claim that is often refuted by centre staff. For example, the following centre's course information describes the situation as follows:

> "Most candidates receive a Pass, and a small percentage of successful candidates receive Pass B. About one candidate in every sixty receives Pass A. There is no 'quota' of particular grades for each course; in theory it's possible for all trainees on a course to fail or to receive pass A (though both situations are extremely unlikely and would certainly raise a few eyebrows in Cambridge!)."
> (Next Level Language Institute, Prague, FAQs, 2009)

International House in Bangkok informs prospective applicants, in response to the Frequently Asked Question, "What are the possible final grades?" that they are:

> "Pass, Pass B, Pass A, and Fail. The CELTA is not a course you can be sure of passing simply through being accepted on to it. However, as centres won't accept you unless they judge that you have the potential to pass, the failure rate is very low (about 2% internationally). The majority of candidates are awarded a Pass grade, with only a small percentage (around 25%) achieving a Pass B or above. There is no 'quota' of particular grades for each course."
> (International House, Bangkok, FAQs, 2009)

A recent CELTA participant tracking survey (carried out from 2004 – 2005 in Barcelona) also referred to the possibility of the presence of a quota, refuted by a staff member:

> " 'Blake Schumacher [former participant, cited in the survey] felt that there was an unspoken quota in which a certain percentage of students must get a particular grade and a certain percentage must fail'. Jenny Johnson, head of the Teacher Training Department at IH Barcelona, however, says that this is not the case. 'There is no 'quota' and the failure rate is in fact very low, because the applicant who is not likely to pass the course is either weeded out by the interview process, or decides to withdraw at some point in the course,' Jenny says."
> (CELTA Participant Tracking Survey, 2009)

Whether there is an unspoken quota or not, a CELTA participant clearly has a relatively small chance (approximately one in four) of earning a pass 'A' or 'B'. In any one Teaching Practice group, therefore, on average only one participant will receive a distinction. To this extent the stakes may be considered higher for CELTA participants than for those taking one of the other two comparable initial training courses. This fact, combined with the Teaching Practice arrangements that rely upon effective group work, play a crucial role in the issues identified by the research, below.

Critical issues

The critical issues of immediate relevance to this topic are summarized as follows:

Issue One: Collaboration became less successful as course progressed and participants became more competitive

Collaborating towards a teaching practice lesson was described as very useful in the early stages, as participants reported that they enjoyed working together and were able to learn from each other. However, they found that collaboration became increasingly problematic, and many Phase Two respondents, having completed their course, referred to the entire experience of collaborating with their peers in negative terms. This was due in part to increased feelings of competitiveness among participants, which was manifested in a number of ways. For example, participants reported significant anxiety with regard to opportunities created while collaborating for peers to "pinch ideas". This was perceived as threatening in the context of assessment, where they were keen to receive and retain credit for their own ideas. The problem of the "pinching of ideas" extended to materials and teaching techniques. Participants also tended to become less supportive of each other as the course progressed; for example, some avoided giving positive feedback in the presence of tutors, while a small number deliberately drew the tutor's attention to reveal negative aspects of another's performance.

Issue Two: The pressure of time hinders collaboration

Some participants described finding that the time that was required for collaboration was not justified by the benefits. They also experienced unfairness in terms of either the quality or the quantity of time and effort each member of the group put into the task. Finally, the participants found that they lacked the time and skills to address such problems.

Issue Three: Tutors perceive constraints on their freedom to award grades

Tutors described several constraints on their ability to award the full range of grades. For example, they reported the prevalence of a culture in which a pass 'A' is very difficult to achieve, being awarded "very rarely; only when a trainee's performance really stands out in relation to the others" (i.e. an NR assessment practice), as well as "concern about awarding too many 'A's or too many fails". They also described believing that they were expected to produce, for any one course, a grade distribution that approximated a bell curve, and they expressed a "fear of lowering standards" and an awareness of a responsibility to avoid "grade inflation".

Issue Four: Tutors hold dual roles of judge and facilitator in relation to Teaching Practice

The Teaching Practice component in particular provides tutors with the primary opportunity in which to assess participants' performances against established criteria. Tutors reported that, given the relatively short time available, they tended to prioritise collecting evidence to justify their grade decisions, and that the provision of developmental feedback sometimes became secondary (this point is discussed further in Author, 2008).

Issue Five: Participants' collaboration skills are assessed

See learning outcome 4, above. This criterion led some participants to take particular steps to "be seen to be collaborating well".

It was found that participants are expected to develop and practice group work skills in situ (i.e. little or no preparation was provided at the start of courses, with an immersion approach being taken instead).

Discussion

A classic double bind

The outcomes above describe a paradoxical situation for CELTA participants, in which they receive contradictory messages. They are informed on a formal level that in order to succeed, they must collaborate effectively, and indeed how well they do this contributes to their overall assessment, and therefore, award. In practice however, they find that unrestrained collaboration could benefit a rival or rivals, which provided opportunities for possibly original ideas, materials or techniques to be "pinched" by peers, thus jeopardizing the chance of achieving one of the few 'restricted' distinctions available. This is a classic double bind which, according to Sluzki, Beavin, Tarnopolsky, and Veron (1977), whose work is based in part on Bateson, Jackson, Haley and Weakland (1956), requires a number of conditions:

> "(1) two or more persons; (2) repeated experience; (3) a primary negative injunction; (4) a secondary injunction conflicting with the first at a more abstract level, and like the first enforced by punishments or signals which threaten survival; (5) a tertiary negative injunction prohibiting the victim from escaping from the field." (p. 209)

All of the above conditions appear to be met in the case described here:

1. The two parties are tutors and participants.

2. Teaching Practice takes place repeatedly throughout a course.

3. A collaborative approach is required and included as a learning outcome (Issue Five); but ideas, material or techniques may be "pinched" if this approach is adopted (Issue One).

4. A more competitive approach is perceived as being more likely to lead to an award with distinction; yet this behavior may lead to failure to

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collaborate effectively, resultant alienation from the Teaching Practice group, and penalty for exhibiting poor collaboration skills.

5. CELTA participants cannot withdraw from Teaching Practice; doing so leads to automatic disqualification.

A collaborative approach on CELTA courses is therefore simultaneously demanded and discouraged. The presence of this double bind raises a number of issues, which are explored below.

Grading CELTA participants to an expected pattern

Research outcomes suggest that tutors are significantly influenced by the expectation that their centre's results will approximate to a normal curve of error, or bell curve (Issue Three). While there appears to be no evidence to support this expectation in current CELTA documentation supplied by Cambridge ESOL, the fact remains that tutors are under the impression that they should not produce results that "would raise a few eyebrows in Cambridge". Results that do not raise eyebrows are those that broadly conform to the pattern described above, which may be displayed as follows:
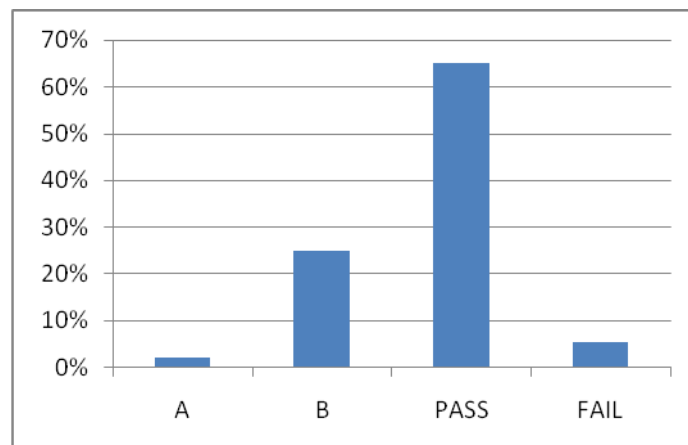

Chart 1: CELTA results (See Table 2) from 1989 – 1996

Why should tutors be influenced by the above pattern? First of all, it is conceivable that the pattern is an accurate reflection of participants' criterion-referenced performance over time; more research would be needed to verify this. However, the outcomes of this research suggest that tutors feel coerced into conforming to it, and

that this prevents them from awarding grades as they would like. Why should this be? There may be historical reasons: it could be that, when the course was first developed in the late 1970s (Author, 2006b) course assessment was norm-referenced, and this was changed to a criterion-referenced approach at some stage and tutors were not informed of the possible corresponding impact on the distribution of grades. It could also be that Cambridge ESOL prefers to retain the distribution of grades as above in order to distinguish the award overall from those of its competitors, in particular, the Trinity College London CertTESOL, which, as we have seen, does not make award with distinctions. It may also be that such grades are useful to employers during the selection process, and that they would devalue the qualification if too many applicants held awards with distinctions.

Various writers (notably, Bloom, 1968; Goertzel & Fashing, 1981; Shank, 2006; Wallace & Graves, 1995) have recognized that grading to a normal curve of error is an impoverished approach to any assessment following on from instruction. Instead, they argue that it is the distribution that might be expected *prior to* instruction, because:

> "Instruction should be specifically designed to provide the instruction, practice, feedback, and remediation needed to bring about achievement of the desired outcomes. [Bloom's] "mastery" model assumes that most students will be high achievers and that the instruction needs to be fixed if this does not occur. [….] A mastery model assumes that most students will achieve the desired outcomes, and therefore, most will achieve higher grades."   (Shank, 2006, p. 4)

In assessing CELTA participants and awarding grades, the aim is to identify what they can do and have learned as a result of their course. Given the rigorous selection procedures that centres apply, good instruction should enable the vast majority of participants to pass and should assist able participants to perform to a high standard. The many variables that exist prior to and during instruction (these include age; education level and background; country of origin; gender; work experience; first language; motivations) means that a normal curve of error may not apply here, because:

"[….] the normal bell curve is "normal" only if we are dealing with random errors. Social life, however, is not a lottery, and there is no reason to expect sociological variables to be normally distributed. Nor is there any reason to expect psychological variables to be if they are influenced by social factors."   (Goertzel & Fashing, 1981)

Informing participants before the start of a course that most will manage only to achieve an average pass grade, while a small number will fail or achieve a distinction, establishes participants' expectations for the duration. Participants respond to tutor expectations, so why restrict those expectations by allowing a culture in which there are artificial restrictions on tutors? A significant effect of this restriction is upon the quality of participant collaboration, which will be discussed next.

Successful collaboration

On CELTA courses, participants are placed into groups and told that they will be working work together. While group composition may not be entirely random (for example, tutors often make sure that both genders are represented if possible in a group) organization into groups does not in itself guarantee successful collaboration. Participants, as well as bringing a multitude of variables to the context, also bring varying levels of skill in group work; this variety alone is sufficient justification for the inclusion of some group work skills development at the start of the course, in order to enable participants to familiarize themselves with, and learn from, their peers' styles, strengths and weaknesses. However, on CELTA courses, development of these skills is not an immediate priority and on no course surveyed were participants offered any direct training in group work skills or giving constructive feedback; all were expected to acquire these skills incidentally. Participants also reported that the pressure of time interfered with successful collaboration, which suggests perhaps that they had misunderstood the role and potential benefits of collaboration. Successful collaboration is therefore jeopardized before training has fully begun (Issues Two and Six).

Training is essential for effective collaboration, which as we have seen can improve learning. Learning is also enhanced through the establishment of bonds between group members:

> "Learning is enhanced when situated in collaborative rather than competitive settings. When we play/learn with others a sense of community is created, fostering a special bond between members."
>
> (Melamed, 1994, p. 19)

However, the essential 'special bond' between participants is threatened when they are compelled to compete for the award of one of a limited number of passes with distinction. In such a context, the emphasis has shifted away from common goals, and towards individual ones. There is also a tension created for tutors, who are expected to facilitate group work and foster bonds between group members (Issue Four), while at the same time perform continuous and end of course individual assessments. The expectation that participants should collaborate in the face of extensive individual assessment seems counter-intuitive, and may lead to "contrived collegiality" or false collaboration (Issue Five). Hargreaves (1994) noted that collegiality may be contrived in order satisfy administrative agendas, a situation that resonates with Teaching Practice arrangements, which are driven by practicalities. He emphasizes that the real problem is one of teachers realizing that the "safe simulation of contrived collegiality" is superficial and a waste of valuable resources:

> "The point here is not that contrived collegiality is a manipulative, underhand way of tricking passive teachers into complying with administrative agendas, for we shall see that teachers are very quick to see through such contrivances. Rather, the administratively simulated image of collaboration becomes its own self-sustaining reality, with its own symbolic importance and legitimacy. In this sense, the major problem that the safe simulation of contrived collegiality raises for teachers and their work is not that it is controlling and manipulative but that it is superficial and wasteful of their efforts and energies."
>
> (p. 80-81)

A number of participants recognized this wastefulness. For example, they reported that they were "playing the game", or "jumping through the hoops to get what [they] want"; "hoops" identified included the need to be seen to "be contributing well to my team" and to "be getting on well with the others, even when I'm not".

Successful collaboration, depending as it does on "fostering a special bond between members", requires trust among all parties that seek to collaborate; on CELTA courses this means the participant-tutor and the participant-participant relationship in particular. However, all parties should also be able to trust the

"system", and work within it knowing that it exists to support, not undermine, their progress. Such support cannot be guaranteed in a system that includes at its heart a double bind. One of the key considerations for the future, according to Hargreaves (1994), is the need to build trust during professional training. Giddens (1990) defines trust as follows:

> "[It is] confidence in the reliability of a person or a system, regarding a given set of outcomes or events, where that confidence expresses a faith in the probity or love of another, or in the correctness of abstract principle." (p. 34)

Such confidence is at risk on CELTA courses. Instead, participants may find that their peers undermine them for personal advantage, that their tutors act as the conduit for mixed messages and that they are expected to work well with others while at the same time be assessed on individual rather than group performance. If the relationship between participants and tutors is based upon false, negative, or contradictory pretexts such as these then trust is fundamentally at risk. Given that research indicates that initial teacher education plays a major role in the development and consolidation of pedagogical values, and provide participants with direct experience of such core values (for example, Ball & Even, 2009), it is clearly the case that conveying negative values to participants at this formative stage in their careers could have far-reaching consequences if they are reflected in their subsequent practice and ultimately conveyed to their own students.

Some solutions

In the light of the discussion above, it is proposed that Cambridge ESOL could take a number of steps that would help to enhance its CELTA training programme:

1. Either abolish the award of grades with distinction, or take steps to eliminate the implicit requirement to grade to an expected pattern, and inform participants accordingly. Both approaches could help to "deemphasize competition" and improve collaboration, though it is anticipated that the former approach would be more successful in this regard. In either case, participants should be provided with statements giving further details about their individual performances, which serve to provide more detailed and

personalized feedback, and are useful for both the participants themselves and their prospective employers. At the very least, such feedback would let participants realize in which areas they met (or did not meet) the criteria or standards. Further research is required in this specific area.

2. It is also important to provide training aimed specifically at the development of participants' group work skills before these become essential for effective collaboration in the Teaching Practice portion of the course. Such training, as well as aiming to develop some of the necessary skills for successful collaboration, could draw attention to the negative effects that competing with each other in this context may have, and emphasize the benefits of effective collaboration.

Conclusion

It is of course neither possible nor desirable to eliminate competitiveness among adults in a training situation such as the one described here. Furthermore, one element of competition can be motivating: that comparison with our colleagues should urge us on to greater things is a natural human response. In CELTA training, it is question of emphasis; it is proposed that the way forward lies in creating a training culture that explicitly deemphasizes competition, and instead, prioritizes the development of a genuinely collaborative training culture in which participants see themselves as members of a learning community. Such a community needs to be grounded in a culture of trust in each other and in the training processes, and to have at its heart two pivotal understandings: that helping others to learn defines teaching, whether the 'others' are language learners or peers, and there is potential to learn ourselves.

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Effective Peer Mentoring for EFL Pre-service Teachers'
Instructional Practicum Practice

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Abstract

Providing effective mentoring to pre-service teachers in their field-based practice continues to be a major challenge in teacher education programs because of limited supervision resources. Possible effective alternatives like peers learning from peers need to be explored. That is, apart from being mentored by their school practicum mentors, pre-service teachers could learn from one another and mentor one another as part of a formal peer mentoring program to assist in the development of their teaching practices. A quasi-experimental design was used to investigate the affect of peer mentoring on participants' professional practice in terms of the instructional domain and the results were compared to a group of pre-service teachers who did not participate in the peer mentoring experiences. Judgments by their school practicum senior teacher mentors, their university supervisors and from self-assessment

questionnaires indicate that the participants in the peer mentoring program made significant improvements in their scores for instructional practice compared to their counterparts. Peer mentoring may be a key to improving the quality of pre-service teacher education programs.

Keywords: Peer-mentoring, teacher training, practicum, instruction

Introduction

Language teacher preparation in many countries consists of initial university-based course work on teaching theory followed by school-based student teaching practice (the practicum or field experience). In pre-service teacher education in general, and EFL teacher education in particular, the school-based practicum experience has been seen as one of the most critical and important components for preparing future teachers (Crookes, 2003; Farrell, 2001; Johnson, 1996; Richards & Nunan, 1990; Simpson, 2006; Walsh & Elmslie, 2005) as the practicum provides the initial chance to try out and to enhance the skills needed for effective pre-service teachers' instructional practice. Almost without exception, pre-service teachers consistently place a high value on the practical experiences attained through their practicum (Bullough et al., 2002; Schulz, 2000) and the research verifies that student teaching experiences have a major influence on pre-service teachers (see, e.g. Aiken & Day, 1999; Gimbert, 2001; John, 2004; Kwan Siu Fong, 1996; Purdum-Cassidy, 2005).

Yet, many pre-service teachers experience feelings of isolation (Dong, 1997; Farrell, 2007; Machado & Meyer-Botnarescue, 2005), and a lack of support (Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009; Wang & Odell, 2002). According to Gold (1996), these are two of the main reasons that new teachers leave the teaching profession. If the realities or problems of beginning teachers are not dealt with constructively and if new teachers are insufficiently supported personally and professionally, it is unlikely that the outcomes of their initial professional practice will be predominantly positive. In terms of developing the student teachers' instructional practice, many pre-service teachers are challenged by the "conceptual struggle about teaching and learning" (Wang & Odell, 2002, p. 515). This can be the case in situations where there is a poor or limited partnership between schools and universities in teacher training. The school settings for student teaching often are not selected on the basis of the schools' supervision capacities or compatibility between

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the schools teaching methods and the university-based programs. Thus, pre-service teachers may experience discontinuality in implementing what they have learned in their university-based coursework with what they see and what they are expected to do in practice. In other words, what they may believe about the nature of effective teaching and learning may be in conflict with the reality of teaching in a particular school context (Gerges, 2001; Luo, 2003; Zeichner, 2010). These issues highlight the need for teacher education reform with a focus on how to improve pre-service teacher instructional practice.

During the practicum, mentoring is the most common mechanism used to develop pre-service teachers' instructional practice in their classrooms. However, the quality of mentoring is limited by many factors including the need for substantial investments of time, money, effort, and resources (Dyer & Nguyen, 1999; Manson, 1990; Morton, 2004; Redmond, 1990; Saban, 2002). An important constraint on the traditional mentoring process is the availability of teachers as role models and mentors for their junior teachers (Kadar, 2005; McDaugall & Beattie, 1997; Peterman, 2003; Thomas, 2000). These problems may well affect the quality of the mentoring process and in such cases pre-service teachers may feel that their school - based practicum experiences were ineffectively mentored or supervised (Morton, 2004). Consequently, there is a need for more efficient and effective mentoring processes to be developed.

Given this climate of limited resources, a peer-mentoring scheme could be considered as an efficient method of enhancing the effectiveness of pre-service teachers' instructional practice, especially in situations where there are simply not enough experienced teachers who are willing or able to act as mentors to junior teachers. Apart from being mentored by their school practicum senior teacher mentors, pre-service teachers could also learn from one another and mentor one another to assist in the development of their teaching practices. The present study investigates an instance of the impact of formal peer mentoring on EFL pre-service teachers' instructional practice during the practicum.

Peer mentoring as a method for developing teachers' instruction practice in teacher education

The varied use of the term of peer mentoring suggests that there is no universal agreement about its definition. However, an examination of the various definitions of peer mentoring reveals several common themes. In general, peer mentoring refers to a supportive process which is based on an equal or nearly equal peer-based relationship in which peers play the role of mutual mentor. Peer mentors are usually equals in terms of age, expertise, power, and hierarchical status, and the interactions are based on reciprocal and mutual beneficial relationships and learning partnerships rather than on the traditional transmission of expertise and experience from experts to novices. In this research, we examine the dynamic of two-way peer mentoring in which "both participants have something of value to contribute and to gain from the other in what is defined as a mutually helpful situation" (Harnish & Wild, 1993b, p. 272) and in which both parties can experience being both a mentor and a mentee at different times.

Peer mentoring is underpinned by the Vygotskian notion of social constructivism. Vygotsky (1981) argued that the majority of learning is not achieved in isolation, but rather through interaction that takes place in communication and collaboration with other people in social settings. According to a Vygotskian approach, the construction of meaning occurs first as exchanges between two participants and is then internalised. Vygotskian theory states that in order for learning to become internalised, mediation must occur during the actual problem-solving, joint activity (or shared task with others) (Vygotsky, 1981). Vygotsky maintained that social interaction is a prerequisite to learning and cognitive development. This means that knowledge is co-constructed and learning normally involves more than one person. As such, learning emerges as the result of interaction in social settings. However, such interaction needs to occur within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Goos, Galbraith, and Renshaw (2002), "applied to educational settings, this view of ZPD suggests there is learning potential in peer groups where [partners] have incomplete but relatively equal expertise – each partner possessing some knowledge and skill but requiring the others' contribution in order to make progress" (p.195). The Vygotskian's notion of ZPD sheds light on the

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peer mentoring process. When peer mentoring happens, assistance occurs in a peer-based relationship in which the two participants work together. Each participant has the opportunity to socially construct knowledge with another person in the field. Participants in the relationship may also be able to experience, and discuss the application of theory to practice, problem solve with others, share their disappointments or confusions, and reflect on their teaching (Samaras & Gismondi, 1998). Thus, the role of each participant is to guide the other within their zone of proximal development.

From this theoretical perspective, peer mentoring can occur in various forms such as peer coaching (Pierce & Miller, 1994; Slater & Simmons, 2001; Wynn & Kromrey, 2000), peer supervision (Miller, 1989), and peer-observation (Richardson, 2000). Most of these different configurations are based on the model of "peer assistance of equals and do not involve evaluation" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005, p. 144). Peer mentoring is considered to have important benefits in developing teachers' instruction practice. Joyce and Showers (2002) reviewed theory and practice related to peer coaching and found that peer coaching can be an effective strategy for professional development in which the objective is prominent improvement in (a) knowledge, (b) skill, and (c) transfer of training into the classroom. Studies have found that participation in peer-based relationships positively influenced teaching practices and that not only does peer-based collaboration facilitate the transfer of instructional skills of pre-service teachers to the classroom, but it also offers opportunities for pre-service teachers to meet together to discuss experiences in field-based contexts (Anderson, Barksdale, & Hite, 2005; Harnish & Wild, 1993a). These conclusions are supported in many studies (see, e.g., Forbes, 2004a; Harnish & Wild, 1993b; Mecham, 2006; Richardson, 2000; Wynn & Kromrey, 2000).

However, the value of this form of peer teacher collaboration during practice teaching has been documented in only two studies in the field of pre-service EFL teacher education. Benedetti (1999)'s research indicates the value of peer coaching as a vehicle for skills acquisition and teacher reflection while Vacilotto and Cummings (2007), who used a slightly different approach to investigate the effectiveness of the peer coaching model, also found peer coaching to be the most supportive behaviour in peer relationships. This study examines the use of peers in developing teachers'

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instructional practice, the benefits of which are increasingly being recognised. The study addresses the need to formalise the use of peers in teacher education using a well-informed structure.

Characteristics of peer mentoring programs

Like mentoring, peer mentoring programs can be structured in various ways. Among the most important factors that have been found to contribute to the success of effective programs are the program orientation (Le Cornu, 2005), the matching of participants, the training of mentors (Armstrong, Allinson, & Hayes, 2002; Evertson & Smithey, 2000), the presence of a contact person or a co-ordinator, and the characteristics of mentors (Terrion & Leonard, 2007). There are various ways in which potential mentors can be paired, but because of the difficulties in establishing and maintaining a formal mentoring system, it is not an easy task to satisfy all the compatibility factors between the participants. However, the matching of partners is desirable and may be crucial to the success of the program as it is heavily dependent on the context of peer mentoring and peer mentoring tasks. Moreover, compatibility between participants' affects their ability to develop a successful formal mentoring relationship; and thereby, it needs to be taken into consideration because the more the participants consider themselves to be compatible, the greater the perceived benefits of the mentorship (Allen & Eby, 2003; Armstrong, Allinson, & Hayes, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004; Johnson & Ridley, 2004).

Beyond the need for compatibility of peer mentors, training for peer mentors is of importance in enhancing the effectiveness of the peer mentoring process (Bryant & Terborg, 2008; Freeman & Kelton, 2004; Treston, 1999), and it needs to be carefully undertaken (Mill, 1994). The topics that are covered in peer mentoring training vary from program to program and typically depend on the specific program and its particular context. However, some common training topics include: orientation, mentoring skills, and support from administration.

While there is little empirical research that has focused on peers playing a mentoring role for each other (Bryant, 2005), the literature has shown that peer learning can be used as a valuable professional development strategy (e.g., Forbes, 2004; Harnish & Wild, 1993). Most of this related research has focused on the use of

peer mentoring for in-service/pre-service science teachers in their own language. However, there has been a lack of formally structured peer mentoring that takes advantage of naturally occurring colleague interactions as an intentional strategy for pre-service EFL teachers in their practicum. This paper describes a practicum-based peer mentoring program for EFL pre-service teachers and investigates whether participation in a formal peer mentoring intervention had an effect on the participants' instruction practice in the classroom during their practicum.

Design

This study employed a two group (treatment and control) quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design to examine the effect of the participation and non-participation in a peer mentoring program on pre-service EFL teachers' instruction during their teaching practice. Quasi-experiments have treatment and control groups, but the participants are not randomly assigned to the groups (Campbell & Riecken, 2006; Creswell, 2003). In this case, the use of a quasi-experiment design allowed the researchers to identify the effect of the formal peer mentoring intervention on the participants' instruction. This design contrasts with the single group design used in much of the available research which leaves unclear whether the changes observed were actually due to the mentor effect.

In this study, the participants completed questionnaires about their professional practice in the instructional domain prior to and at the conclusion of the intervention (as a self-reporting measure), and parallel questionnaires were completed by their school mentors and university supervisor to evaluate the pre-service EFL teachers' professional practices. A separate survey was distributed at the end of the study to ascertain the value the participants attributed to their peer mentoring experiences. Thus, the effect of the intervention was examined through perceived changes in the participants' instruction as measured by their school mentors, their supervisors, and their self evaluation. The effects of peer mentoring on the participants' professional practice were also examined by participants' evaluation of their peer assistance during their professional practice.

Instruments

A version of Danielson's (1999) shortened components of professional practice questionnaire was adapted for use in this research to measure the participants' instructional practice. According to Danielson (1996), there are five components at "the heart of teaching", which are: 1) communicating clearly and accurately, 2) using questioning and discussion techniques, 3) engaging students in learning, 4) providing feedback to students, and 5) demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness. Danielson (2002) defines instruction as the actual engagement of students with learning content, and the primary goal of this domain is to enhance student learning. Danielson (2002) also states that teacher efficacy of these teaching skills influences how students "experience the content, whether they grow to love it or hate it, and the extent to which they come to see school learning as important to their lives" (p. 25).Without a doubt, these goals are the basic expectations in most teaching and learning contexts.

Within Danielson's (2002) construct, four levels of performance are found: Unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, and distinguished. Each level is specifically articulated and exactly what one should hope to observe at each level is clearly described. Clearly defined levels of proficiency help insure greater observer reliability and validity. For the purpose of this study, a score of 1 to 4, which corresponds to the aforesaid levels of performance, was assigned to each of the assessed elements found within each of the five component areas. A column "Not observable" was added to the survey given to the university supervisor and school mentors in order to help them to evaluate what they observed. Finally, some minor changes to Danielson's wording were made and the scales were translated into Vietnamese to make the framework more user-friendly for this specific setting.

Context

This study was conducted within a six-week practicum for pre-service EFL teachers at the College of Foreign Languages, Vietnam National University, where clusters of pre-service EFL teachers were placed in different secondary schools in Hanoi or nearby areas. After studying EFL teaching methodology courses which provided them with grounding in English language teaching instructional practice, pre-service EFL teachers were assigned to do their practicum at one of the local secondary

schools. The practicum was a single period of six week where they experienced first hand teaching practice in real classrooms. There were approximately 200 students enrolled in the fourth year of the teacher education program, and 10-12 participating schools, with widely varying numbers of trainees being assigned to each school. The pre-service EFL teachers were at their practicum sites for six full days a week, beginning in late February 2008 and continuing to early April 2008. Students progressed through these field experiences as a cohort group, and were placed with the university supervisor who had worked with them in the university-based ELT methodology courses. In each school, two or three of the pre-service EFL teachers were assigned to a cooperating English teacher and a form teacher. These school mentors were expected to guide pre-service teachers towards effective English language teaching and class management.

Participants

Participants consisted of an intact treatment group of 32 and a control group of 33 EFL teacher trainees. The treatment group participated in a peer mentoring program which was integrated into their practicum, whereas the control group did not receive formal peer mentoring training nor were they involved in a formal peer mentoring process. A comparison of the characteristics of the two groups (e.g., previous teaching experiences) found no relevant differences between the two groups.

Research implementation

To prepare the participants for the formal peer mentoring process, the participants in the treatment group were given a peer mentoring training workshop. There were three goals for the workshop. The first goal was to orient the participants to the formal peer mentoring process. Second, the participants were provided with an opportunity to get to know each other and to enhance their awareness of each other's personalities and preferences. The third goal was to train the participants in the necessary mentoring skills. One of the researchers acted as a program designer and implementer, who coordinated the participants' sign-ups, conducted the formal peer mentoring process, assigned the pairs, and being was contact person for all the participants during the practicum. Through weekly peer mentoring reflective journal

reports, the mentor educator (the researcher) tracked what the participants were doing during the process of peer mentoring to observe what problems they faced, and at the same time, was to be able to offer support and advice if necessary. It was particularly important that if any problems were discovered, appropriate action be taken. Since the mentor educator was not directly involved in any of the participants' practicum work, the university supervisor and school mentors were asked to facilitate this peer mentoring process by monitoring, providing support, and expertise if needed. All the participants in the experimental group received a manual for mentoring practice.

As part of this peer mentoring intervention program, participants were matched as closely as possible according to their preferences, time tabling, age, and compatibility. Student teachers were able to choose their peer mentor partner from among those in the school where the participants were placed for their practicum, which was normally in close geographical proximity to their homes. Student teachers who worked together in the peer mentoring process were assigned to work with the same school mentor. Thus, they taught the same classes during their six week practicum; which provided them with regular opportunities to interact with each other and to work cooperatively to solve common classroom-based problems.

The program aimed to provide the pre-service EFL teachers with an additional strategy for developing their professional practice during their practicum and for giving support to a peer. During the practicum, the pairs of peers were expected to provide career-related support and psychosocial support to each other through frequent contact. How they did this was negotiable, and happened whenever they felt the need of support for some of the challenges and dilemmas associated with being a student teacher. Although in-person contact was preferred, telephone and email contacts were also encouraged. These were sometimes used as a direct result of time and other constraints such as, for example, clashing class schedules.

Peer mentors were required to conduct two major activities each week: peer observation and support meetings. Support meetings were an activity that gathered pairs of peer mentors together to examine their learning-to-teaching process. Apart from informal meetings that peer mentors might have, a formal weekly meeting with each other was felt to be necessary and to formalise the mentoring process. These meeting were organised to create opportunities for pre-service teachers to promote

regular dialogue, inquiry, and reflection on their field-based experiences. Each pair was required to sit together for about an hour per week to discuss the lesson they had observed, review the work done, to discuss both the professional and non-professional issues arising during the week and to negotiate an action plan for the following week. The weekly hour-long meetings included structured activities which were detailed in the peer mentoring program package. Meanwhile, the control group followed the normal pattern of practicum in which there was no formalization of their peer interaction.

Data collection and analysis

Danielson's (1996) survey for instruction domain was given to the participants for their self evaluation, to the school mentors and university supervisors for their evaluation of teacher trainees at both schools during the first and last week of the practicum. A mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the two group's performance on their instructional practice. The two groups' scores were compared from three perspectives, that is, those of the participants, their school mentors, and their university supervisors. Only the interaction results (treatment and control by pre and post intervention stage) are discussed in this analysis because the aim of the study was to investigate the degree of change in scores over time for the two groups in terms of their perceived instructional performance.

Results and discussion

The results related to Danielson's (1996) questionnaire on instruction are provided in Table 1 for the treatment and control groups across the pre-intervention and post-intervention period for their self-evaluation, school mentors' evaluations, and university supervisors' evaluations. A test of the statistical model for the three mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance showed no violations of any of the required underlying assumptions for any of the analyses. The results from this analysis for the trainee-teachers' self-assessed scores indicated that there was no significant interaction in the scores for the instruction component between groups, with a Wilks' Lambda = 0.98, $F(1,63) = 1.48$, $p = 0.22$, although there was a weak

effect (eta squared = 0.02). Figure 1 plots the means of these results, showing that although the treatment group perceived instructional practice improved during the pre-post intervention period, the change was not significantly different from that of the control group which believed that its performance in this domain had slightly declined. Thus, the changes in the perceptions of both groups of teacher trainees about their instructional competence during the practicum remained relatively stable (i.e. from a mean of 2.85 to 2.96 for the mentoring group and from 2.69 to 2.64 for the non-mentored group).

Figure 1: Self-evaluated pre and post scores of instruction component for treatment and control group
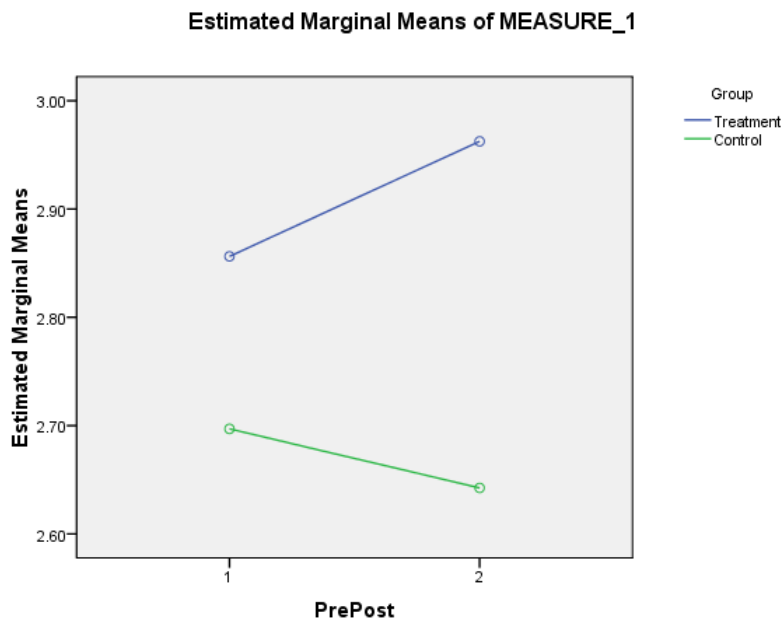
A different pattern of results occurred for the scores for the instructional domain for the two groups based on the school mentors' evaluations. Results from the mixed between-within ANOVA show that there is a statistically significant interaction between the scores for instruction across the pre-intervention and post-intervention period for the two groups, Wilks' Lambda = 0.86, $F(1,63) = 9.35$, $p = 0.003$, partial eta squared = 0.12. The means for this significant interaction are plotted in Figure 2. Looking at the score changes for the two groups, we see that there was an increase in the scores for both the treatment and the control group; however, there

was a significantly greater gain in the scores for the treatment group for the instruction domain.

Figure 2: School mentor evaluation pre and post scores of instruction domain for treatment and control group
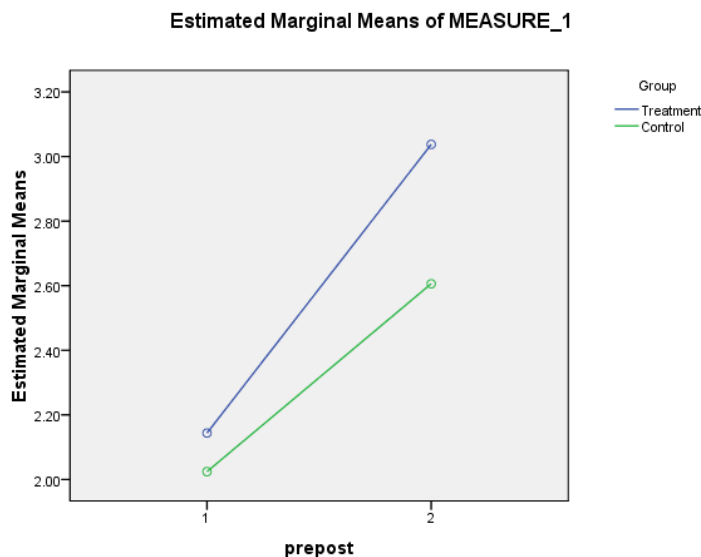
A similar pattern of results was found for the scores for the instructional domain based on university supervisors' evaluations. Results from the mixed between-within ANOVA show that there is a statistically significant interaction between the scores for instruction across the pre-intervention and post-intervention period for the two groups, Wilks' Lambda = 0.80, $F(1,63) = 15.23$, $p = 0.000$. The large size effect (partial eta squared = 0.19) supports the notion of perceived practical significance between the two groups. The plot of the means shown in Figure 3 depicts that for the pre-intervention period, the university supervisors evaluated all the participants in the instruction domain similarly. However, for the post-intervention period, the university supervisors' scores indicate that they perceived the treatment group to have made a significantly greater improvement in the instruction component, while there was not much of a difference for the control group. These results suggest there were significant differences in the scores for the instruction component across the pre- post-measurement period between the group who participated in the intervention and the group who did not.

Figure 3: University supervisor evaluation pre and post scores of instruction domain for treatment and control group
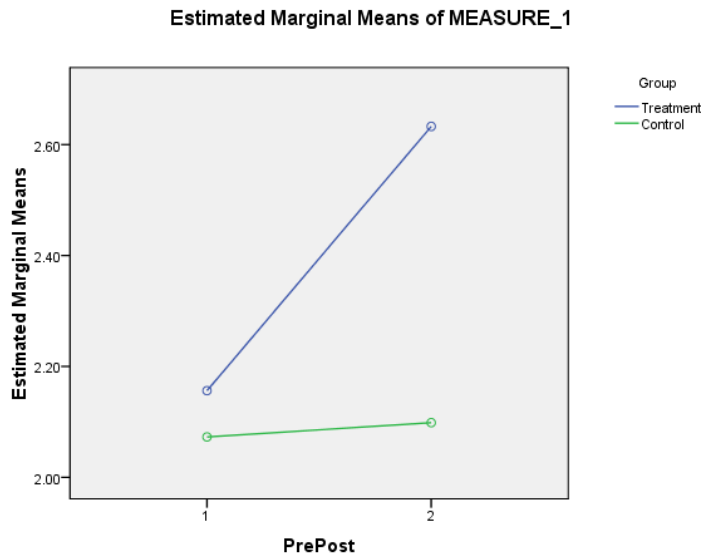

Estimated Marginal Means of MEASURE_1

Table 1: Pre and post-test mean scores of the treatment and control group on Danielson's (1996) domains of instruction

Domain of professional practice	Evaluation from three perspectives		Treatment group (n=32)		Control group (n=33)		PrePost* Group Wilks' Lambda		
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value	p	Partial Eta^2
Instruction	Self evaluation	Pre-measure	2.85	0.37	2.69	0.32	0.98	0.22	0.02
		Post-measure	2.96	0.49	2.64	0.40			
	Mentor evaluation	Pre-measure	2.14	0.22	2.02	0.29	0.86	0.003	0.13
		Post-measure	3.03	0.38	2.60	0.31			
	Supervisor evaluation	Pre-measure	2.15	0.37	2.07	0.26	0.80	0.000	0.19
		Post-measure	2.63	0.32	2.09	0.51			

The statistical data for these three analyses are summarised in Table 1, which shows that the ratings for the mean scores fall in the basic (1.5 to 2.48) to proficient (2.5 to 3.49) scoring range. In addition, the trainees saw themselves as coming into the practicum as "proficient" and not changing very much, while the teacher mentors and university supervisors saw them as starting with basic skills and improving on those during the practicum.

The data from these three analyses provide evidence that there was a significant change in scores related to instructional practice as evaluated by the school mentors and the university supervisors between the participants who were involved in the mentoring training intervention and the participants who participated in the ordinary program. School mentors in both groups saw increased performance from basic to proficient but the treatment group was rated as becoming significantly more proficient than the control group. There was also a significant discrepancy in this domain between the two groups from the perspective of the university supervisor. Interestingly, the university supervisors working with control group did not see much improvement in their teachers' performance in instructional practice from the beginning to the end of the practicum; yet in the treatment group, a significant improvement was believed to have occurred. However, when it comes to the participants themselves, both groups perceived little change in their instructional practice. Both groups felt they brought "proficient" skills to the practicum from their university study and that these skills changed very little over the 6 weeks. This result may be due to the "shattered feeling" generated by the intensity of the practicum (Johnson, 1996). It is possible that the challenges they faced during the practicum may have caused them to feel inadequate or inferior.

This study provides some evidence that formal peer mentoring can assist EFL pre-service teachers to develop their instructional practice during a period of practicum study. In this study, we argued for the necessity and value of the use of a formal peer mentoring program to provide support for teacher trainees and to provide the opportunity for participants to make improvements in their instructional practice.

Conclusion

The results of the study can be seen in terms of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the role of social interaction with capable peers in developing core aspects of learning (to teach). Participation in the peer mentoring model during the practicum enabled pre-service EFL teachers to interact with each other; thus, developing their professional practice. Vygostsky's theory provided a valid way to understand pre-service teachers' learning in the study. The study provides further evidence for the position that learning does not take place in isolation but rather through interaction, i.e., it occurs through communication and collaboration with other people in social settings. However, the study also raised the awareness of the need for well-structured support for interaction among peers.

To date, there is a dearth of research investigating the effect of formal peer mentoring on EFL pre-service teacher practicum study in non-western contexts like Vietnam. In this study, the findings support the data from the two previous studies (Forbes, 2004b; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh, & Wilss, 2008) that have explored how peer-based strategies can help teachers to develop their instruction practice. Based on these results, we would argue that peer mentoring should be considered as an alternative approach to traditional practicum programs to ensure that pre-service EFL teachers function effectively in the educational environment, thus improving the quality of EFL teaching in early career teachers. If we are to effectively provide pre-service teachers with support for their first entry in to the profession, we must consider integrating this model of formal peer mentoring into the practicum program. The results from this study suggest that the two major activities – peer observation and the support meeting – are the core practices in helpful in peer mentoring. In addition, the training workshop is also a key factor contributing to effectiveness of the program.

The provision of a peer mentoring program for pre-service EFL teachers during their practicum has the potential to contribute to the understanding of the use of peer mentoring for developing effective EFL teaching practices among pre-service EFL teachers. The findings from this study are of significance to a variety of educational groups, who would be interested in exploiting the untapped learning resource of peers in teacher education.

Although the efficacy of this proposal was tested in terms of the pre-service teachers' instruction practice, further research on other teaching –related aspects remain to be explored.

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A Proposal for a CA-Integrated English Language Teacher Education Program in Turkey

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Abstract

This study proposes a comprehensive framework for a Conversation Analysis (CA) informed English language teacher education program in Turkey. By reviewing recent studies in CA, Critical Reflective Practice, Teacher Language Awareness and language teacher education in general; the author calls for a more effective language teacher education program and presents an applicable framework that aims to solve current problems in English language teacher education in Turkey.

Keywords: Conversation analysis, teacher language awareness, foreign language teacher education, L2 classroom interactional competence

1. Introduction

This paper proposes an applicable framework for integrating Conversation Analysis (CA) into English language teacher education programs in Turkey. The need for such a proposal has arisen from the problems of the structure of the current programs in Turkey, the growing number of studies that attribute CA a significant role in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and recent developments within

the particular area of CA-informed models for language teacher education. Another motivation has been the negligence of this promising research paradigm by academicians and practitioners in Turkey, which can be well understood from the fact that none of the research papers (out of 183) presented in the "The National Conference of Foreign Language Education in Turkey" (held in Ankara in November 2007) followed a CA methodology nor showed the pertinent implications of CA for foreign language teaching/learning.

Reasoning from the abovementioned motivations, Section 2 reviews the CA-informed research in Applied Linguistics. In Section 3, the language teacher education context in Turkey is briefly introduced, with reference to the current program (Section 3.1) and its problems (Section 3.2). Section 4 informs the reader on recent developments in language teacher education in general with its wide ranging but complementary subsections. For example, in Section 4.1, the concept of teacher language awareness is discussed, which builds links from CA to *Classroom Interactional Competence* and to Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (Walsh, 2006b) [a framework designed for language teacher education (Section 4.2)]. In Section 4.3, critical reflective practice and effective mentoring are discussed by considering the recent attempts in standardising language teacher education in Europe. Section 5 will focus on a discussion of the teachers' skills in creating and maintaining a pedagogical focus and its potential results. In the last section before the conclusion, the phases for a CA informed language teacher education program in Turkey will be given with a sample assessment scale.

2. CA and Applied Linguistics

CA methodology emerged and was developed in ethnomethodology; a subdiscipline of sociology. With their pioneering study, Sacks et al. (1974) investigated the methods of interlocutors in structuring conversation efficiently and argued that conversation has its own dynamic rules and structures. It is evident that in order to "structure a conversation clearly and to ensure the efficient delivery of information, speakers and listeners work together" (Pridham 2002, p.45). This derives its basis from a socio-cultural theory of language as opposed to the mainstream rational and cognitive paradigm, which has influenced the research tradition in Applied

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Linguistics and SLA. For Drew (2005), due to its analytic perspective and its investigations of forms-of-interaction, CA has led the way to the recent expansion of the boundaries of Applied Linguistics.

Seedhouse (2005a) discussed the relevance of CA-informed research in the following Applied Linguistics areas: teaching language for specific purposes, language teaching materials design, language proficiency assessment, language classroom interaction, native/non-native speaker talk, and code-switching. Following Firth & Wagner's (1997) proposal for reconceptualising SLA research, a growing number of publications arose, both for and against the implications of CA-for-SLA. Firth & Wagner's (1997) argument called for sensitivity to contextual and interactional aspects of language use, a broadening of the SLA database and more importantly, an adoption of a more emic and participant-relevant perspective towards SLA research.

The emic perspective in CA has been attributed one of the primary roles in its implications for Applied Linguistic research (Markee 2000, 2008; Markee & Kasper, 2004; Seedhouse, 2004, 2005a, 2005b). For Seedhouse (2005a) "CA presents competence as variable and co-constructed by participants in interaction" (p.172). Therefore, giving a role to cognition as a socially distributed phenomenon, SLA research should take a participant-relevant perspective and be investigated as a bottom-up process.

Cognitivists have essentially argued that the A in SLA "stands for acquisition, thus emphasizing that language acquisition and use are theoretically and empirically distant dimensions of language (Markee & Kasper, 2004, p.491)". As a reaction to CA-for-SLA, this cognitive orientation was an emergent point for some researchers (Gass 1998; Long 1997; Kasper 1997). Additionally, He (2004) stated that the concern of CA is neither the cognitive processes that enable the learner to absorb the interactional data internally; nor the process of learning over an extended period of time.

However, as a response to this attributed deficiency concerning a longitudinal approach to CA-for-SLA, Markee (2008) proposed the Learning Behavior Tracking (LBT), which involves using two methodological techniques; Learner Object Tracking (LOT) and Learning Process Tracking (LPT). The first one is a technique

that attempts to document when a language learning event occurs during a particular time period; and the second one uses the techniques of CA to evaluate how participants engage in a language learning behaviour. Markee (2008) claimed that his approach has the advantage of being methodologically true to CA, while also addressing SLA's traditionally cognitive understandings of mind (see Mori and Markee 2009 for a review of studies within CA-for-SLA). The discussion will now turn to the advantages of CA for materials development and speaking classes.

The applications of CA in L2 speaking classes have been a focus of interest and research by many scholars (Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006; Peng, 2007; Zhou, 2006). Apart from the SLA issues discussed so far in this section, these studies are more of an applied origin. To illustrate, Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, (2006) focused on the teaching of pragmatics in foreign language classes and demonstrate how this can be achieved effectively with materials informed by CA. Peng (2007) indicated that in order for students to develop an awareness of conversational structures and patterns, teachers should incorporate authentic audio or video materials into their classes for students to transcribe and analyze. Furthermore, as Mori (2002) stated: "by raising the awareness of the sequential organization of talk and explicitly teaching the procedures that they can follow to accomplish certain social actions, the instructors may be able to raise the probability that interaction during group work becomes coherent and natural" (p. 340).

The applications of CA-informed classroom activities are inevitably dependent upon materials development and advancements in corpora studies. For developing teaching materials, many researchers have investigated naturally occurring conversations like telephone calls and tried to build links for language classes (Bowles, 2006; Brown & Lewis, 2003; Wong, 2002). The centre of the problem seems to be the inadequacies of the dialogues in textbooks from a socio-pragmatic perspective. As the context in this paper is Turkey, the case can be exemplified with a study held with 100 teacher candidates. In her research, which was designed to reveal the beliefs of Turkish EFL teacher candidates on the perceived socio-pragmatic problems of the dialogues in text books, Sarac-Suzer (2007) found that teacher candidates do not trust the current course books used in English language teaching in Turkey.

As we turn our attention to teachers, the next section will briefly introduce the current language teacher education program in Turkey. Starting from Section 4, the focus will be on teacher education; narrowing down from teacher language awareness to the applications of CA in teacher education. The discussions and the theoretical background provided herein will hopefully supply the reader with an understanding of the need to integrate CA to the current language teacher education program in Turkey.

3. Language Teacher Education in Turkey

Since the 1950s, English has become the most popular foreign language in Turkey. Buyukkantarcioglu (2004) relates the popularity of the English language in Turkey to socio-political and socioeconomic developments, scientific/technological developments, the media, education, international travel and gearing state officials towards learning a foreign language. Therefore, the teaching of English as a foreign language is a matter of concern in both professional and academic contexts. Starting from 2006, the English language has been taught from the 4th grade in primary education, which means that it is a compulsory school subject for young learners. As for higher education, English is not just a 'required' course, but in 26 universities it is the actual medium of instruction (Kilickaya, 2006). For Kirkgoz (2007),

> "Turkey is experiencing a period of change and innovation in ELT systems, particularly in primary-level education, to achieve its aim of catching up with the European system of language education and adapting its existing system to new educational norms, particularly in the ELT curriculum and the assessment system."   (p. 227)

Tercanlioglu (2004) stated that the Turkish educational system is looking to the educational systems of other countries for wisdom on improving their own teacher training system. However, it should be mentioned that direct adoption, instead of adaptation, from other educational systems may create problems; therefore we should be context-sensitive. The following two sections will briefly outline English language teaching policies, language teacher education in Turkey and problems in the curricula so as to raise awareness on why a CA-informed language teacher education program in Turkey may bring solutions to the recent problems.

3.1. Current English Language Teacher Education Programs

There are two major English language teaching education programs in Turkey. The first one is ELT Departments, which belong to the Education faculties of the national universities. These programs are at the undergraduate level and granting a B.A. degree requires four years of Education in English and other disciplines (See Appendix 1 for the curriculum). The second one is 'ELT Certificate Programs', offered by the Education Faculties of some universities. However, in order to acquire this certificate, which takes one year, one must be a graduate or a student of English Linguistics, British Language and Literature, or American Culture and Literature departments. Our concern in this paper will be the former group, since these programs are the majority and they are founded with the aim to educate teachers.

ELT Department programs consist of courses in the areas of: Language and Awareness, General Education, Literature and Culture, and Professional Education and Practicum (see Appendix 2 for the credit and hour ratios, also see Ortakoyluoglu, 2004). During the last year of the program, the students have practicum courses; School Experience (7th semester) and Teaching Practice (8th semester). Throughout the 7th semester, pre-service teachers observe experienced teachers in state schools and write observation reports. In the 8th semester, teacher candidates start teaching in the classroom and are assessed according to the observations of both the mentor (a university lecturer) and the experienced teacher.

3.2. Language Education Problems and Potential Solutions

One of the major problems in language education (and more specifically, language teacher education) in Turkey is the present structure of the Central University Entrance Examination. The exam consists of 100 multiple-choice questions and there is no assessment done for candidates' listening or speaking skills in English. Therefore, students focus on learning grammar and vocabulary when they are in high school, so as to guarantee entrance into good universities. However, when students start their undergraduate degree in ELT departments, they lack the required skills in speaking. As all of the teachers in state schools are Turkish, this, in the long-term, affects the conversational skills of the teachers who teach the target language.

The other problems in language teacher education in Turkey have been discussed by many researchers (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998; Dogancay-Aktuna & Kızıltepe, 2005; Kirkgoz, 2007). The lack of in-service teacher training in state schools, crowded classes, a lack of materials, the irrelevancy of teacher education to the realities of Turkish schools, and the need for a theoretical base for teacher education (what and how to teach pre-service teachers, how to select them, etc.) are the most commonly found problems discovered by the above mentioned researchers. However, the scenario is not so negative due to recent ministry innovations, as reported by Kirkgoz (2007):

> "During the teaching year 2005–2006, with the ministry's approval, a teacher training component was added to the English Access Micro Scholarship Program. The teachers' component of the programme includes in-service teacher-training sessions and workshops conducted by American language specialists for approximately 270 secondary school teachers throughout the country." (p. 222)

Although Western-oriented projects may bring many innovations to language teacher education in Turkey, it is actually research held 'in the classroom' with the teachers and students which can bring real insights to the current problems that exist. Thinking in the line of the Context Approach (Bax, 2003), every learning context may have different pedagogical requirements. Reasoning from this contextual perspective, every and each language learning setting may require different pedagogical strategies, and more importantly, a different teacher-student discourse within the micro-contexts of classrooms; as can be seen in Seedhouse's (2004) classroom micro-contexts and Walsh's (2001; 2003; 2006b) classroom modes. Therefore, it follows that only with a thorough analysis and understanding of the reflexive relationship between one's own pedagogy and practice, can a teacher enhance his/her skills.

One of the major problems in English language teacher education programs in Turkey is that there is little or no attention given to the language use of the teacher candidates or the ongoing interaction in their classrooms. Given the reflexive relationship between pedagogical focus and interaction, the candidates' awareness of their actual practice in terms of classroom interaction is crucial to teacher development. Therefore, the teacher candidates should be given the opportunity to

review (through video recordings) and reflect upon the interactional organisation of their classrooms, so as to understand how the discourse shapes the pedagogical outcomes. One way to integrate this tool for teacher development is to record the lessons and reveal the interactional features of the classroom discourse using a micro CA analysis. This is possible through mentor- and teacher- candidate collaboration, in which a CA analysis of the actual classroom practice is studied by both parties combined with reflection sessions.

Many recent studies (e.g Seedhouse 2008; in press; Walsh 2006b) have highlighted the need for a CA approach to demonstrate the problems in classroom interactional practice and by this way have informed the teachers on how a fine-grained micro analysis of their discourse may be used to point out the troubles with tasks-in-process. Integrating such an approach into language teacher education programs in Turkey may be very useful for teacher candidates as they will receive feedback on their actual teaching, critically reflect upon their practice, as well as develop language awareness and interactional competence. To exemplify how this process can be carried out, samples will be given from naturally occurring classroom discourse in Sections 5 and 6. However, a background in Teacher Language Awareness, L2 Classroom Interactional Competence and Critical Reflective Practice is necessary before presenting the extracts and implications of such data.

4. Developing Interactional Awareness, CIC and Critical Reflective Practice

Kumaravadivelu (1999) suggested that foreign language teachers need to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to observe, analyze and evaluate their own classroom discourse. In this sense, interactional awareness of language teachers – as much so as a part of teacher language awareness – is an integral part of pedagogical and practical knowledge. In Section 4.1, the phenomenon of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) will be introduced as a basis for interactional competence. In Section 4.2, the concept of L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence* (Walsh 2006a; 2006b) and his SETT framework will be discussed so as to bridge the gap in the current teacher education program in Turkey and to raise awareness about the need for a CA-integrated pre-service teacher education program. In Section 4.3, critical reflective practice and

effective mentoring will be highlighted, which will be the basis of the CA-integrated program in Turkey.

4.1. Teacher Language Awareness (TLA)

Edge (1988) attributes three roles to a non-native teacher of English as a foreign language trainee: language teacher, language analyst and language user. In practice, these three roles interact (Andrews, 2007) and in pedagogical practice the harmony of interaction is dependent upon the extent to which the teacher is *language aware*. Wright (2002) indicated that TLA encompasses an awareness of the learners' developing interlanguage, an awareness of language from the learners' perspective and an awareness of the extent to which the language content of materials/lessons poses difficulties for students.

TLA is important in three aspects of language teaching, which are linked to different teaching/learning foci (Long and Robinson 1998, cited Andrews 2007, p. 948): (a) focus on forms (concentrating on the teaching of discrete points of language); (b) focus on form (where the emphasis is on meaning focused activity, with attention switching to language as the need/opportunity arises in the course of communication); (c) focus on a meaning (the non-interventionist approaches, which advocate abandoning a focus on language forms). In the words of Andrews (2007), "although TLA is of particular importance where teachers are employing focus on forms or focus on form approaches, it can also have an impact upon a teacher's effectiveness even within the most extreme of meaning focused approaches" (p. 949). Andrews (2001) claimed that the significance of TLA comes from its impact upon the ways in which input is made available to learners. In his recent study, Andrews (2007) referred to Walsh (2001; 2003) whose focus on the teacher talk dimension of TLA raised the need to add an additional category to TLA; namely L2 teachers' interactional awareness. Andrews (2001) further reported that the constructs *Quality Teacher Talk (QTT)* and L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence* describes how teachers' enhanced understanding of interactional processes can facilitate learner involvement and increase opportunities for learning.

How can a CA-integrated program be conducive to TLA and Classroom Interactional Competence? In what ways may this enhance language teaching and

learning? One robust way to make teacher candidates aware of their own and learners' language use is having them watch the video recordings of their lessons and go through a CA analysis of their classroom practice. By doing so, the teachers will be well aware of troubles resulting from their language use in instruction. Micro details like overlapping talk, latching language, pauses, and intonation may point out mismatches between pedagogical focus and language use. Developing teachers' language awareness and improving their Classroom Interactional Competence using such an approach will enhance the quality of teaching in various ways. Combined with critical reflective practice, the teachers will gain necessary interactional skills to overcome tensions resulting from potential mismatches. These issues will be made clear is Section 5 by looking relevant examples, after first introducing the notions of CIC and SETT.

4.2. Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) and SETT

Often by offering observation or by showing videos of typical interaction, some researchers have begun to address the need to induct new professionals into professional discourse (Seedhouse, 2008). This is an important tool to enhance L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence* (CIC); a term coined by Walsh (2006a; 2006b). CIC encompasses the features of classroom interaction that make the teaching/learning process more or less effective (Walsh 2006b). These features are: (a) maximizing interactional space; (b) shaping learner contributions (seeking clarification, scaffolding, modelling, or repairing learner input); (c) effective use of eliciting; (d) instructional idiolect (i.e. a teacher's speech habits); and (e) interactional awareness. The following paragraphs will introduce some basic characteristics of the *Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk* (SETT) grid (see Appendix 3), as introduced by Walsh (2001; 2003; 2006a; 2006b).

After analyzing constructive and obstructive characteristics of teacher talk in the foreign language classroom, Walsh (2002) listed the features of construction as direct error correction (less time consuming with reduced interruption), content feedback (teachers' providing personal reactions to comments made by the learners), checking for confirmation, extended wait time and scaffolding. The obstructive features, on the other hand, were listed as turn completion (examples of latching in

and completing student turns), teacher echo and teacher interruptions. Following his observations and analyses of teacher talk using a CA methodology, he concluded that when comparing constructive and obstructive teachers, "there are significant differences in the turn taking mechanisms, length of learner turns and overall quantity and quality of teacher and learner contributions" (p. 16).

Following Seedhouse (1996, cited in Walsh 2001, p. 18), there are four classroom micro contexts, referred to as *'modes'* by Walsh (ibid), namely; managerial mode, materials mode, skills and systems mode, and classroom context mode. Each mode requires specific interactional features drawing upon the pedagogical goal in the particular contexts, which emerges from "...the reflexive relationship between pedagogy and instruction in the L2 classroom" (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 66). Therefore, the pedagogical goal in each mode inevitably shapes the interactional features of the language classroom, which constructs the basis of the SETT grid.

Managerial mode refers to the way teachers organize the class and move between activities (MacCarten, 2007). In managerial mode, the pedagogical goals are to transmit information, to organize the physical learning environment, to refer learners to materials, to introduce or conclude an activity, and to change from one mode of learning to another. In relation to this mode, the identified interactional features are: (1) a single, extended teacher turn, which uses explanations and/or instructions; (2) the use of transitional markers; (3) the use of confirmation checks; and (4) an absence of learner contributions. It should be kept in mind that researchers may label the same contexts in different ways. For example, Seedhouse's procedural context more or less reflects the same interactional features with Walsh's managerial mode. Additionally, Biber (2006, cited in Evison, 2008) labels classroom management as a discrete register. As for the classroom context mode, the pedagogical goals are to enable learners to express themselves clearly, to establish a context and to promote oral fluency. The interactional features of this mode are extended learner turns, short teacher turns, minimal repair, content feedback, referential questions, scaffolding, and clarification requests. In skills and systems mode, on the other hand, different interactional features are identified as extended teacher turns, direct repair, display questions, and form-focused feedback. It is obvious that there is a diverse pedagogical focus in this mode, which is to enable

learners to produce correct forms, to allow the learners to manipulate the target language, to provide corrective feedback, and to display correct answers. Lastly, in materials mode, the pedagogical goals are to provide language practice around a piece of material, to elicit responses in relation to the material, to check and display answers, to clarify when necessary and to evaluate contributions. The interactional features are extensive use of display questions, form-focused feedback, corrective repair, and the use of scaffolding. See Appendix 3 for the interactional features of each of the modes and/or see Walsh (2003; 2006b) for further examples and details.

The focus will now shift to the basis of SETT, and how the abovementioned framework has advanced in order to help teachers "both describe the classroom interaction of their lessons and foster an understanding of interactional processes" (Walsh, 2006b, p. 62). First, Walsh's (2006b) study draws on a corpus of 14 lessons (12 hours or 100,000 words). By analyzing these classroom interactions, he established the SETT framework, which represents the fluidity of the L2 classroom context, portrays the relationship between pedagogic goals and language use, and facilitates the description of the interactional features of the learners and especially the teachers (ibid, p. 63).

Working with the teachers during this CA integrated teacher development process consisted of three phases (Walsh, 2006a). In the first phase, audio-recordings of teacher's classes are made and analysed according to the reflexive relationship between the pedagogical goal and actual practice. In the second phase, the teachers themselves analyze the data collaboratively with the researcher, which constructs the SETT framework. Teachers analyze snapshot recordings of their own lessons; identify the classroom modes (like managerial mode or materials mode) and transcribe examples of interactional features using the SETT grid, which is followed by a post evaluation feedback with the researcher. In the third phase (12 months after phase 2), an evaluation of the extent to which the teacher has developed an enhanced awareness of the talk in the classroom is made. With a stimulated recall methodology, the teacher checks his interactive decision-making while watching a video recording of his own lesson.

Walsh's (2006a; 2006b) studies stand as a groundbreaking turning point in language teacher education as it adequately frames a workable and efficient model to

develop L2 Classroom Interactional Competence. This competence together with TLA, form an integral part of the pedagogical content knowledge of language teachers. The use of CA transcripts, the close examination of interactions in different classroom modes, a careful analysis of transitions between different modes and seeing the troubles that occur at the discourse level will inform teachers on their own teaching and ongoing learning process in the classroom.

Since the aim of this paper is to propose a CA-informed model for foreign language education in Turkey, a direct adoption of this framework may not be possible due to contextual reasons. However, together with Seedhouse's (2008, see Appendix 4) model and accounting for the contextual considerations in Turkey, SETT may be a very useful tool for developing teacher candidates' and novice teachers' CIC. Furthermore, the issues of language teacher assessment and mentoring should also be discussed in relation to the proposal of this paper, especially considering the value of critical reflective practice.

4.3. Critical Reflective Practice and Effective Mentoring

In their study, using CA for the analysis of collected data, Lazaraton and Ishihara (2005) found out that the microanalysis of classroom discourse and teacher self-reflections complement each other by providing insights that neither method can generate in isolation. They valued the importance of the CA process in claiming that "close examination of classroom discourse recorded precisely as it happens not only allows detailed analyses of classroom practices, but can also validate or provide counter evidence to the self reflection provided by the teacher" (p. 529).

Considering that effective mentoring *sine qua non* is an integral part of teacher education, a large number of studies have investigated the effects of mentoring in relation to teachers' practice using a CA framework (Carroll, 2005; Hall, 2001; Lazaraton and Ishihara, 2005; Strong and Baron, 2004). Hall (2001), for example, studied the conversations of academics and teachers believing that teaching, and therefore student learning, are improved through teacher learning and development. Additionally, Carroll (2005) developed a theoretical framework for examining interactive talk and its relationship to professional learning in teacher study groups.

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Turning back to Lazaraton and Ishihara (2005), it is claimed that through extensive self-reflection, the empirical investigation of classroom discourse, and collaborative discussions with the researcher, the research methods employed in their study enabled the teacher to make a connection between her subconscious beliefs and the currently constructed knowledge of her teaching, thus leading to continued professional growth. Thus, collaborative teacher education environments through effective mentoring and teacher-researcher cooperation will hopefully lead to better quality teacher education and the standardization of teacher education programs and pre-service and in-service assessment procedures through critical reflective practice.

In discussing the standardization of the assessment and self-assessment of pre-service and in-service foreign language teachers, Kupetz and Lütge (2007) insisted that the aim should be the implementation of a reflective approach to teacher education. These authors made particular reference to the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) (Newby et al. 2007), which was produced within the framework of the European Centre for Modern Languages project: *From Profile to Portfolio: a Framework for Reflection in Language Teacher Education* (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004). For Kupetz and Lütge (2007) "student teachers who get feedback on their teaching supported by video recordings are more likely to change their procedure than those who only get verbal feedback" (p. 43).

Within the European Profile for Language Teacher Education (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004), Item 25 (training in the development of reflective practice and self-evaluation) has been of major significance for the development of EPOSTL (Newby et al., 2007). In relation to this, Kupetz and Lütge (ibid) concluded that with the help of video recordings, mentors and student teachers can make use of observable data in order to develop criteria that meet the requirements of EPOSTL descriptors. Using video recovering to develop descriptors that coincide with EPOSTL descriptors is important because it is an active and collaborative way of developing competencies in the assessment and self-assessment processes of future teachers. Additionally, it enables prospective teachers to work with a reflection tool that provides potential for the standardization of assessment and self-assessment in teacher education.

These project reports highly value the use of video recordings and critical reflective practice in language teacher education. This is, to a great extent, in direct

relation to Seedhouse's (2008, p. 55) ideas: "Fine grained CA analysis of transcripts may be combined with video to create a powerful induction tool into professional discourse for trainee or newly qualified English language teachers". So it is obvious that Walsh's SETT grid (discussed in the previous section), his ideas of L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence (*2006a; 2006b), and developing interactional awareness in L2 classrooms (2003), together with a sensitivity to the Interactional Architecture of L2 Classrooms are all complementary to the recent efforts for standardizing language teacher education as they can be synthesized with the two European documents discussed above. *En route* to enhancing teacher education standards and qualities, then, CA can play a central role. How then can insights from critical reflective practice, TLA, SETT and L2 CIC be implemented in a CA-integrated language teacher education program? In the following sections, the literature review will be explicated by presenting some samples from language classrooms.

5. Creating and Maintaining a Pedagogical Focus

Seedhouse (2008) clearly stated that the ability to create and manage a pedagogical focus is a competence or skill that can be developed rather than something given or automatic. The importance of this L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence* (Walsh, 2006a; 2006b) is of primary importance in creating learning opportunities in the language classroom, as Walsh (2002) stressed in his words:

> "Where language use and pedagogic purpose coincide, learning opportunities are facilitated; conversely, where there is a significant deviation between language use and teaching goal at a given moment in a lesson, opportunities for learning and acquisition are, I would suggest, missed." (p. 5)

In discussing the reactions of researchers within the Communicative paradigm to the quantity of Teacher Talk Time (TTT) in L2 classrooms, Walsh (2001) proposed the term QTT (Quality Teacher Talk). He clarified the scope of QTT in saying that "instead of getting trainees to reduce teacher talk, we should be concerned to make teachers more aware of the effects of teacher talk on opportunities for learning, and encourage QTT" (p.17). It was further suggested that high TTT may be appropriate depending on the mode (see the discussion on classroom modes in Section 4.2) and

pedagogic purpose in operation; therefore, we should be dealing with quality rather than quantity (Walsh, 2002; 2003).

According to Seedhouse (2008) "there is often a mismatch between what the trainees want the students to do and what the students actually do" (p. 43). The problem is especially visible during transitions between form and accuracy contexts and meaning and fluency contexts. For example, Seedhouse (1997a) questioned whether focusing on both accuracy and fluency contexts at the same time is possible and revealed that this can be performed when using topics that are personally meaningful to learners, allowing the learners to manage the interaction themselves, and limiting the teachers' role to using camouflaged correction techniques to upgrade and scaffold learner utterances.

Creating and maintaining a pedagogical focus successfully is a key asset to classroom language learning. The students may easily be confused if the pedagogical focus is not successfully maintained and shifted. In order to clarify this, we can have a look at the extract below, which was analyzed before by Seedhouse (2008) to illustrate how inexperienced teachers' handling of pedagogical focus through their discourse may result in confusion. The data comes from an English lesson in a British language school, and the teacher is a trainee.

Extract 1

```
001  L1:  I was drive (0.5) drive drive
002       driving a car?
003  T:   I was driving a car?
004  L1:  eh when (0.5) you:: (1.0) eh (1.0)
005       um (0.5) drink a=
006  T:   =when you=
007  L1:  =when you drank drank a: a orange
008  T:   when you drank an orange. OK you
009       were driving the car (0.5) when
010       you drank an orange.
011  L1:  yes
012  T:   (0.5) OK?
013  L1:  haha
014  T:   huhu strange but it's OK correct
015       OK right (0.5) this time let's
016       just think ((looks at textbook))
017       about these children of courage
018       we've got Mark Tinker? (0.5)
019       who's aged 12 comes from London
```

```
020        (0.5) Jackie Martin 14 comes from
021        Manchester (0.5) and Daniel Clay
022        who's 13 and comes from Newcastle.
023        (0.5) right can you see the
024        pictures? (0.5) can you see them
025        Malta?
026   LL:  (xxxxx)
027   T:   right children of courage what do
028        you think (0.5) children of
029        courage will do? (2.0) what do
030        children of courage do. (1.0) or
031        what did they do rather what did
032        they do? (2.0) what does courage
033        mean? what's this idea if I am
034        courageous (2.0) how would you
035        describe me? (2.5)
036   L2:  I describe one person?
037   T:   yes well anybody if if you (0.5)
038        were (0.5)one of these children of
039        courage (6.0)
040   L3:  don't understand
041   T:   you don't understand. OK people of
042        courage. what would they have
043        done? what do you think they do?
044        (0.5)
045   L4:  he is on holiday?
046   T:   they're on holiday? no but to be
047        courageous do you understand the
048        word courageous? courageous? (0.5)
049   L:   no I don't
050   T:   no? courageous (4.0) courageous
051        (2.0) what would you have done?
052        (2.0) no?
053   L:   no     (Seedhouse, 1996; p.360).
```

Starting from line 1 to line 14, it is obvious that the focus is on form and accuracy, a classroom mode named 'skills and systems mode' by Walsh (2006b). The teacher wants the student to produce correct grammatical form in line 3 and with a latching language (see Appendix 5 for CA conventions) in line 6, puts stress on the accurate usage. As it was discussed by Walsh (ibid.), the use of direct repair, form-focused feedback and scaffolding are some of the interactional features of this classroom micro-context. We can understand from line 14 that the student's production of a bizarre sentence is not important, as the focus is on producing correct

linguistic forms, with no attention to meaning. Starting from line 15, the teacher directs the students' attention to the textbook and specifically to a text entitled 'Children of Courage', which is accompanied by images and stories relevant to the characters in the text. Between lines 14 and 25, the use of discourse and transition markers, an extended teacher turn, lack of learner contributions and comprehension checks are typical to this transitional 'managerial mode'. However, according to Seedhouse (2008), "What is noticeable in the video and transcript is that the shift of focus is not marked very strongly. Also, there is no metadiscoursal explanation about the shift or the nature of the new focus" (p. 50).

From line 27 to 35, there is an extended teacher turn which includes a series of questions that may create ambiguity for students in respect to the pedagogical goal of the lesson. Although there are many pauses in lines 28, 29, 30, 32 and 34, which may create interactional space; the diversity of questions may cause comprehension problems for students as the focus is not clear. The required answers between these lines range from the actions of the characters to a meaning of a specific lexical item (courage). The evidence to the confusion can be seen in line 36, and is explicit in line 40 (don't understand). The contradictory pedagogical focus created here by this trainee teacher may hinder opportunities for learning. As it was clearly put by Seedhouse (2008) in his analysis of this extract, although L3 shows non-comprehension in line 40, the teacher changes the subject from 'children' to 'people', and alters the tense of the question, thus creating problems for the learners further. Going back to Walsh's (2003; 2006b) discussion of classroom modes, in materials mode, there is a predominance of IRF (Initiation/Response/Follow-Up) patterns, extensive use of display questions, form focused feedback, corrective repair and scaffolding. However, the unsuccessful creation and maintaining of the pedagogical focus impinges upon the interactional organisation of this micro-context, and fails to create opportunities for learning.

In order to enable teachers to implement pedagogical intentions effectively, we should develop an understanding of the interactional organisation of L2 classes, which is possible using a CA methodology with a large corpus (Seedhouse, 1997b). However, each L1 setting may display different classroom interaction procedures, as evidenced by, for example, code-switching studies that used a CA methodology

[(Mori, 2004; Raschka, Sercombe & Chi-Ling, 2009; Üstünel & Seedhouse, 2005). Raschka Sercombe & Chi-Ling, (ibid.)], for instance, found that teachers use code-switching to shape and guide their classes in a Taiwanese EFL classroom. Üstünel& Seedhouse's (2005) findings, which are relevant to this paper, on the other hand, revealed that code-switching in L2 classrooms is orderly and related to the pedagogical focus and sequence adopted.

The findings of Kirkgoz's (2007) survey, which was applied to language teachers in Turkey revealed that the type of communicative language teaching proposed by the Ministry of National Education (2006) did not seem to have the expected impact on teachers' classroom practices. This is to a great extent a result of the Turkish context, which may have developed its own distinct interactional features. For example, teachers' code-switching according to pedagogical focus may be a useful tool for Turkish learners of English. However, the new primary education curriculum abandons the use of L1: "you should not switch to your mother tongue..." (Kirkgoz, 2006, p. 30). Abandoning code-switching from teachers' discourse, which can be a useful device in some cases for creating and maintaining pedagogical focus, may be inappropriate in some contexts particularly where the students and the teacher share the same L1. Instead of directly adopting suggested western methodologies, CA based studies should be performed to see how unique interactional structures of Turkish language classrooms emerge. A framework like SETT, incorporated to the teacher education programs according to the contextual needs, may reveal different interactional features for different pedagogical goals compared to its UK version. Therefore, using CA to analyze teachers' talk and learners' talk in Turkey, and building the bricks of language teacher education on this framework will be very useful.

6. Integrating CA into the Language Teacher Education Program in Turkey

In light of the discussions so far, this section will delineate a potential model for language teacher education programs in Turkey. The primary aim of this model is to create a language teacher education program which helps the trainees to develop their L2 Classroom Interactional Competence and Teacher Language Awareness. By closely examining the interactions in the classroom, making teacher candidates aware

of their discourse in the classroom, and helping them reflect upon their own practice; this model can prepare teachers for their actual teaching experience. The current program, however, lacks a close examination of trainees' classroom discourse and therefore cannot supply these novice teachers with required skills for, for example, successfully creating and maintaining a pedagogical focus in the language classroom.

The suggested model should be applied in the fourth year of pre-service education, within the 'School Experience' and 'Teacher Practice' courses. As mentioned before, during the former, students observe experienced teachers (for 13 weeks, approximately 39 hours in total). In the latter one, students start teaching and are assessed both by the teacher of the class and the mentor (the lecturer from the university). In constructing the model, the discussions from Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 5 should be especially remembered. The phases of the proposed model are as follows:

Phase 1. Observing the experienced teacher and recording the lessons
This phase lasts 13 weeks, as the pre-service teachers go to class every week. The student teacher records the first three lessons observed, and analyses the conversations with the mentor's guidance. The classroom mode chart (Walsh, 2001; see Appendix 3) is used as a starting point. The first three weeks provide students with an initial *Conversation Analysis* training with the help of the mentor. This training involves getting acquainted to CA conventions, and the basics of interaction like turn taking, repair, and preference organisation. In addition to the modes in the SETT grid, form and accuracy, meaning and fluency, focus on task, and classroom procedure contexts should be paid particular attention. From the fourth week until the 13th week, the student will transcribe, analyze and evaluate three lessons and will put it in his/her portfolio to be handed to the lecturer at the end of the semester.

Phase 2. Video-recording the pre-service teachers' lesson; self-evaluation and peer-evaluation
In the second semester, as the candidates start teaching, their lessons are video-recorded by their peers (they go the same school in groups of five). Following each lesson, the student analyzes his/her lesson and during the same week, also evaluates it with a friend from the same group, using the framework given in phase one. This

reflection process lasts 7 weeks. So in addition to insights gained from self-evaluation, collaborative learning is enhanced through peer evaluation.

Phase 3. Mentor evaluations and the tracking of the development of interactional competence and language awareness

Starting from the 7th week, the mentor starts to evaluate and assess the teachers' performance. The trainees, together with their peers, select the recordings in which they believe to have had the best performance. The mentor and the trainee discuss the recording while the mentor takes notes on the teacher trainee's reflection. The mentor then gives feedback according to the recording witnessed and the reflective discussion, and finally, makes suggestions to the trainee. To exemplify the initial stage of this process, let's have a look at extracts 2 and 3 below:

Extract 2

```
001  T:    extending THEIR contribution a bit because they
002        might come out with a word or two and I sort of
003        tried to  draw them out a bit (Walsh, 2006b; p.120).
```

Extract 3

```
001  T:    where are they Renata, these two?
002        (3.0)
003  L:    on the train?=
004  T:    =on the train, on the train does anybody know
005        has anybody ever been to London?
006        yeah what do you call the
007        underground train in London?
008        (2.0)
009  L:    the tube=
010  T:    =the tube or the underground (Walsh, 2006b; p.121).
```

In his reflective feedback corpus, Walsh (2006b) identified four interactional strategies which show the ways opportunities for learning can be enhanced when teacher language awareness is raised. These interactional strategies are scaffolding, seeking clarification, extended wait time and reduced teacher echo. Extract 2 above is a self-evaluation of teacher talk, which illustrates one of the four constructive

interactional strategies; namely scaffolding. Having closely examined the classroom interaction in Extract 3, the trainee reflects upon her teaching with particular reference to how she expands the learner's contribution with a scaffolding strategy.

Considering the aims of this proposed model mentioned at the beginning of this section, the expected learning outcomes are varied. The trainees will start their teaching profession with a heightened awareness of the interactional architecture of the second language classrooms, which will become possible through a reflective practice that enhances Teacher Language Awareness and L2 Classroom Interactional Competence. Having received constructive feedback from the mentors, experienced teachers and their peers, by focusing on video recordings and performing a fine detailed micro-analysis of classroom interactional practice, the teacher candidates will develop, in time, automaticity for creating opportunities for language use and learning. Driven by the idea that spoken interaction in the classroom is key to language learning, the opportunities created by the teachers to enhance learner involvement and acquire the necessary skills to create and maintain a pedagogical focus will contribute to English language teaching programs in Turkey. The model can also be adapted to other teaching contexts, as well as to the teaching of other languages. Finally, the performance of the trainees can be assessed using the criteria below:

Assessment of the Teaching Practice Course
The reports of self evaluation and peer evaluation: 25%
The evaluation of the video recordings: 25%
The evaluation of teachers' self reflection (mentor): 20%
Mentor's observation: 20%
The experienced teacher's report: 10%

7. Conclusion

Van Lier (1996) sees classroom interaction as the most important element in the curriculum. In this paper, I tried to describe how an enhanced L2 *Classroom Interactional Competence* and developed *Teacher Language Awareness* combined with critical reflective practice, peer-evaluation, and collaborative mentoring via

making use of a Conversation Analytic approach and video recordings may lead to a more effective language teacher education program in Turkey. As shown by various studies cited in this paper, CA is integral not only to SLA studies, but also for second language teacher education. Only through a deep understanding of the unique context of the language classroom, is it possible to provide students with the required skills to communicate effectively, as language is both the medium and the content within this educational setting.

There are, however, some limitations regarding the implementation of this program. First of all, the mentors should be trained on the basics of Conversation Analysis, both as a methodology and as an approach to teacher education. Second, the trainees also need to be informed on this methodology, as it will constitute an integral part of their training. Another limitation is that necessary technological acquisitions have to be made by higher education institutions (like the purchasing of multiple video recorders), which may be problematic due to financial means. Lastly, as the evaluation of the trainee performance will be based upon portfolios, time constraints should be considered.

Conversation Analysis can bring insights into the understanding of the interactional architecture of second language classrooms and inform language teacher education programs through different dynamics that were discussed throughout this paper. Micro analysis of teacher-student and student-student interaction and an examination of the micro analysis by teacher candidates as proposed in this model can help the trainees develop necessary skills to successfully create and maintain pedagogical foci and facilitate opportunities for language learning. The proposed model can be adapted easily to language teacher education programs in other countries, with sensitivity to contextual differences. Thus, the model is compatible with the teaching of other languages like Turkish, German or French.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Foreign Language Teacher Education Program in Turkey

(Ortakoyluoglu, 2004; p. 125-127)

YEAR 1

1st Semester		
Course Code	**Course Name**	**Credits**
EBB147	Introduction to Education Science	3
İDÖ171	Contextual Grammar I	3
İDÖ173	Advanced Reading and Writing I	3
İDÖ175	Listening and Pronunciation I	3
İDÖ177	Oral Communication Skills I	3
İDÖ159	Turkish I	2
İDÖ183	Computer I	3
İDÖ181	Effective Communication Skills	3
Total		**23**
2nd Semester		
Course Code	**Course Name**	**Credits**
EBB148	Educational Psychology	3
İDÖ172	Contextual Grammar II	3
İDÖ174	Advanced Reading and Writing II	3
İDÖ176	Listening and Pronunciation II	3
İDÖ178	Oral Communication Skills II	3

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
İDÖ160	Turkish II	2
İDÖ184	Computer II	3
İDÖ180	Vocabulary	3
Total		**23**

YEAR 2
3rd Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
EBB279	Principles and Methods in Education	3
İDÖ271	British Literature I	3
İDÖ273	Linguistics I	3
İDÖ275	Approaches in ELT I	3
İDÖ277	English-Turkish Translation	3
İDÖ279	Presentation Skills*	3
İDÖ281	History of Education in Turkey*	2
Total		**20**

4th Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
EBB278	Testing and Evaluation	3
İDÖ272	British Literature II	3
İDÖ274	Linguistics II	3
İDÖ276	Approaches in ELT II	3
İDÖ278	Research Methods	2
İDÖ282	Special Education Methods I	3
İDÖ284	Language Acquisition	3
Total		**20**

YEAR 3
5th Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
EBB391	Classroom Management	2
İDÖ371	Teaching English to Young Learners I	3
İDÖ373	Special Education Methods II	3
İDÖ375	Teaching of Language Skills I	3
İDÖ377	Literature and Language Teaching I*	3
	Second Foreign Language I*	2
OKL222	Drama*	3
Total		**19**

6th Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
İDÖ372	Teaching English to Young Learners II	3
İDÖ374	Turkish-English Translation	3
İDÖ376	Teaching of Language Skills II	3
İDÖ378	Literature and Language Teaching II*	3
	Second Foreign Language II*	2
İDÖ380	Social Service Practices	2
İDÖ382	Instr. Technologies and Mater. Development.	3
Total		**19**

YEAR 4
7TH Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
EBB393	Special Education*	**2**

EBB491	Guidance	3
İDÖ471	Materials Evaluation and Development in ELT*	3
	Second Foreign Language III*	2
İDÖ	Elective I*	2
AİT203	Principles of Atatürk and History of Revolution I	2
İDÖ475	School Experience	3
Total		**16**

8th Semester

8th Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
EBB478	Comparative Education*	2
EBB492	Turkish Educational System and School Management.	2
AİT204	Principles of Atatürk and History of Revolution II	2
İDÖ472	Testing and Evaluation in ELT	3
İDÖ	Elective II*	2
İDÖ	Elective III*	2
İDÖ478	Teaching Practice	5
Total		**18**

Appendix 2: The credit/hour ratios of the major components of ELT curriculum

(Ortakoyluoglu, 2004; p. 21)
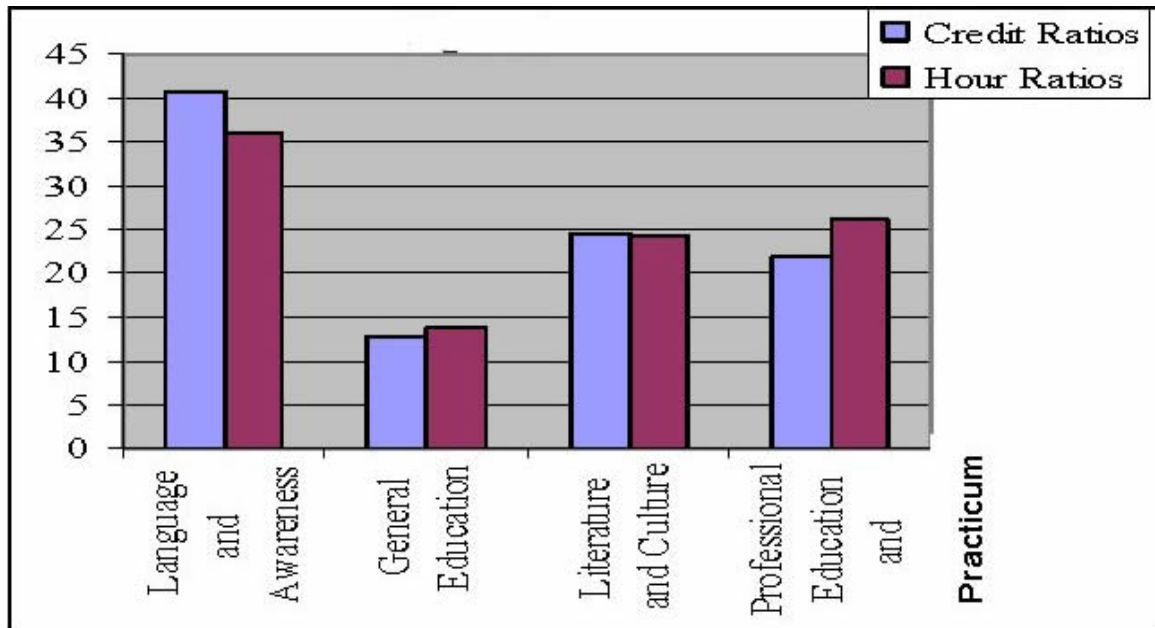
Appendix 3: The SETT grid (Walsh, 2003; p.126)

Mode	Pedagogic goals	Interactional features
Managerial	ρ To transmit information. ρ To organise the physical learning environment. ρ To refer learners to materials. ρ To introduce or conclude an activity. ρ To change from one mode of learning to another.	ρ A single, extended teacher turn which uses explanations and/ or instructions. ρ The use of transitional markers. ρ The use of confirmation checks. ρ An absence of learner contributions.
Materials	ρ To provide language practice around a piece of material. ρ To elicit responses in relation to the material. ρ To check and display answers. ρ To clarify when necessary. ρ To evaluate contributions.	ρ Predominance of IRF pattern. ρ Extensive use of display questions. ρ Form-focused feedback. ρ Corrective repair. ρ The use of scaffolding.
Skills and systems	ρ To enable learners to produce correct forms. ρ To enable learners to manipulate the target language. ρ To provide corrective feedback. ρ To provide learners with practice in sub-skills. ρ To display correct answers.	ρ The use of direct repair. ρ The use of scaffolding. ρ Extended teacher turns. ρ Display questions. ρ Teacher echo. ρ Clarification requests. ρ Form-focused feedback.
Classroom context	ρ To enable learners to express themselves clearly. ρ To establish a context. ρ To promote oral fluency.	ρ Extended learner turns. ρ Short teacher turns. ρ Minimal repair. ρ Content feedback. ρ Referential questions. ρ Scaffolding. ρ Clarification requests.

Appendix 4: Seedhouse's CA-informed teacher education framework

(Seedhouse, 2008; p.56)

1. Make videos and transcripts of both experienced and inexperienced EL teachers in a variety of typical professional situations with both other professionals and students.
2. Identify in the fine detail of the interaction those interactional issues which may lead to a more or less successful conclusion of the interaction.
3. Identify in the fine detail of the interaction those key interactional devices which are used by experienced professionals and analyse how they use them. An example in this chapter is the establishment of a pedagogical focus by an experienced teacher. An example from another professional context is Drew's (1992) explication of a device used by lawyers for producing inconsistency in, and damaging implications for, a witness's evidence during cross-examination in a courtroom trial.
4. Disseminate findings to trainee and new professionals using video combined with transcripts.

Individual teachers who are not in a teacher training context could also employ CA as a tool for their own professional development. This would involve teachers video recording their own lessons, or working jointly with a colleague on recording each other. The teachers would then transcribe and analyse the micro-detail of their lessons. Areas which might be focused on in analysis are:

- Sequences in which trouble of some kind occurs
- Sequences which went particularly well and in which successful learning was thought to have taken place
- Lesson transition sequences and how the learners oriented to these
- Sequences in which the teacher produces instructions or explanations
- In action research, the teacher might record a 'default' lesson, then introduce an innovation into the teaching context which is then recorded and the two lessons compared
- What actually happens in pairwork and groupwork?

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Appendix 5: CA transcription conventions (Adapted from Hutchby and Woofit, 1998)

[overlap]	Overlapping utterances – (beginning [ ) and (end])
=latched	Contiguous utterances (latching)
(0.4)	Represent the tenths of a second between utterances
(.)	Represents a micro-pause (1 tenth of a second or less)
stre:::tch	Sound extension of a word (more colons demonstrate longer stretches)
sto-	An abrupt stop in articulation
□quiet□	Surrounds talk that is quieter
rise?	Question mark - Rising inflection (not necessarily a question)
emphasis	Underline words (or parts of) indicate emphasis
rise□	Rising intonation
fall□	Falling intonation
>quick<	Surrounds talk that is faster
((description))	Analyst's notes

Collaborative Action Research: An Alternative Model for EFL Teacher Professional Development in Pakistan

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Abstract

The existing teacher training and education programs in Pakistan, which run under the traditional model of knowledge transmission, do not seem to contribute to the professional development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Informed by the Vygotskian sociocultural theory and Wenger's (1999) community of practice theory, the author suggests collaborative action research (CAR) as an alternative model which he argues, has the potential to actively involve novice teachers, experienced teachers, teacher-educators, and university-researchers in a joint enterprise to pursue vibrant professional development in the field. First, the author reviews the current empirical studies on CAR and its contribution to teacher professional development. Then, he discusses the present situation of teaching and learning English with special emphasis on the current English teacher education and training programs in Pakistan to justify the need for change. Lastly, based on the findings of studies on CAR, he suggests CAR as an alternative model for EFL teacher professional development in Pakistan.

Keywords: Collaborative action research, Community of practice, Reflection, English teacher training, Pakistan

1. Introduction

English teacher training and education programs in Pakistan still run on the traditional model of knowledge transmission and do not seem to contribute to the professional

development of EFL teachers (Ali, 2000; Dar, 2005; Warsi, 2004). University-Researchers and teacher-educators usually select teaching materials and methods, and deliver them to the teachers in short-training courses. The rationale to justify these expert-driven, top-down training courses is that language teachers neither have access to quality teaching materials and methods nor can they develop them. Therefore, it becomes the job of teacher-educators and university-researchers to search for good teaching materials and methods and recommend them for EFL teachers. Consequently, teachers depend on teacher-educators and do not bother themselves by devising their own materials and teaching methods which can be more relevant, context-specific, and locally situated to meet the needs of their students. In short, the self-marginalized language teaching community in Pakistan does not benefit much from such one-shot training program in which they receive the ready-made courses and teaching materials. This fact suggests that teachers become solely practitioners who practice what is prescribed by experts. As a result, language teachers do not grow professionally and do not gain much respect from the student community and society at large.

Many teachers, teacher-trainers, and university-researchers from other parts of the world have also expressed dissatisfaction with current pre-service and in-service teacher training and education programs (e.g., Atay, 2006, 2008; Burns, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; McDonough, 2006; Richards, 2008; Zeichner, 2003). They have asserted that the teacher training programs still operate on the traditional model of transmitting knowledge. Based on the theory of behaviorism which states that all human acts are acquired through habituation, the pre-service and in-service teachers are habituated through top-down, expert-driven training programs (see Fig. 1 below). Atay (2008) asserts that teacher professional development programs usually consist of "short term or one-shot in-service programs conducted by outside experts" (p. 139). According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, as cited in Atay, 2006),

> "[I]n-service teacher education programs are typically organized to disseminate a knowledge base constructed almost exclusively by outside experts. This means that through their careers teachers are expected to learn about their profession not by studying their own experiences but by studying the findings of those who are not themselves school-based teachers." (p. 2)
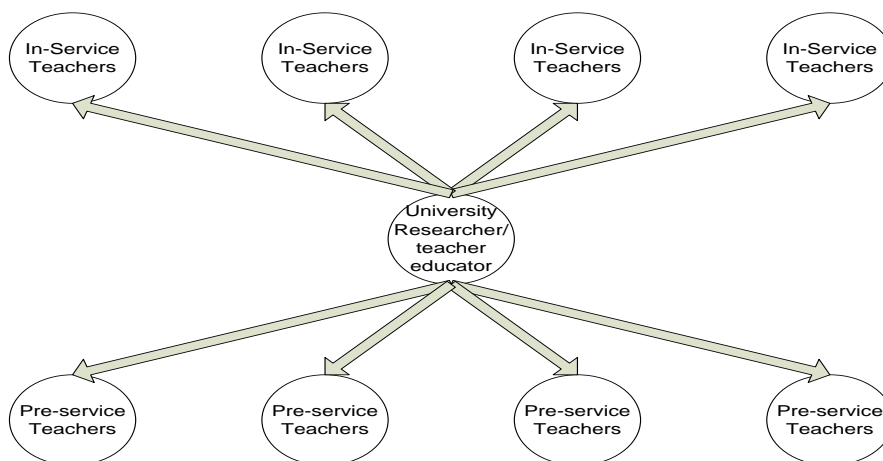
Figure 1: Representation of Knowledge Transmission Model in which a University Researcher or Teacher educator Transmit knowledge to Pre-service and In-service Teachers

Single headed Arrows = Transmission of knowledge

In order to search for alternates to the knowledge transmission model and to empower English teachers, a number of studies were conducted to investigate the effects of action research, CAR, and reflection on teacher professional development (Atay, 2006, 2008; Burns, 1996, 1999, 2005; Farrell, 1999; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Gebhard, 2005; Mahboob & Talaat, 2008; McDonough, 2006; Richards, 2008; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Zeichner, 2003). Among them, very few empirical studies in the field of language teacher education were based on CAR (e.g., Atay 2006, 2008; Burns, 1996; Miller, 2003). Therefore, in this paper, in addition to the language teacher education studies, I also review some of the landmark studies from the field of general teacher education that are based on CAR (e.g., Burbank & Kauchak, 2003; Ponte, Ax, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004).

The researchers from both the fields of general teacher education (e.g., Burbank & Kauchak, 2003; Ponte, Ax, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004) and language teacher education (e.g., Atay 2006, 2008; Burns, 1996; Miller, 2003) claim that CAR provides an opportunity for teachers to systematically reflect on their own practices, which not only helps them discover, develop, and monitor changes in their classroom practices, but also empowers them to make informed decisions to explore such practices for student language development. The researchers define CAR as a collective enterprise in which, with the support and guidance of experienced teachers and/or teacher educators and/or researchers, the teachers initiate research using their

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own classroom as a site and focus of their research study. In other words, during the process of CAR the teachers themselves carry out the actual research and the university-teachers or teacher-educators facilitate them when the teachers need it (see Fig. 2 below).
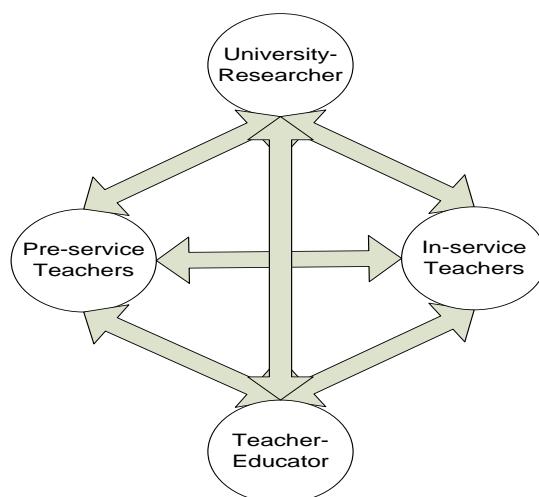
Figure 2: Representation of Collaboration Action research in which a University Researcher and/or Teacher educator facilitates Pre-service and/or In-service Teachers

Double headed Arrows = Collaboration and interaction

Before I propose CAR as an alternative model for the professional development of Pakistani EFL teachers, first it is important to review landmark empirical studies on CAR (i.e., Atay 2006, 2008; Burns, 1996; Burbank & Kauchak, 2003; Miller, 2003; Ponte, Ax, Beijaard & Wubbels, 2004) to identify excellent models of CAR and its contribution to teacher professional development and then to review the present situation of teacher education and training programs in Pakistan to justify the need for change. For this purpose I divided the paper into three parts. In the first part, I analyze the most recent landmark empirical studies on CAR. In the second part, I discuss the importance of English, the present teaching conditions, and the English teacher training and education programs in Pakistan. Lastly, based on findings of the empirical studies reviewed, I suggest an alternative model for EFL teacher training and education based on CAR, which has the potential to address the key issues currently affecting the teacher training programs in Pakistan. Before I review some of the milestone empirical studies, I want to acquaint the reader with the theories that inform this paper and help me to select the most relevant studies for review.

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2. Theoretical underpinnings

The theories which guided me in reviewing and analyzing literature on CAR and its role in teacher professional development, are Vygotskian socio-cultural theory, and Wenger's (1999) theory of community of practice. Both these theories state that individuals engage in a discourse, negotiate, and construct knowledge as a collective enterprise.

As cited in Lantolf and Thorne (2006), Vygotskian social-cultural theory seems to fully capture the assumption underlying CAR. It states that the interaction among individuals occurs both at inter-psychological and intra-psychological levels to construct and reconstruct knowledge and its meaning. At the inter-psychological level individuals interact with other individuals or the environment in a specific socio-cultural context to construct knowledge. The constructed knowledge is strongly affected by its socio-cultural context and therefore the knowledge constructed is context-specific and locally situated. Such constructed knowledge which is informed by the practices of the individuals (e.g., the teachers-researchers) can cater well to the needs and requirements of specific situations (e.g., classroom learning). At an intra-psychological level, the socially constructed knowledge interacts with each individual cognitively and results in the reconstruction of the knowledge. This phenomenon of reconstruction of knowledge helps with cognitive development of individuals. It adds to critical thinking development, creativity, and consequently, empowers the practitioners (teachers).

Wenger's (1999) community of practice theory complements the Vygotskian socio-cultural theory in the sense that it also promotes social interaction through partnership and collaboration. It also holds that knowledge is socially constructed. The only difference or addition is the philosophy of apprenticeship which implies the peripheral participation of the new comer or the novice in knowledge construction. The new comer participates in the community of practice as an apprentice of old-timer or a more experienced partner. Peripheral participation becomes central when the apprentice gets more experience not through directions but guidance and participations. Gradually, they become self-directed and prepared to participate equally in knowledge construction. Socially and contextually situated knowledge can serve the community better than any other knowledge transmitted from outside.

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Therefore, Wenger's (1999) theory of community of practices fully captures the assumptions underlying the CAR.

3. Models of collaborative action research (CAR) and its contribution to teachers' professional development

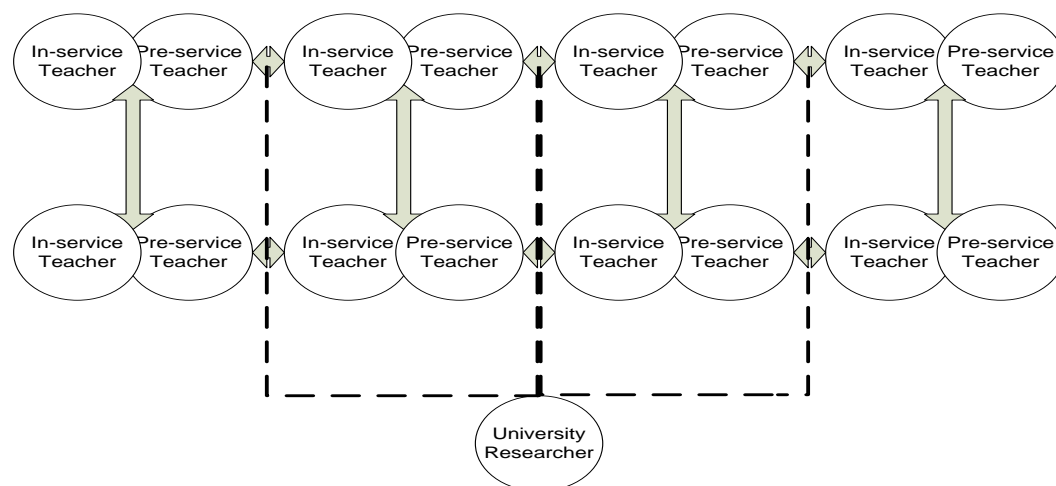*3.1. Large scale facilitation models of collaborative action research (CAR)*

Figure 3: Representation of Collaboration of Pre-service and In-service Teachers in dyads in Large Scale Action Research Project Facilitated by a University Researcher

Dotted-lines = Less Frequent Interaction
Double-headed Arrows = More Frequent Interaction

In large scale facilitative models of CAR, a large number of teachers usually carry out the actual research. University-researchers provide facilitation only when it is needed. In such large scale projects, teachers make small groups based on their location and availability. These groups are then connected with one another through networks of regular meetings in which they share, discuss, and reflect on their experiences.

Atay (2006, 2008), Burbank and Kauchak (2003), and Ponte, Ax, Beijaard and Wubbles (2004) presented excellent facilitation models of such large scale collaborative action research projects (see Fig. 3 above). In their projects, Atay (2006) and Burbank and Kauchak (2003) paired up pre-service and in-service teachers in dyads whereas Ponte, Ax, Beijaard and Wubbles (2004) and Atay (2008) worked with in-service teachers only. In all these research projects, the job of the university-researchers was to facilitate the teachers during the research process. It was

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teachers who identified issues for investigation, developed plans of action, collected data, and evaluated the outcomes. The teachers used various action research strategies to collect data in the classroom such as video recording, observing, and writing reflective journals, diaries, reports, and field notes. In addition, at different stages of the research process the teachers arranged a number of meetings among themselves and sometimes with the researcher to share, discuss, and reflect on their teaching, learning, and research experiences. The university-researchers used logbooks to record the development of the teachers' action research and the facilitation provided. The aim of the above studies was twofold: (i) to explore the contribution of CAR to the development of teachers' professional knowledge and, (ii) to explore the effects of the facilitating roles of the researchers on teachers. The comment by one of the teachers in Burbank and Kauchak's (2003) study below represents the findings of all the above projects,

> "Action research alone allows for reflective teaching, collaborating with another teacher adds a wonderful dimension to that reflection. You are able to discuss and consider how well the project is working and what needs to be changed, rearranged, taken out altogether or enhanced upon. There were many instances when I would be frustrated and disillusioned by the project; areas, that unless verbally discussed, may have gone unnoticed … I became more willing to step out of my comfort zone, take chances, and try things I may not have tried without that support."
>
> (Burbank & Kauchak, 2003, p. 511)

In short, the results of the above large scale studies indicated that the practice of CAR empowered the novice and experienced teachers to make independent and informed decisions, construct and co-construct knowledge, and build a locally situated, contextually aware, and independent community of practice.

3.2. Participatory models of collaborative action research (CAR)

In addition to large scale facilitative models explained above, I found excellent models of participatory collaborative action research in Burns (1996) and Miller (2003). In such participatory models of CAR, the researcher besides facilitating the teachers in the research process, participates in the actual research for different purposes. Burns utilized participatory collaborative action research to design a new curriculum for adult ESL learners (see Fig. 4 below) whereas Miller (2003) used

collaborative action research for his own professional development as an EFL teacher-consultant. Both the studies give us insights as to how the researchers moved from the position of university-researchers to reflective practitioners by not only reflecting on their practices as teacher-consultants but also on the practices of teachers and research assistants (RAs).
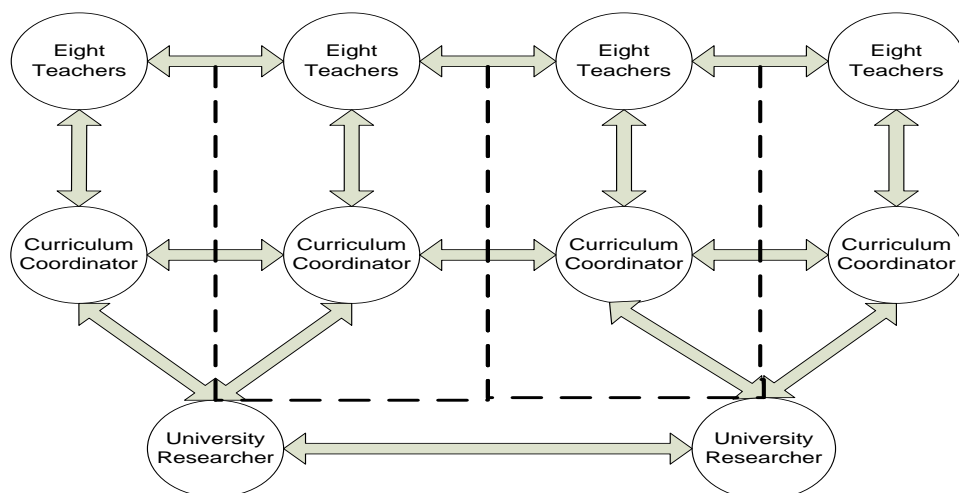

Figure 4: Representation of Equal Participation of CAR members in Curriculum Development

Dotted-lines = Less Frequent Interaction
Double-headed Arrows = More Frequent Interaction

Burns' (1996) model of CAR was based on what she called, 'devolved participation' (p. 503) which engendered complementary and shifting positions for thirty teachers, four curriculum coordinators, and the two researchers - Burns and her colleague. These changing positions among them created balance in the ownership of the constructed knowledge. Equal and active partnership in the process of curriculum designing empowers the teachers to be the creators of the knowledge rather than passive receivers as they used to be in the past under the umbrella of the knowledge transmission model. The teachers took the role of the researchers and collected data from their classroom through the processes devised collectively by all the members irrespective of their assigned roles. She affirmed that, through this involvement, the teachers could explicitly evaluate the contents of the courses they taught and could bring changes to the curriculum which were based on informed and locally situated practices of the teachers. In conclusion, she asserted that,

> "Involving teachers collaboratively in creatively exploring the practical implications of curriculum change has […] a significant impact on whether and how the teachers accept and adopt change [...] Additionally

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> […] models of participatory research involving researchers and teachers could be productively expanded to address institutional, theoretical, and personal teaching and learning issues." (Burns, 1996, p. 597)

Miller (2003) reported her doctoral study in which she presented a very unique kind of participatory CAR that she conducted both for her own professional development as teacher-consultant and for the professional development of EFL teachers. She investigated the efficacy of her role as teacher-consultant in collaboration with two EFL teachers and four research assistants (RAs). She collaborated with the teachers and the research assistants, not as a mentor but as a research partner and collectively went through the whole process of action research. Her philosophy was that of an 'insider' i.e., to become part of the process to understand and to help EFL teachers in action research. She departed from her role as a university-researcher (expert) and got involved in collaborative inquiry to explore practices jointly with teachers and students. She asserted that,

> "My overall aim was therefore to avoid working within a knowledge-transmission deficit model of teacher education. Instead I worked towards co-constructing the 'sessions' not as 'lessons or training sessions' where I would 'teach' or 'train' and the teachers would act as 'students' or 'trainees' but as professional encounters where, through conversation and reflection, learning opportunities of various kinds would emerge for us all." (Miller, 2003, p. 204)

In addition to the studies reviewed above, there are a number of other review studies (e.g., Burns, 2005; Mann, 2005; Zeichner, 2003) which examined the contribution of CAR projects to the professional development of pre-service and in-service teachers in different parts of the world. For example, Mathew (1997, as cited in Burns, 2005) examined a large scale study on CAR carried out in India. A few university-based researchers and 250 English teachers participated in the government-funded four-year project responsible for deigning and implementing "communicative curriculum, *Interact in English*, for secondary school classrooms" (Burns, 2005, p. 65). The aim of the project was not only to empower teachers to design and implement the curriculum but also to motivate them to become researchers of their own classroom practices. Initially, the 250 teachers were trained in classroom-based inquiry and were asked to collect data from 800 schools in collaboration with their teachers. In this way, those teachers who didn't attend the training sessions also learned action

research through collaboration and practical demonstration of the trained teacher-researchers.

The studies reviewed above provide strong evidence in favor of collaborative action research as a professional development activity for teachers and teacher-educators both in the field of general and ESL/EFL education. I believe that such collaborative action projects not only empower EFL teachers to make informed decisions but also raise their status to education professionals and leaders. The teachers become active and legitimate participants in the construction of locally situated and contextually relevant knowledge which caters for the needs of the local population. Before I propose CAR as an alternative model for the professional development of Pakistani EFL teachers, it is important to review the present situation of teacher education and training programs in Pakistan to justify the need for change.

4. The current context

Since British rule (1608 -1857) over the sub-continent (The British India), the English language has been enjoying prestigious status in the field of government administration, law, military, higher education, commerce, and mass media both in India and Pakistan (Rahman, 2001; Shamim, 2008). Few westernized Pakistanis speak English as their first language, some highly educated people speak it as their second language, and the majority of educated people use it as a foreign language (Rahman, 2001). Apart from being adopted as an official language of Pakistan, it also serves as a gateway to higher education and lucrative jobs (Dar, 2005). In addition, it is the medium of instruction in private schools, armed forces schools, colleges, and universities. It is regarded as the only source for attaining advancement, scientific, and technological progression, and financial growth in Pakistan (Shamim, 2008). Considering its importance, efforts are in progress to make English compulsory subject from grade one in all government schools as well. "In fact, it enjoys the position in Pakistan which no other language does" (Hafeez, 2004, p. 27).

Historical prestige of English in Pakistan is further aided by the demand of English in today's globalized world. Commenting on the importance of English in the present time, Richards (2008) asserted that,

"One of the simple facts of life in the present time is that the English language skills of a good proportion of its citizenry are seen as vital if a country is to participate actively in the global economy and to have access to the information and knowledge that provide the basis for both social and economic development." (p. 158)

However, EFL teachers in Pakistan do not seem to be fully prepared to meet the challenges and demands of teaching English.

4.1. The present situation of teaching English in Pakistan

The majority of English teachers in Pakistan still follow the traditional transmission teaching model (Ali, 2000; Shamim, 2008). This maybe due to the fact that they were themselves taught and trained through this model. In a typical English teaching class, a teacher would read the lesson (chapter) in the text aloud while standing in front of the podium and translate every single difficult word from English into Urdu. Many language learners including myself would try to write every single translated Urdu word in our textbooks. Shamim (1993, as cited in Shamim, 2008) also asserted that,

"[T]eachers mainly concentrated on doing a lesson or doing grammar, irrespective of class size. Doing a lesson mainly comprised a predictable set of activity types: reading the text [lesson] aloud by the teacher and/or the students; explaining the text, often in Urdu or the local language giving the meanings of difficult words in English and/or Urdu/the local language; and getting the students to do follow-up textbook exercises in their notebooks." (p. 9)

Ali's (2000) observations about English teaching conditions further confirm those of Shamim's findings, asserting that "in Pakistan, teaching is basically viewed as the transmission of predetermined knowledge to students, and teachers are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that this happens in as uncontaminated a fashion as possible" (p. 177). Although the research findings of Shamim's and Ali's findings may not be generalized to all the government and private schools in Pakistan, they do represent the English teaching practices of the majority of schools and colleges there. English teaching practices based on grammar-translation method has only made English learners exceedingly wary of grammatical rules; the practices that have badly affected their speaking and writing fluency (Hafeez, 2002).

4.2. English language teachers training and education in Pakistan

Upon the realization of the importance of English education and the poor EFL teaching conditions in Pakistan as described above, many public and private institutions started to offer English teacher training and education programs to pre-service and in-service teachers of schools, colleges, and universities. International institutions in Pakistan like The British Council of Pakistan (BCP), United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP), and Unites States Agency for International Development in Pakistan (USAID-Pakistan) have been organizing short training workshops, courses, and annual conferences for the professional development of Pakistani English teachers (Mansoor, 2002).

Pakistani local institutions like Higher Education of Pakistan (HEC), Aga Khan University Karachi, Institutional of Educational Development (AKU-IED), Society of Pakistani English Teachers (SPELT), Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad (AIOU), and many other public and private colleges and universities of Pakistan (Dar, 2005) in their capacity are also contributing to the development of ELT education. However, according to some Pakistani educationists and researchers (e.g., Ali, 2000; Dar, 2005; Warsi, 2004), almost all the above mentioned institutions offer traditional teacher training programs generally focusing on disseminating teaching methods and procedural skills to deliver the ready-made materials and courses which have afflicted EFL teacher profession. Evaluating the situation of teacher learning in Pakistan, Ali (2000) asserted that,

> "Learning to teach is a matter of mastering procedures that ensure the accurate transmission of knowledge. Supervisors' (or the teacher trainers') work is seen largely as the identification of deficits in teachers' work which supposedly helps them improve their teaching."   (p. 177)

In addition, some institutions such as HEC, USEFP, The British Council, and USAID (US Embassy Islamabad press releases, 2006) send Pakistani English language teachers (ELTs) to the US and the UK to study at various levels of higher education (e.g., Masters and PhD in TESOL, TEFL or Applied linguistics). These overseas education programs are very encouraging and in the long run, I hope, will contribute to the professional development of EFL teachers in Pakistan. Approximately 73 ELTs benefited from Fulbright grant until 1993 (Rahman, 2001). However, I could not find

any report regarding the overseas qualified ELTs who returned to Pakistan. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to see that some of them who have returned, have conducted some individual research in order to improve EFL education, but they have yet to contribute to the professional development of EFL teachers at large. I have personally attended some of their workshops and short training courses but unfortunately almost all of them were based on disseminating procedural skills, teaching materials, and methods. In other words, no research tools were provided to the trainees for developing and exploring such skills, materials, and methods based on teachers' teaching and learning contexts.

In short, almost all the English teacher training programs run by both private and public institutions in Pakistan do not cater for the needs of today's demand of learning and teaching English. The training programs usually follow the traditional model of disseminating knowledge which resulted in a bulk of *dummy* English teachers who diligently follow the procedures, methods, techniques, and strategies disseminated to them. Probably this is the reason why they could not develop professionally neither could they affect the learning abilities of their students who after studying English throughout their academic life (16 to 18 years), failed to become fully literate in English.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Pakistan is in need of an alternative model which could help the EFL teachers to grow professionally and develop their own theories and practices based on their teaching and learning contexts. As reviewed above, recent empirical studies in other parts of the world have found that CAR can be used as an alternative model for EFL teacher professional development. CAR allows novice language teachers to initiate classroom research themselves in collaboration with experienced teachers and/or a researcher and/or a teacher-educator (e.g., Atay, 2006, 2008; Burbank & Kauchak, 2003; Burns, 2005; Mann, 2005; Miller, 2003; Richards, 2008; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Zeichner, 2003).

5. Implications of collaborative action research (CAR) for Pakistani EFL teacher professional development

From the studies reviewed above, four major characteristics of CAR emerged i.e., facilitation, participation, interaction, and reflection (see Fig. 5 below). All the characteristics were somewhat manifested in almost all the studies reviewed which have a number of implications for Pakistani EFL teachers, teacher-educators and university-researchers who can jointly contribute to EFL teacher professional development. Atay (2006), Burbank and Kauchak (2003), and Ponte, Ax, Beijaard and Wubbles (2004) presented large scale CAR projects which may be suggested for countries like Pakistan where there are very few university-researchers and teachers-educators. A university-researcher in collaboration with a teacher-educator can facilitate novice and experienced teachers to arrange district-wide, province-wide and even country-wide CAR networks in Pakistan. Instead of transmitting the exported materials and procedural skills, the university-researchers and the teacher-educators can facilitate the EFL teachers in Pakistan in carrying out large scale collaborative action research which will not only empower the teachers to develop their own locally situated and contextually specific teaching materials but also independent researchers of their own practices.
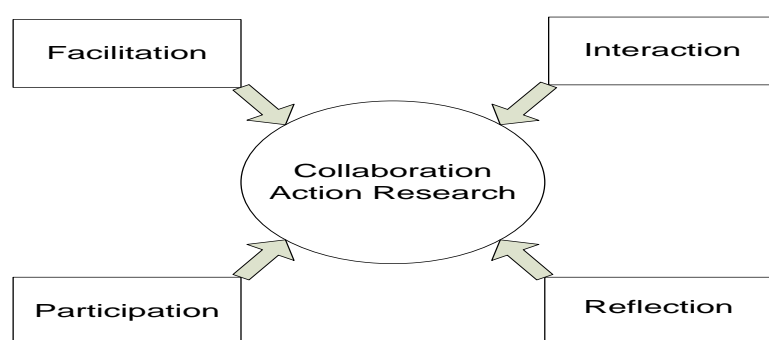
Figure 5: Major characteristics of CAR

Atay's (2008) model of CAR gives us insight as to how a researcher can facilitate the in-service teachers to carry out classroom-based research. I believe, once facilitated in doing research, the in-service EFL teachers in Pakistan, will continue to do research

on their own to enhance their professional image and construct knowledge which serves the needs and requirement of their students.

Burns' (1996) and Mathew's (1997, as cited in Burns, 2005) studies are excellent examples of developing EFL curriculum through CAR which obviously contributed to the professional development of the teachers involved in the activity. Such collaborative research projects can also be initiated in Pakistan where, in collaboration with curriculum-counselors and university-researchers, teachers can develop EFL curriculum using their classrooms as the sites of the research. Such collective efforts empower teachers to use their own knowledge, experiences, and skills to design a context-specific and germane EFL curriculum: one of the most important factors of EFL teacher professional development missing in English teacher education in Pakistan.

Miller's (2003) use of CAR for his own professional development as an EFL teacher-consultant is an excellent example for all teacher-educators in Pakistan who need to develop professionally and understand classroom practices. Once they understand classroom practices, they will be in a better position to facilitate both pre-service and in-service teachers in carrying out classroom research and develop professionally. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that teacher professional development programs in Pakistan should also encourage teacher-educators to participate with teachers in CAR if they want to become valuable members of the society.

However, CAR may be criticized for the dominant role of the teacher-educators or the university-researchers over the teachers', played out in doing research. This is particularly true for countries like Pakistan where they have been playing a dominant role by transmitting knowledge in an uncontaminated way in teacher training programs. The CAR studies reviewed suggest facilitative and participatory roles for the university-researchers and the teacher-educators in the CAR project. This changes their role from that of experts to facilitators and participants. In extreme cases, researchers' domination may be tolerated in the first venture of doing action research. Once the teachers are comfortable with doing action research, they may not need further help and may do research on their own. The role of a researcher under the umbrella of CAR should be that of a facilitator, partner,

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guide, and coordinator and the purpose of a researcher's intervention should be to facilitate the teachers in doing research on their own and to help them construct their own theories and practices.

There might be some other limitations of CAR in the Pakistani context. Teachers, due to their busy schedule, may not find time to carry-out research. This limitation can be counterbalanced by distributing and assigning responsibilities among colleagues as demonstrated in the studies reviewed. Some may do the job of collecting data, and others may reflect on them collectively in their casual meetings. CAR promotes such collaborative efforts of facilitation and participation among the teachers. Another limitation of CAR might be the resistance of teachers to doing research due to the fear of lacking expertise in research. They may think that research involves complex statistical methods and analyses which may be too complicated and difficult for them. However, the qualitative nature of classroom research, such as reflection, writing journals, keeping dairies, meetings, and discussion can take away the fear of the complex image of research from teachers' mind and make it comparatively simple for them. In short, EFL teachers in Pakistan have to go through the phases of participation, interaction, facilitation, and reflection to become independent investigators of their own practices thereby enhancing their professional image. Further research is needed especially in the field of TEFL to explore the roles of university-teachers, teacher-educators, and most importantly the role of teachers in the joint enterprise of CAR.

6. Conclusion

Based on the empirical studies reviewed and analyzed, I would strongly suggest the teacher-educators, the university-researchers, and the novice and the experienced teachers in Pakistan to arrange CAR projects and build a constructive community of practice based on equal participation. It will not only empower the local EFL teachers of Pakistan to make informed decisions but also emancipate them from the transmission model of teacher training which has been plaguing their teaching practices since long. I would also suggest that the institutions in Pakistan like The British council, Higher Education Commission, Unites States Agency for International Development, Aga Khan University - Institution for Educational

Development, and many other private and foreign-aided institutions, including the local educational institutions of professional development (government colleges and universities) in Pakistan, offer opportunities to teachers to actively engage in CAR and build a constructive community of practice.

Once initiated, the CAR cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection has the potential to continue to re-occur and contribute to the professional development of both pre-service and in-service teachers on a regular basis. It also has the potential to bridge the gap between researchers, teacher-educators, and novice and experienced teachers. Pakistan and many other developing countries where there is a lack of action research, especially in the field of ELT, such collaborative efforts based on equal participation, can bring a revolution to the EFL teacher profession. It not only emancipates the EFL teachers from the top-down transmission model but also empowers them to construct their own theories, knowledge, and methods which will definitely be context-specific, locally-situated, and relevant to the local needs and requirements of learners.

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Using Perplexing Survey Questions with Repeated Pair Discussions to Enhance the Depth of Expression of Beliefs: The Case of Pre-service Japanese EFL Teachers

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Abstract:

This study describes using a teaching beliefs survey featuring perplexing questions, combined with paired conversations and written follow-up responses as a platform for pre-service teachers to share and justify their beliefs as part of a larger process of integrating theory, beliefs and practice. Results show the procedure to be effective in generating more explicit beliefs including reasons, conditions and/or contexts. However, little impact was seen in exploring the origins or basis of support for these beliefs. Suggestions are made for improving the survey and procedure to deepen reflective processes.

Keywords: Epistemology, reflection, beliefs, teacher development, teacher training

1. Introduction

As an education faculty, we are responsible, not only for developing competent teachers in their content discipline, but also for developing teachers who are sensitive to the multiple factors influencing their classroom and who are capable of taking these factors into account when they consider classroom management, teaching methods and curriculum development. This paper describes an exploration into pre-service teacher beliefs. More specifically, it discusses how we might help teachers to

make their beliefs more explicit and ideas more sophisticated, and therefore, more useful as a foundation for making real classroom decisions. This study was integrated into the educational cycle at the level of course design and classroom instruction. I will therefore begin by talking about background to the study and course design considerations.

1.1 Background

1.2.1 Course objectives

As part of my course load for 2008 I was assigned a conversation class with our 4th year English majors. There are two major tasks in the fourth year in the Faculty of Education. The first is, to complete two sessions of practice teaching - one in the major area of specialization and one in the minor. In the typical case, one session would be in elementary school and the other in junior high school. The second task is, to write and defend the graduation thesis. In designing the course, I had a number of purposes; the most important of which I considered to be preparing students to present and defend their thesis orally in English. A second major purpose was to help to integrate the experience of practice teaching and the knowledge gained from other classes with their beliefs about teaching.

Accordingly, they would be asked to reflect in detail on their practicum and to present some of these reflections to each other. They would also be required to reflect and engage in dialogue with their peers on important aspects of educational theory and practice, such as the role of the teacher and theories of learning. In writing, discussions and presentations they were asked to make their thinking explicit and to explore the basis of their thinking. In addition, this being a conversation class, activities were set up to promote fluency through a pattern of preparation, repeated practice and feedback that ended with an oral presentation and a written summary. Although defense of the graduation thesis was a major aim, this was a first semester class so thesis proposals were as yet in the planning stages; and as such the course content would have to be limited to personal beliefs surrounding teaching. In the end, a large part of the course revolved around a survey of beliefs about teaching and learning, an area I had occasion to explore some years earlier.

1.1.2 Research background

In Suzuki, Wada and Pederson (2004), we conducted a survey on beliefs about language learning based mostly on Horwitz's (1988) Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). The survey is divided into five sections: 1) difficulty of language learning; 2) foreign language aptitude; 3) the nature of language learning; 4) learning and communication strategies; and 5) motivation and expectations. (Horwitz, 1988, p. 284) What surprised me in our study of Japanese high school students was that a factor analysis grouped responses in a manner that in no way resembles Horwitz's original categories. Our attempt to label the constructs underlying each of the new groupings was not entirely satisfying, but we came up with: 1) active-interactive orientation; 2) positive orientation; 3) product orientation; 4) dependency; and 5) satisfaction with progress (Suzuki, Wada and Pederson, 2004, p. 18-20). I was left with more questions than answers regarding these results. Were these unexpected clusters revealing a more fundamental level of meta-beliefs? Were the categories in this American instrument ill-suited to capture a fundamentally different structure of thinking regarding the nature of learning in the culture of Japan?

Similar doubts were raised by Bernat, Carter and Hall (2009) while investigating the relationship between personality traits and language learning beliefs as revealed in the BALLI instrument. As in our study, a factor analysis did not group questions in a manner consistent with the original taxonomy of Horwitz. The five factors identified were: 1) motivation for coming to Australia, 2) preferred strategies for language learning, 3) integrative motivation, 4) self-confidence, and 5) grouping learning hard sciences as different from learning humanities and that women learn language more easily than men. Regarding the original groupings, they write: "The Horwitz scores were not at all useful in the analysis of these data because the Horwitz taxonomy was devised using data from a different population" (p. 131).

Moving beyond language learning, DeBacker, Crowson, Beesley, Thoma and Hestevold (2006) examined the trustworthiness and consistency of 3 major self-report instruments used to measure epistemic beliefs or foundational beliefs about knowledge and knowing. These were the Epistemological Questionnaire (EQ), the Epistemological Beliefs Survey (EBS) and the Epistemic Beliefs Inventory (EBI).

Summing up their conclusions, they write:

> ". . . (O)ur investigations failed to support the view of epistemic beliefs as a domain-general and multidimensional collection of beliefs about knowledge and knowing. This is seen most clearly in the consistent failure of factor analyses (exploratory and confirmatory) to support the hypothesized factor structures . . . lack of support is further demonstrated in the extant research literature, which has failed to yield a consistent picture of the number or nature of dimensions that constitute epistemic beliefs." (p. 301-2)

In this study, I wanted to probe more deeply into my students' ways of thinking and find out how their thoughts interacted with a survey instrument. My approach was to a large extent phenomenological, in that I wanted to collect data and view it without a pre-conceived framework, since as mentioned above, pre-conceived frameworks have not performed very well. This meant that the literature review was, in fact, conducted after I had collected the data. Then, the research question emerged as part of looking for ways to summarize the data.

In the following literature review, a description of the participants and setting is followed by the research question, design of the instrument and classroom procedure. I then cover the data collection and results. The results are then discussed with reference to the literature. Finally, I conclude with thoughts on how to proceed with the next cycle of investigation and instruction.

2. Literature review

It is well-noted in second language teacher development that we have moved away from a product oriented approach in which we pass down "a set of discrete behaviors, routines, or scripts . . . discrete amounts of knowledge usually in the form of general theories and methods." (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 399) In its place, we have adopted an approach in which "teacher candidates develop their own theories and become aware of their own learning-to-teach processes" (Richards & Nunan, 1990 cited in Velez-Rendon, 2002, p. 457). In a widely reported study, Nespor (1987) demonstrated that teacher beliefs are a better predictor of classroom behavior than is knowledge. It is now widely accepted that teachers act largely on their own beliefs.

According to Richards, Gallo and Renendya (2001), current approaches are based on the following assumptions:

- "Teachers' beliefs play a central role in the process of teacher development;
- Changes in teachers' practices are the result of changes in teachers' beliefs; and
- The notion of teacher change is multidimensional and is triggered both by personal factors as well as by the professional contexts in which the teachers work."   (p. 41)

These beliefs are said to come from culture and more specifically from home and school (Anderson, 1984). Experience as a student is well established as a source of beliefs (Lortie, 1975; Mitchel, Doolittle & Schwager, 2005). In addition, Schommer (1998) identified age as a factor exercising influence on belief structures independent of education.

With the recent push for outcomes, it is tempting to revert to the transmission model by trying to instill beliefs to indirectly influence behaviors and achieve program goals. However, this seems to be problematic. Borg (2003) summarizing the findings of Breen et al. (2001), writes: "individual teachers realize specific principles through particular sets of favored practices, and that at an individual level these configurations of practices and principles are unique . . . any one principle was realized through several different practices" (p. 96). It seems then that even if beliefs could be instilled, it would be unlikely to yield a predictable outcome in teaching behavior. Therefore, if the transmission model is inadvisable and if instilling beliefs promises no clear results, the only remaining path is to foster the development of independent, thoughtful teachers (i.e. reflective practitioners) and trust their judgment. The question then becomes how to foster such higher-level reflection.

This means investigating the deeper foundations of thoughts and beliefs with an eye to developing methods for making these foundations stronger and more supportive of reflection. One line of investigation explores beliefs about knowledge and knowing itself, that is, epistemology. Epistemological, or epistemic beliefs, are meta-beliefs that shape the way we process and structure information. For example, do we regard knowledge as being composed of discrete facts? Is knowledge certain, or does knowledge depend on perspective? Is knowledge independent of opinions,

and if not, is everyone's opinion equally valid? In a situation of conflicting data, how do we decide what to believe? While the philosophical roots to epistemic beliefs are grounded in Plato, the modern psychological investigations are, according to Hofer and Pintrich (1987), descended from William Perry at Harvard in the late 1960s who was interested in how and why students reacted differently to their experience at university. Perry viewed epistemic beliefs as following a developmental path of fixed stages. Subsequent researchers have differed regarding the number of stages and, according to DeBacker et al. (2006) they have also differed as to whether these stages are linked and change together, as in Piagetian development, or whether development is modularized, with each area following its own path and pace.

Many developmental frameworks have been proposed. However, Hofer and Pintrich (1997) assert that, despite differences, there exists broad agreement about the nature of the basic categories of beliefs: certainty of knowledge and source of knowledge (grouped under nature of knowledge) and; source of knowledge and justification for knowing (the process components). They align each major framework to conform to a general model. Development extends along a continuum from the most naïve, absolutist position in which knowledge is certain and received from authorities. It then transitions through a stage of multiplicity, in which authority still holds sway and in which things are knowable but where it is accepted that authorities themselves may disagree. Finally, development culminates in relativism, in which the knower is recognized as an important "maker of meaning" and where knowledge is seen as "relative, contingent and contextual" (p. 91). See Table 1 for the full scheme.

Table 1: Models of epistemological development in late adolescence and adulthood

Intellectual and Ethical development (Perry)	Women's ways of knowing (Belenky et al)	Epistemological reflection (Baxter Magolda)	Reflective judgment (King & Kitchener)	Argumentative reasoning (Kuhn)
Positions	*Epistemological perspectives*	*Ways of knowing*	*Reflective judgment*	*Epistemological views*
Dualism	Silence Received knowledge	Absolute knowing	Pre-reflective thinking	Absolutists
Mulitiplicity	Subjective knowledge	Transitional knowing		Multiplists
			Quasi-reflective thinking	
Relativism	Procedural knowledge (a) Connected knowing (b) Separate knowing	Independent knowing		Evaluatists

Another broad line of investigation is that of reflective inquiry which has its roots in the thought of John Dewey. This line of thought has been elaborated into four stages of reflective thinking by Leung and Kember (2003) (cited in Phan, 2008). These are: habitual action, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection:

> "Habitual action is a mechanical and automatic activity that is performed with little conscious thought. Understanding is learning and reading without relating to other situations. Reflection concerns active, persistent and careful considerations of any assumptions or beliefs grounded in our consciousness. Finally, critical reflection is considered as a higher level of reflective thinking that involves us becoming more aware of why we perceive things, the way we feel, act and do."   (Phan, 2008, p. 78)

But what are the springs of development? In other words, how can growth be stimulated and supported? Dewey (1910) writes that some beliefs are mere fancy and tend to no deeper thought while beliefs which lead to reflection are those that have some consequence to our behavior in the world. He states that, "The consequence of a belief on other beliefs and upon behavior may be so important, then, that men are forced to consider the grounds or reasons of their belief and its logical consequences. This means reflective thought [. . .]" (p. 5). He later writes that, "*Demand for the solution of a perplexity is the steadying and guiding factor in the whole process of reflection*" (p. 11). King and Kitchener (1994, cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997) make a useful distinction between reflective thinking and critical thinking, which they claim is "concerned with the solving of closed, well-structured problems" (p. 102).

In general, researchers take a Piagetian view of change in which people interact with the environment and respond to novel experiences either by assimilating them into existing frameworks of thought or by accommodating them as a new framework. The process of intellectual development then is one of resolving a state of cognitive disequilibrium. Students are predisposed to change when exposed to theories that contradict each other or when they are shown that theories change over the years (Schommer, 1998, p. 558).

This is commensurate with Dewey's approach of presenting a "perplexity", which provokes extended consideration resulting in reflective thinking. A number of researchers have used such perplexities or ill-structured problems to probe epistemic beliefs. Kuhn (1991, cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997, p. 103-4) used current urban

problems to explore the thought processes of his students, namely: What causes prisoners to re-offend? Why do children fail in school? What causes unemployment? Furthermore, he asked participants to explain how they came to hold such an opinion then probed them for support. He also asked them to come up with an opposing position and then to refute it. Finally, he asked them to explore their reasoning process itself. Similarly, White (2000) asked pre-service teachers to identify a problematic classroom situation involving, for example, instruction, discipline or a personal issue. They were expected to generate five alternative solutions then choose one. They were then interviewed and asked to justify their choice and to reveal their line of thinking.

Likewise, Horwitz (1985) studied the uses of surveys regarding language learning beliefs in methodology classes for pre-service language teachers. One purpose of the survey was for students to gain awareness of their beliefs. A second purpose was to supply language teacher educators with information about what students really believe in order to design instruction more effectively. But most importantly, the survey was used as a basis for exploring areas of controversy through discussion, thereby destabilizing established, and as yet unchallenged beliefs. She writes:

> "Students are often surprised to learn that an opinion they had taken for granted as correct evokes spirited controversy. This confrontation with different opinions is often the student's first step towards questioning their own beliefs and helps increase their receptivity to new information."
>
> (p. 335)

With the intention of developing a more constructivist approach based on students' epistemic beliefs, MacLellan & Soden (2004) decided to require an extended written response so as to elicit the considered views of their students in their most advanced state. They designed their task in line with recommendations from King & Kitchener (1994) to gain access to these epistemic convictions. Task requirements included:

> -"A focus on ill-structured problems which involve doubt about the adequacy of one's current understanding;
> -A requirement to give reasons for the content of responses since it is the reasons that can reveal the sophistication of the thinking; and
> -The use of generally familiar knowledge since this allows participants to respond to issues about which they have some working knowledge and increases the participants' comfort with the task."
>
> (MacLellan & Soden, 2004, p. 257)

Also speaking from the viewpoint of constructivism, Bondy et al. (2007) suggest creating a 'culture of trust' in which students can feel free to express their views. This may be done in part by representing alternative perspectives in the selection of readings. They further suggest we get to know the students well by giving them many opportunities to respond to content, by way of free writes and opportunities to ask questions and discuss dilemmas. They also say we need to encourage students to connect their learning across courses (including field experience) and to connect theoretical concepts to practical tasks.

Chinn and Brewer (1993) summarize the research on the process of theoretical change in science. This process begins with the presentation of anomalous data. They explain:

> ". . . (A)nomalous evidence itself is presented in different ways, sometimes through laboratory work or live demonstrations, sometimes through computers, and sometimes through discussions. Regardless of the details of the method, the presentation of anomalous data is always a key step intended to precipitate theory change."   (p. 2)

While being exposed to alternate views may be a necessary first step towards a more sophisticated belief system, it is by no means a straightforward process. On the contrary, alternative views and anomalous data may well meet with a selective receptivity to new information rather than the expected balanced openness and intake. Kardash and Scholes (1996) for example, confirmed earlier work on the "biased assimilation effect" in those who held initially strong beliefs. They presented subjects with a factual text offering tentative views on a scientific topic and asked readers to write a concluding paragraph summarizing the information. They found that those with differing initial beliefs handled the information in different ways. They conclude:

> ". . . (T)he less that people believed in certain knowledge, the less extreme their initial beliefs regarding the HIV-AIDS relationship, and the more they enjoyed engaging in cognitively challenging tasks, the more likely they were to write conclusions that accurately reflected the inconclusive, tentative nature of the mixed evidence they read. In contrast, people with strong beliefs in the certainty of knowledge, extreme initial convictions, and a self-reported disinclination to engage in cognitively challenging tasks were more likely to ignore totally the inconclusive nature of the information that they read and more likely to write conclusions that demonstrated 'biased assimilation'."   (p. 269)

Similarly, Chinn and Brewer (1981) (cited in Chinn & Brewer, 1993) found that when students were presented with scientific theories that contradicted their entrenched beliefs, that even though they:

> "[…] (U)nderstood the theories quite well, as shown by their ability to answer transfer questions, they did not *believe* the new theories. And when confronted with anomalous data, the subjects' responses fit into the categories of rejection, exclusion, abeyance, reinterpretation, and peripheral change. No subjects gave evidence of abandoning their entrenched beliefs."   (p. 16)

For new theories to take root, evidence must be processed deeply. In regard to promoting deep processing they recommend two strategies: that of choosing issues which views are of personal significance and being required to justify one's views to others. Similarly, Kuhn (1991) (cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997) made note of several elements in his interviews that were particularly revealing of students underlying epistemic beliefs and that may be useful in helping students avoid taking in only that which is consistent with current beliefs. These questions probe proof, expertise, multiple viewpoints, origins of theories and certainty:

-Is there anything anyone could say or do to prove this is the case?

-Could someone prove that you were wrong?

-Do experts know for sure what causes _____?

-Is more than one view possible regarding the question of what causes _____?

-Could more than one point of view be right?

-Can you remember what is was that led you to believe that this is the case?

-How sure are you of your view compared to an expert?   (p. 104)

Finally, Chinn and Brewer (1993) list three factors exerting an important influence on the acceptance of a new theory. These are: a) whether a plausible theory is available; b) quality of the alternative theory; and c) intelligibility.

To summarize, a program to encourage cognitive development must first create a situation of cognitive disequilibrium. This may be done through presenting alternate views. It might also be created by presenting the thinker with an ill-structured problem, one admitting of no direct solution through any standard

procedure. Furthermore, we can say that the problem needs to be one of personal import; that is, it should have real world consequences. In addition, there is a need to take ideas out of the realm of private thought and express them in some forum for exchange. Finally, there should be a focus on justifying ideas and, ideally, some examination of the thought process itself.

But assessing progress may be no easy task. In the case of epistemic beliefs, changing across stages is, according to King and Kitchener (1994, cited in Hofer & Pintrich 1997) "marked by rapid spurts of growth, followed by a plateau" (p. 101). Even more problematic is that, over a four-year undergraduate degree, they found only an average half-stage difference in developmental level between first and fourth year students, and this based on a seven-stage scale.

While large shifts in development may not be evident except over a period of years, White (2000) managed to capture change in progress as she conducted her interviews:

> "I became aware that students' responses sometimes seemed to change meaning as they talked. When this happened they appeared to be clarifying what they believed through the process of explaining it to me. At other times they appeared to revising their beliefs as they explained to me." (p. 282)

While White (2000) treats this only as a data analysis problem, it seems to be very pertinent to assessment. She seems to have caught students in the very process of resolving a situation of cognitive dissonance, which is the path to change. This may offer an alternative to catching change at its end point.

This process of developmental change has been observed in children where non-verbal behavior showed a mismatch with verbal behavior. In a reproduction of Piaget's classic experiment in which a child is asked whether a row of checkers has increased in number when spread further apart compared to a paired row of unmoved checkers, it was discovered that some children gave the standard incorrect response that the number had increased but showed, at the same time, with gestures, that they understood the one-to-one correspondence of checkers in the two lines. The gestures revealed implicit knowledge of one-to-one correspondence, knowledge which is rooted in an understanding of conservation. Their knowledge as shown in gesture did not match their explicit verbal statement. This invited a further study in which it was

found that those children demonstrating similar mismatched responses were more likely to solve the problem with instruction than children with matched responses.(Church & Goldin-Meadow, 1986, cited in Goldin-Meadow, 2004, p. 317) It may be that beliefs exist independent of each other in separate domains and come into contact and conflict when brought to bear on a problem. Based on this, assessment of belief change might also be conducted by observing mismatches, either verbal/verbal or verbal/non-verbal.

3. Research questions

While this cycle of research had a specific impetus and a clear overall direction, the research questions were not clarified until the last stages, which is in line with the phenomenological nature of the investigation. The questions that ultimately emerged were:

Which survey questions performed best in eliciting contrary opinions among students?

What level of cognitive complexity can be achieved in answers to ill-structured survey questions combined with repeated exchanges with peers?

4. Participants and setting

Participants were 14 students enrolled in an elective conversation class for fourth year students in a 4 year Bachelor of Education program at a prominent university in Japan. 4 students were specializing in English teaching for junior high school. The other 10 were part of an English specialization program for elementary school teachers. Each student took part in one practicum in their major concentration (JHS or ES) and one in their minor. Both practicums took place during the period of this first semester course.

5. Instruments and procedure

5.1 The survey

In order to elicit a richer background to students' beliefs, the survey was designed with questions that provoke thought beyond simple agree/disagree. Some questions were posed in contiguous pairs that could be interpreted as opposing each other.

Other questions altered the perspective or otherwise introduced some subtle variation on a previous question. Still other questions invoked a context or some mitigating factor. Others used a metaphor to elicit a response. Questions were deliberately avoided if they tended to be uncontroversial among researchers and practicing educators. In other words, I avoided using questions as a springboard to illustrate pre-conceived teaching points or to uncover what might be regarded as misconceptions.

Some questions seem, quite obviously, to oppose each other. For example:

5. Teachers should be interested and aware of their students' personal happenings

and problems inside and outside of school.

6. Teachers should concentrate on teaching their subject in the classroom. Students' personal problems, especially those outside school, are the responsibility of parents and counselors.

10. One learns most by working alone.

11. One learns most by working with other students.

12. Those who do well in school will also do well in life.

13. Those who do not do well in school will fail in life.

Other questions vary in more subtle ways. They might be thought to oppose each other or, alternatively, to be complementary when used at different stages of the learning process or for different purposes:

1. A teacher should tell the students what to do and how to do it.

2. A teacher should help students learn to solve problems and discover things on

their own.

3. Students learn well through praise.

4. Students learn well through alerting them as soon as they go wrong.

7. Students learn a lot from the teacher correcting their mistakes.

8. Listening to the teacher explain something in a lecture is an effective way to

    learn.

9. Doing a project or solving a complex problem by oneself is a good way to

    learn.

Another set of questions seeks to represent the role of the teacher through images:

18. A teacher should be like a friend.

19. A teacher should be like a parent.

20. A teacher should be an expert.

21. A teacher should be like a coach.

Bruner's (1996) folk pedagogies serves as the basis for the following items each of which are endorsable in some context, but are incomplete as a teaching framework:

14. Students learn a lot by watching others and imitating.

15. Students learn to do things well by understanding the rules about how things

    work.

16. Students learn to do things well by practicing a lot under the close supervision

    of the teacher.

17. Students learn to do things well by trying them, making mistakes and

    correcting themselves.

22. Students learn a lot by playing freely.

Questions, mostly inspired by the BALLI survey, elicited related beliefs about language teaching:

23. We learn English by learning grammar rules.
24. We learn English by imitating and practicing.
25. We learn English by trying to say or write something we want to communicate.
26. Students who become fluent have a special talent for languages.
27. To become fluent in English, it is necessary to spend time living in an English
    speaking country.
28. To speak English well, you must start learning when you are in elementary school.
29. Japanese who speak English well become different from other Japanese
30. Going to a good school will improve your English a lot.
31. Studying on your own will do a lot to improve your English.
32. Playing and enjoying yourself in English is an effective way to learn.
33. If a person can speak English well, their Japanese will also be excellent.
34. Memorizing words is important if you want to learn to speak English well.
35. To be a good English speaker, you must be a good translator

5.2 Procedure

Students filled out the survey agreeing or disagreeing with each statement on a six point Likert scale. They were then assigned a group of questions (4-6 items) about which they were to write detailed notes of their opinions. They were encouraged to answer questions together if they seemed to be closely related to each other. Notes were to be handwritten to emphasize the tentative nature of the answers. I wanted them to be prepared, but I also wanted them to feel free to change their views after interacting with their classmates. They used these notes as the basis for conversations with peers at the next class meeting. I checked that this homework had been completed, but did not require that it be submitted.

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Pair discussions were conducted in class. They began by explaining to a partner which question number they had chosen, followed by an explanation of their choice based on the notes they had prepared. They were allowed to look at their paper and read. It was the usual case to ask them to discuss two related questions. This was done in order to allow students to give more complex views and also to keep pairs talking if they managed to cover a question more quickly than others. Pairs were then changed and the same procedure was used. They changed partners a third time, but this time students were asked to look at their partner when they spoke, referring to their notes only when necessary. With the fourth (and typically last) pair change, students were asked to leave their papers behind and speak freely from memory or from their thoughts as they occurred. Conversations were timed and usually began with a 4 to 5 minute exchange and moved to a 3 to 4 minute exchange as students became better able to say what they wanted more fluently. The entire procedure was repeated once more with the next set of questions. It was usually the case that two sets of questions were discussed in this way in one class. Finally, students were to write up their answers to this week's discussion questions in proper academic format and hand them in the following week. They also prepared handwritten notes for the next set of questions.

When the questionnaire was completed, students were asked to choose a question or two about which they felt strongly. They were asked to make a detailed presentation of their opinion and their reasons for holding it. They were asked to support their views with any evidence they could produce, but were recommended especially to pay attention to their practicum experience and/or their personal experience as students. Presenting this support in narrative form was also specifically recommended. Students were also to hand in a detailed paper based on this presentation.

6. Results

6.1 Survey results

Data consisted of the completed surveys and the written answers to each question (or grouping of questions). Presentation papers were, unfortunately, handed back to students without being copied and so were unavailable for analysis.

Data on the survey addresses research question 1: Which questions performed best in eliciting contrary opinions among students? As the mechanism for moving toward higher levels of cognitive sophistication was assumed to be cognitive dissonance, I wanted to know to what extent each question was likely to expose students to alternative points of view. Figures in Table 2 represent measures of interpersonal disagreement.

Since the questionnaire uses a six point Likert scale, question averages should be compared with a midpoint of 3.5. Averages closer to this figure show greater possibilities for students with contrary viewpoints encountering each other in any given pairing. The best performing questions by this measure (those averaging within the two middle numbers (3 and 4) are items: 1, 7, 16, 19, 27, 28, 30 and 31.

The percentage agreeing and disagreeing with each question is yet another measure of the likelihood of disagreement among participants and is the most practical; since a simple show of hands in class can inform you at once whether a question will yield sufficient controversy to warrant an exchange of views. The percentages range from a perfect 50/50 split (item 33) to the state of no disagreement at 0/100 (item 32).

Another measure of the likelihood of disagreement can be calculated by measuring the distance between the scale average (3.5) and the average of an item as a function of the standard deviation. However, the difficulty with this measure, as with each of the other two, is what point to choose as a cut-off. The approach I have chosen is to look for the point at which the three measures start to show divergence.

If I begin by setting the standard deviation-based measure at 1 SD it confirms all percentages up to the 75/25% split. After this point the standard deviation based measure approves some questions and disapproves others at the same percentage. Specifically, at the 77/23 level, questions 4 and 12 gain approval while question 14 is rejected. At the 85/15 level questions 6, 8 and 26 are approved while questions 3 and 21 are rejected. At the 92/8 level question 24 is approved while questions 13 and 34 are rejected. It seems then that the 75/25 split shows convergence with standard deviation based measure.

In the case of the average, all questions producing an average between 3 and 4 are in agreement with the other two measures. However when we expand the range to

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2.7-4.3 we get a clear divergence with some questions being approved and others rejected at the same percentage split. Specifically, of questions with a 77/23 split, questions 4 and 9 are approved while questions 12, 14 and 23 fall outside the range. In the 85/15 splits we see the same thing with questions 8, 21 and 26 accepted while 6 and 10 are rejected. Questions with a 75/25 split are approved with only one exception, item 29. It would seem then that the 75/25 split shows convergence of all three measures and can operate as a convenient benchmark for judging the goodness of questions.

It also seems practically appropriate in giving students a very good chance of encountering a contrary view in a series of 4 pairings. The chances of being paired randomly with someone with a differing view over a series of 4 pairings is in the range of 97%. Questions meeting this standard of goodness are designated with an asterisk in Table 2. Overall, 13 items meet the standard.

Table 2: Performance summary for survey questions

Question	% Disagree	% Agree	Avg.	SD	3.5-Avg.	Midpoint-Avg < 1 SD
1. A teacher should tell the students what to do and how to do it.	54	46	3.23	1.01	0.27	YES*
2. A teacher should help students learn to solve problems and discover things on their own	0	100	5.38	0.65	1.88	NO
3. Students learn well through praise.	15	85	5.00	1.22	1.50	NO
4. Students learn well through alerting them as soon as they go wrong.	77	23	2.62	1.04	0.88	YES
5. Teachers should be interested and aware of their students' personal happenings and problems inside and outside of school.	0	100	5.46	0.66	1.96	NO

6. Teachers should concentrate on teaching their subject in the classroom. Students' personal problems, especially those outside school, are the responsibility of parents and counselors.	85	15	2.31	1.32	1.19	YES
7. Students learn a lot from the teacher correcting their mistakes.	39	61	3.52	1.04	0.02	YES*
8. Listening to the teacher explain something in a lecture is an effective way to learn	85	15	2.77	1.01	0.73	YES
9. Doing a project or solving a complex problem by oneself is a good way to learn.	23	77	4.15	0.99	0.65	YES
10. One learns most by working alone.	85	15	2.69	1.03	0.81	YES
11. One learns most by working with other students.	8	92	4.77	0.93	1.27	NO
12. Those who do well in school will also do well in life.	77	23	2.54	1.33	0.96	YES
13. Those who do not do well in school will fail in life.	92	8	2.08	1.19	1.42	NO
14. Students learn a lot by watching others and imitating.	77	23	4.46	0.78	0.96	NO
15. Students learn to do things well by understanding the rules about how things work.	15	85	4.31	0.85	0.81	YES

Item						
16. Students learn to do things well by practicing a lot under the close supervision of the teacher.	54	46	3.23	1.30	0.27	YES*
17. Students learn to do things well by trying them, making mistakes and correcting themselves.	0	100	5.31	0.95	1.81	NO
18. A teacher should be like a friend.	54	46	2.92	1.12	0.58	YES*
19. A teacher should be like a parent.	46	54	3.69	1.65	0.19	YES*
20. A teacher should be an expert.	0	100	5.38	0.77	1.88	NO
21. a teacher should be like a coach.	85	15	2.77	0.93	0.73	NO
22. Students learn a lot by playing freely.	42	58	4.08	1.19	0.58	YES*
23. We learn English by learning grammar rules.	23	77	4.38	1.04	0.88	YES
24. We learn English by imitating and practicing.	8	92	4.77	1.30	1.27	YES
25. We learn English by trying to say or write something we want to communicate	0	100	5.92	1.04	2.42	NO
26. Students who become fluent have a special talent for languages.	85	15	2.85	0.90	0.65	YES
27. To become fluent in English, it is necessary to spend time living in an English speaking country.	62	38	3.23	1.17	0.27	YES*
28. To speak English well, you must start learning when you are in elementary school.	69	31	3.00	0.91	0.50	YES*

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29. Japanese who speak English well become different from other Japanese.	69	31	2.46	1.39	1.04	YES*
30. Going to a good school will improve your English a lot.	54	46	3.23	1.30	0.27	YES*
31. Studying on your own will do a lot to improve your English.	31	69	3.77	1.01	0.27	YES*
32. Playing and enjoying yourself in English is an effective way to learn.	0	100	5.38	0.65	1.88	NO
33. If a person can speak English well, their Japanese will also be excellent.	50	50	2.92	1.32	0.58	YES*
34. Memorizing words is important if you want to learn to speak English well.	8	92	4.75	0.72	1.25	NO
35. To be a good English speaker, you must be a good translator.	75	25	2.83	0.90	0.67	YES*

*This item meets the 75/25 standard/

6.2 Written answers

Written answers address research question 2: What level of cognitive complexity can be achieved in answers to ill-structured survey questions combined with repeated exchanges with peers? After looking at the written answers, they seemed to me to fall clearly into three categories:

1. Belief: a simple statement of opinion.
2. Reasons and Conditions: conditions or reasons are offered but without further support.
3. Justified Belief: in which evidence from experience, theory or authority is cited.
4. A Belief was judged as something that did not go beyond the information in the survey response, that is, an assertion without support:

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It depends. Students should share their ideas but in the end they should also work alone. (*Author's paraphrase*)

Although this participant says it depends, which shows some sense of conditionality, he does no more than restate agreement with each question, the first about working in groups and the second about working alone. All other answers in this category were more clear-cut. Such responses accounted for just 8% of the written answers (See Table 3).

As to Justified Beliefs the most sophisticated category, they were mostly restricted to citing examples of one sort or another. Some were examples from experience in practicum teaching, others were from personal experience as a student with the remainder being more removed examples of friends and acquaintances or examples from the mass media. For example:

I heard a story about a girl who spent three months abroad but she did not study on her own. So when she got home, she could speak no better than before.
(*Author's paraphrase*)

Only two instances of theoretical reference appeared: one referring to the Cognitive Approach and the other to Communicative Language Teaching. Altogether, Justified Beliefs accounted for 10% of responses overall.

The bulk of responses (80%) were of the Reason/Condition type in which if-then reasoning was used, conditions of context were specified, or an answer was otherwise elaborated:

It may be true that living in a foreign country is necessary for fluency but the important factor is effort, whether inside or outside of Japan.
(*Author's paraphrase*)

Playing is an effective way to learn especially in elementary school. Children love to play. They are motivated when they play or enjoy themselves so they can learn a lot through playing games or singing songs. (*Author's paraphrase*)

Such statements may offer reasons at considerable length but the reasons themselves are not justified with evidence.

Table 3: Response by level of sophistication

	Count	Percentage
Belief	17*	8
Reason/condition	181	82
Justified Belief	23	10
Total	221	100

*Note that 12 of the 17 instances of *Belief* were accounted for by just 2 students.

7. Discussion

Regarding research question 1, the results were clear in identifying 13 questions that elicited a high level of disagreement among students. Obviously, these questions should survive in any subsequent survey. Furthermore the 75/25 percent split was shown to perform well as a benchmark meaning that questions for discussion can be previewed by a show of hands to ascertain their effectiveness before proceeding with in-class conversations.

While the survey described in this paper was developed prior to reviewing the literature, it proved to adhere to a number of accepted principles. First of all, questions were relevant to the lives of the students and the implications of each question were vitally important as recommended in Dewey (1910). It matters what students think about each of the issues because they will affect how they will perform as a teacher. In addition, the questions were essentially equivalent to ill-structured problems which admit of no easy answer and promote extended consideration as per King and Kitchener (1994, cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997).

The procedure also found support within the extant literature. If ill-structured problems are discussed with classmates, it not only means being exposed to alternative views, a pre-condition of cognitive growth, it actually makes it more likely that participants will justify their answers or challenge their partners (Chinn &

Brewer, 1981, cited in Chinn & Brewer, 1993) and potentially lead to considerations of quality of support and source of knowledge.

Next allow me to turn to the second research question: What level of cognitive complexity can be achieved in answers to ill-structured survey questions combined with repeated exchanges with peers? While a survey provides a snapshot of teacher beliefs, it does not go beyond responding to assertions. Answers provide no background, no caveats and conditions. In contrast, the written responses produced following pair discussions showed a higher level of sophistication. The preponderance (82%) of Condition/ Reason responses, is clear evidence that a more elaborate and explicit account of teaching beliefs was produced compared with a stand-alone survey. Only 8% of responses were limited to the Belief level, the level of survey answers. On the other hand, a full 10% of answers extended to accounts of evidence or origin of beliefs, that is 23 endorsements distributed among 7 students.

8 Notes for the next cycle of exploration

While the procedure of this study led to the explicit statement of views including conditions and reasons, these were left unsubstantiated in most cases. However, the explicit statements do open participants to exploring the next stage in which they search for why their beliefs are held and how they might be supported or refuted. To improve the depth of processing, instruction should be given to augment the written responses with information about the source of the belief or evidence supporting it. In addition, some questions from Kuhn (1991) could be modified and recommended to participants to include in their conversations.

As to the next survey, the 13 remaining questions should be included along with some new items to preserve a contrasting or multi-faceted perspective on each issue. In addition, eliminating badly performing questions from the survey will shorten it considerably and allow more time for in-depth treatment in the form of preparing class presentations. Class presentations (not examined in this study) required students to support their opinions with theory or examples from personal experience, either as a student or as a practicum teacher. With less class time consumed by the survey and follow-up questions, the presentation portion of the program can be expanded from one opportunity to two.

Finally, further thought needs to be given to assessment. First, there will need to be an instrument for assessing written work. The simple framework used in this study for classifying beliefs may serve as a starting point for developing a protocol. In addition, it may be desirable to develop another system for observation purposes, perhaps one that will seek to identify change-in-progress by identifying mismatches and contradictions at both the verbal/verbal as well as at the verbal/non-verbal level.

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English Teacher Professionalism and Professional Development:
Some Common Issues in Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper explores the notions and issues of professionalism and professional development of English teachers in Indonesia. The paper was based on some of the findings of a fieldwork conducted in 2007, in which 46 English teachers were interviewed. The aim of the study was to investigate the nature of professionalism as perceived by Indonesian EFL teachers. Findings from interview data suggest that English teacher professionalism in Indonesia is unique, is often different from what is constructed by common literature on teacher professionalism, and could be elaborated in terms of five areas. Those areas are: (1) motives for entering the profession, (2) teaching rewards, (3) the wider society's views about teaching profession, (4) English teachers' career progression, and (5) teachers' perceptions on the meaning of professional EFL teachers. Discussions in this article will only focus on the first two areas. In addition, the paper will also examine how motives for entering the profession and teaching rewards bring an impact on one's professional development.

Keywords: Teacher professionalism, professional development, Indonesian EFL teachers

Introduction

Like many other countries, Indonesia has experienced educational reforms and changes over the past few decades. A thorough study of the national education system before and after the country's independence in 1945 shows progress and decline of education as well as a history of changes (Purwadi & Muljoatmodjo, 2000; Tilaar, 1995; World Bank, 1998; World Bank, 2004). Curriculum decentralisation in 1994 (Bjork, 2003), school-based management reform following the release of Decentralisation Laws at the beginning of the year 2000 (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006), education standardisation through national examination (Nuridin, 2006), and the release of a new law on teacher professionalism in 2005 (Lie, 2006) are examples of the changes that have been taking place.

Studies have also shown that imposed educational changes in Indonesia directly and indirectly influence the teaching force and teacher professionalism (English teachers included), as it is the teachers who implement the policy at the grassroots level (Budiwalujo, 2006; Hadiyanto & Subijanto, 2003; Hanafie, 2007). Bjork's (2003) ethnographic fieldwork in six junior high schools in East Java, for instance, has led him to conclude that in responding to mandated curriculum decentralisation reform, Indonesian teachers did not show their enthusiasm for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons is the perceived culture of public-serving teachers who, for many decades, have been used to serving and being loyal to the government, and not to education itself. The emphasis so far has been on teachers as government employees rather than as professional educators. In addition, public-serving teachers have been accustomed to receiving and following orders from the centre rather than actively participating in professional learning opportunities or being creative and innovative. This study is one example of how imposed educational changes affect Indonesian teachers and how they perceive their professionalism (Bjork, 2003).

Findings from an earlier study by Yuwono (2005) suggest that most English teachers in Indonesia are aware of the importance of developing and learning as professionals as well as coping and/or complying with the recent changes in education system or any changes in English curriculum and ELT practices. However, the realities of teachers' day-to-day lives at the local/school level often provide a

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different picture: teachers are forced to work in isolation and with inadequate support from policymakers and/or other related stakeholders. Such a condition could eventually lead to English teachers' scepticism, confusion, ignorance, reluctance, unwillingness, or even resistance instead of growing as professionals (Yuwono, 2005).

This paper intends to explore how English teachers in Indonesia define and construct their professionalism and their ongoing professional development amidst recent changes and difficulties.

English teacher professionalism and professional development: A brief review

Professionalism and professional development programs for English teachers are undoubtedly desirable and important in all ELT contexts throughout the world, particularly given the fact that English is now the preferred language of communication in the fields of science, communication, technology, trade and education (Senior, 2006; Walker, 2001). This era of globalisation has resulted in the further spread of English as an international language. Recent economic and employment trends and developments have also changed the way English is used (e.g. Warschauer, 2000). Such trends, as a result, have led to the changing roles of English teachers, their professionalism, as well as types of professional development programs and learning opportunities that English teachers might need. Today's English teachers cannot escape the implications of globalisation. Language teachers, for example, must now be able to reconceptualise how they conceive of the link between language and culture. In addition, there is an urgent need for teachers of English 'to be able to write persuasively, critically interpret and analyse information, and carry out complex negotiations and collaborations in English' (Warschauer, 2000, p. 518).

In another discussion, Hedgcock (2002) adds that professional language teachers should be 'grammatically, sociolinguistically, discursively, and strategically proficient' in the target language (p. 301). Apart from that, such teachers must have awareness about language learners, processes of learning, approaches to classroom instruction (also in Alatis, 2005), as well as adequate experience and practice in the target language. What is also perceived as crucial for second or foreign language

teachers is interactions with the so-called 'language education field' (p. 301) and communications with fellow language teaching professionals. Such interactions and communication, as Hedgcock further reviews, can be done through informal chats, formal discussions, presentation in conferences and/or seminars, email messages with other teachers, and publications of research papers (Hedgcock, 2002).

It is perhaps not easy to list what professional English language teachers must possess or how they should develop as professionals. For example, there are still debates on whether or not native speakers make better language teachers than non-native speakers. Shin (2008), for instance, has claimed that while native speakers do have the proficiency in the target language, such proficiency alone is not sufficient qualification for teaching positions – they should have teaching competency. At the same time, however, English teachers who are non-native speakers are required to possess a high level of written and oral proficiency in the language as well as competency in teaching should they want to be considered as professional English teachers.

It is not the aim of this paper to further elaborate matters related to expected and/or required characteristics of the so-called professional English teachers. This is because the concept of ELT teacher professionalism itself is not easy to define and is constantly changing (Oder, 2008). Also, the aim of the study is to investigate English teacher professionalism within the context of Indonesian education – a context which is far from ideal and is characterised with a lot of complex realities, limitations and obstacles in its classroom. Perhaps for Indonesian context, English teachers – following Walker's (2001) brief summary - are considered to be 'professional' if they at least: (1) have educational qualifications, (2) have good subject-matter knowledge, and (3) are skilled practitioners in the classroom.

The section following discusses common conditions of English teachers in Indonesia.

English teachers in Indonesia: Some problems and issues

English is perhaps a relatively new language for Indonesia given it was only introduced in the early 1950s, not long after the country's independence. For more than five decades, the teaching of English has always been challenging (Nur, 2003).

Problems faced years ago in terms of choice of approaches, teachers' qualifications and material designs still seem to be present nowadays.

Since English was first introduced as a compulsory foreign language, the facts from classrooms and schools are quite intriguing. For example, Dardjowidjojo (2000) calculated the contact hours Indonesian secondary students spend in learning English at school for four years. By the time a student graduates from the senior high school, he/she will have studied English for 606 hours. With this amount of time spent at secondary schools, it is expected that high school graduates will be able to use the language fairly well. Sadly, this is mostly not the case as many high school graduates are not as 'fairly' good as they are expected to be (Dardjowidjojo, 2000). Moreover, as Jazadi (2000) has also noticed, Indonesian learners are not sufficiently exposed to non-classroom types of discourse. As a result, despite the sufficient contact hours, many students are still unable to communicate in English well when they finish their high school.

With regard to English teachers, recent studies on the conditions of ELT practices and English teachers in Indonesia conducted in Java show surprising if not worrying facts from English classrooms, which indicate that English teachers have not themselves mastered the language they are teaching (Dardjowidjojo, 2000). Since Java is the most important (hence, the most advanced) island of the country, one can only imagine what the situations in remote places outside Java would be like. Also, in most cases, English teachers in Indonesia depend a lot on textbooks and curriculum guidelines but often without having full understanding of the philosophy behind those materials or methods. In other words, many of them still have the so-called 'new-textbook old-method' attitude (Dardjowidjojo, 2000).

Although more studies still need to be conducted, the facts from English classrooms indicate that ELT practices in Indonesia at the very lowest level (i.e. the classroom level) have not been successful. Research findings, as well as inputs and criticism from ELT practitioners and other educators, have shown that many aspects need to be fixed in English classrooms, including the teachers. Considering the problems and conditions that exist in the classrooms, English teacher professionalism in Indonesia needs to be examined carefully and redefined – hence this study.

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The study

Discussions in this paper are based on a study conducted in the town of Salatiga in Indonesia. Forty-six English teachers who worked at various types of secondary schools participated in the study (i.e. public schools, private schools, Islamic schools, and community-based school). Initially, the study aimed at investigating the perceptions and beliefs of those teachers on the issues of teacher professionalism and professional development. Semi-structured interview method, which consisted of a predetermined set of questions, was the main data gathering tool. The interviews ranged from 20 to 70 minutes and were undertaken in Indonesian as the researcher is a native-speaker of Indonesian. Data from those interviews were then transcribed. They were later organised, managed, retrieved and coded with the help of NVivo 7 software (Bazeley, 2007). The development of themes and categories that emerged from interview data, as well as the refinement of those categories, were also done with the assistance of the software. The data were then translated and presented in English. Some of the findings are discussed below.

The findings

The paper argues that, based on the data obtained from interviews with 46 teachers, 'professionalism' may be perceived and constructed differently by English teachers in Indonesia even though discussions on professionalism in general cannot be separated from dimensions of profession such as knowledge, autonomy and responsibility as theorised by Western scholars (e.g. Hoyle & John, 1995).

Findings of the current study suggest that English teacher professionalism in Indonesia can be elaborated in terms of five areas, namely motives for entering the profession, teaching rewards, the society's views about the profession, teachers' career progression, and the perceptions of teachers and principals on the meaning of professional EFL teachers. This paper, however, only focuses on the area of motives and rewards, and how those two impacted upon professional development.

Motives for entering the profession

Reasons for entering the teaching profession may vary. Those reasons nevertheless impact on how someone views the profession and how one is committed

to the profession. For some, becoming a teacher is a passion. For others, the reasons may include financial burden, influence from families, religious calling, and even the perceived roles and positions of women in the society. In addition, as the data were sourced from English teachers, one of the motives of becoming a teacher appears to be the love of the English language.

As revealed in the data, some teachers did want to enter the profession in the first place because they loved teaching; ten participants expressed their love and passion for teaching even before they entered the profession. For example, Ms. Lesti, a young teacher from Public School 3, was committed to the profession despite the fact that she was only a part-timer (hence low in income) and that the school she was working at the time of the study was not supportive for novice teachers. In answer to the question about why she wanted to be a teacher, she said:

> "I enjoy the profession. I believe that it is a challenging profession but I love it. I've always wanted to be a teacher. That's why I chose to enter the teachers' training college after I finished high school."

A similar view was expressed by other teachers such as Ms. Rika from Islamic School 1 and Mr. Yato from Public School 3, who said that they have always wanted to be a teacher since they were little and have always enjoyed being a teacher since.

Other teachers, however, admitted that they fell in love with the profession and became committed to it after they entered the profession. In other words, teaching was not their chosen path in the first place. In answering the question on why they entered the teaching profession, two teachers said:

> "Teaching was actually not my goal in life; I didn't intend to become a teacher. But after dealing with students for some time, I must say I fell in love with the profession. Now I always feel satisfied whenever I can make my students understand after I explain things to them or whenever I can apply new methods in class successfully."
> (Ms. Nana, a senior teacher at Public School 5)

> "I didn't want to be a teacher at first but now I really like it. I love teaching. Moreover, I learn that my future as a teacher isn't that bad after all – I can live with my salary and I'll get my pension when I retire."
> (Mr. Susilo, a young teacher at Public School 6)

What is expressed by Mr. Susilo may be in contrast with the perceived notion of Indonesian teachers as being underpaid. However, Mr. Susilo is young, single and

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still lives with his parents in a relatively small town; he thus does not need to support anyone else but himself. Interviews with married teachers with children, however, do tell different stories and at some point reflect the condition of teachers as being underpaid. Ms. Nindi, for instance, stated the following when asked about salaries for Indonesian teachers:

> "I think teachers' salaries in Indonesia are still low, particularly given the fact that living cost is really high nowadays. Education for our children is also very expensive now. It's ironic if we think about it; teachers are always expected to deliver their best for their students yet at the same time many of them cannot afford the cost of education of their own children. Often it's not financially feasible for us to pay for our kids' education."
>
> (Ms. Nindi, a teacher at Public School 1)

Despite the relatively low financial reward, most of the teachers interviewed did not see it as a motive to leave the profession or change to another profession. Only two teachers in particular, Mr. Sami from Private School 6 and Ms. Mawar from Private School 8, said that they were still open to other career possibilities even though they enjoyed their teaching job at the moment; the former because he had a young family and thus needed more money, and the latter because she was still young and unmarried and hence she loved to try new challenges. Other teachers, however, confirmed that they would stay in the profession. When asked for her future plans for example, Ms. Kasih, a young part-timer who worked at three different schools, mentioned that:

> "I don't know if I'll still be teaching here given I'm only a part-timer. But I'll always be a teacher – here or elsewhere. I love teaching and I don't think I'm interested in another job other than teaching."
>
> (Ms. Kasih, a teacher at Private School 5)

The so-referred 'religious calling or duty' is another reason why one wants to become a teacher. Teachers teaching at Islamic and Protestant schools usually cited this motive as their reason of entering the profession in the first place. Two teachers had a similar answer when asked why they became a teacher:

> "I believe that by teaching I'm serving Allah. It's my duty as His follower. I have this satisfaction that I get from teaching – it's not the financial reward that matters most for me."
>
> (Ms. Dwi, a teacher at Private School 3)

> "Teaching is part of my ministry duties as Christian to serve and love others, particularly the marginalised. That's why I took the teaching position in this school. I actually believe that once you decided to choose this teaching path, you must show your total commitment and professionalism. Unfortunately this is one thing that I can't do nowadays and I feel guilty about it sometimes."
>
> (Mr. Sami, a teacher at Private School 6)

Mr. Sami, however, expressed his regret for not being able to show the total commitment which he used to have a couple of years ago. This is because he is now a married man with a baby and, despite his idealism (i.e. financial reward is not important), family must now come first. He thus has to make teaching as his second job and opens his own business. This, as a result, has affected his professionalism as he now has limited time, money and energy to learn or join a professional development activity, for instance.

Obtaining 'fast money' due to financial burden is another reason why someone wants to be a teacher, particularly because English teachers are in high demand nowadays since English is one of the subjects included in the national exam. Six teachers frankly cited economic reasons as their initial motive to be English teachers. With regard to such a motive, a teacher at an alternative school was quoted as saying the following,

> "Frankly speaking, even though I enjoy teaching, I became an English teacher mainly because of economic reason. Besides teaching in this school, I can easily give private English tutorial to many other students from different schools."   (Mr. Hatta, a teacher at Alternative School 1)

Five other teachers who had the same motive came from public schools. They entered the teaching profession as a result of financial burden. One of these teachers stated,

> "To be honest, teaching was never my goal – I'm never really into teaching, even now. I became a teacher because I desperately needed a job at that time. I graduated in 1997 and business was no good due to the monetary crisis so I decided to apply for a position as a public servant; I passed the tests and here I am now. But my interest was more on business than education."   (Mr. Nano, a teacher at Public School 2)

Mr. Nano further admitted that he was often reluctant to improve his knowledge and pedagogical skills because his main interest was not in teaching. In his case, the situation was made worse because he was tired of dealing with the mundane but massive administrative work as a teacher and other education bureaucracies. On top

of that, he had to teach students whose motivation to learn a foreign language was relatively low.

A similar situation occurred with Mr. Hamid, a much more senior teacher who has been teaching for more than 30 years. He became a teacher because of financial burdens and because his parents could not afford to pay education fees anymore. Three decades ago Indonesia was short of teachers; the number of public servant teachers could not meet the high enrolment for primary and secondary schooling. To solve the problem, the government opened a one-year teachers' training program for high school graduates. Answering the question about his initial motive for becoming a teacher, Mr. Hamid said,

> "Actually I never dreamt of being a teacher. When I graduated from high school, going to university was not an option at all – my parents would never be able to afford it. We suffered from severe financial problem. That's why I decided to enter the program and I chose English. After one year I was qualified to teach English for primary and secondary levels - this solved our financial situation."
>
> (Mr. Hamid, a teacher at Public School 4)

Mr. Harto, a teacher at Public School 3 who is at the same time a senior English teacher, also became a teacher due to financial hardship. His first goal was to join the military but in late 1970s the government offered scholarships for high school graduates who would like to be teachers. Moreover, they would automatically be guaranteed positions as public servants as soon as they finished their studies at the teachers' training college. Although he had never wanted to be a teacher, Mr. Harto did take the offer because the profession did not only earn him money but also long-term security as a public servant.

Unlike Mr. Nano, Mr. Hamid eventually found his passion in teaching after decades of interacting with children. However, he realised that his 'quick teacher education' meant that he was perhaps not professional enough to be an English teacher at present time and that he had to actively join professional development programs. Nevertheless, he felt that he was too old to develop as professionals or to learn more to enhance his professionalism. He further explained why he was reluctant to grow:

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> "I'm not interested in learning anymore because I'm too old; I'm not as sharp as I used to be. Career wise, I don't have the intention to progress, so what's the point of developing?"
>
> (Mr. Hamid, a teacher at Public School 4)

Mr. Hamid, despite his unquestioned commitment and passion to the teaching profession, perhaps reflects one of the most common conditions of the country's teaching force: being underqualified (e.g. Naja, 2006; Prasetyo, 2006).

For some female teachers, the perceived (and expected) role and position of women in the society seemed to be their initial motive of becoming a teacher. Although this study does not include discussions on the anthropological and cultural perspectives of gender in Indonesia, according to some participants Indonesian women are expected to look after their husbands and children. Thus teaching is a convenient job for them should they need to juggle their family and career. Below are three female teachers' comments on answering the interview question about their reasons for becoming a teacher:

> "I chose this profession because as a woman I realised that one day I'd get married and have kids. By becoming a teacher, I would have a lot of time for my family. For example, if my kids are on holidays, so am I."
>
> (Ms. Nindi, a teacher at Public School 1)

> "Teaching was not my first job. After I graduated from university I worked in an export-import company because I had a degree in English language. But this job was no longer suitable for me once I got married since I found it hard to look after my husband and my baby while at the same time I had to work full time. That's why I decided to become an English teacher because as a teacher I have more free time."
>
> (Ms. Tiara, a teacher at Public School 6)

> "I'm not married yet but I think being a teacher is convenient for a married woman. I can imagine myself being able to focus both on my family and my teaching career. This is because I believe I don't have to spend too much time in this profession. For example, I can finish working by 2 pm – it means I'll still have plenty of time for my family."
>
> (Ms. Juli, a teacher at Public School 6)

While Ms. Juli has anticipated her future life as a married woman who probably needs to juggle her family and career, for two other young teachers the reason behind their intention to enter the teaching profession was simply because they did not want

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to work in an office. Below are their comments with regard to their reason of why they were interested in the teaching profession:

> "As a graduate from an English Department, I think being an English teacher is more enjoyable than working as a secretary in a foreign company, for example. A teacher deals with people, whereas those working in an office mostly deal with non-living beings."   (Ms. Hida, a teacher at Public School 3)

> "At this point, I haven't really decided whether or not I'll like the teaching profession – I'm still young and have lots of opportunities. But if I were to choose between working in an office or teaching, I'd choose the latter. I don't think I can stand working all day in an office."
>   (Ms. Mawar, a teacher at Private School 8)

Being English teachers, it is the love of the language that drove some of the participants to be teachers. The sole passion for English language (and not so much for the teaching profession) made those teachers attribute their professionalism to their oral and written skills in the language rather than pedagogical knowledge and skills that a teacher should also possess. Mr Ivan, a novice teacher at Islamic School 2, explicitly stated that professional English teachers are those who can communicate well in English with native speakers and who have good knowledge in English grammar. He admitted that with regard to his speaking skill, he considered himself as being 'a professional teacher'. Nevertheless, as he further stated, he did not know quite a lot about recent issues in education and was not interested in them. For his further development as a teacher he simply said, "[…] as long as it is related directly to English language, I'm always willing to learn and improve."

A similar attitude was expressed by Mr. Hamid, a teacher at Public School 4, who implied that he loved the language more than he loved the profession, "If I did not teach English, I doubted if I would be interested in teaching at all." For him, a professional English teacher is someone who should first fall in love with the language, and his idea of enhancing professionalism is "[…] by reading English newspapers or watching English TV shows to enrich your vocabulary."

Motives or reasons for entering the teaching profession, as acknowledged by Mr. Aman (a principal at Public School 4), does determine one's professionalism. Those who choose the profession because they love teaching will not hesitate to improve themselves and continue their learning. Unfortunately, based on one participant's critical observation, many Indonesian teachers, particularly public

servants, become teachers because they were sometimes desperate and could not find positions elsewhere. When asked to comment about the reasons why someone wanted to be a teacher, he stated:

> "I believe people become teachers for different reasons. But I've noticed that a lot of teachers, particularly those who are public servants, entered the profession for the wrong reason; they became teachers because they were not accepted anywhere else. Such a motive obviously determines their long-term professional work."
>
> (Mr. Suto, a principal at Private School 6)

For the type of teachers as described by Mr. Suto, their professionalism is linked to their experience: the longer they stay in the job, the more experienced and hence the better teachers they are. This is regardless of their commitment, passion for teaching, professional and pedagogical knowledge and competence, real performance in class, or whether or not they have shown their enthusiasm and willingness to continually learn.

Rewards for teaching: How much is the profession valued?

It is commonly known that in general, Indonesian teachers are undervalued and underpaid (e.g. Alwasilah, 2000; Naja, 2006; Prasetyo, 2006). The data from the fieldwork suggest that such a condition does exist. Most teachers who participated in the current study admitted that the teaching profession and their professionalism are not yet properly rewarded despite the hard and massive work that they have to perform daily and the high expectations from parents and society that they have to endure. This, as a result, has further affected their professional growth.

Three teachers expressed their concerns with regard to rewards, stating that it is sad that the teaching profession in Indonesia is even less valued than paramedics, nurses or bank clerks. They made the following comments when asked about the rewards for the teaching profession in Indonesia:

> "In general, the reward for the teaching profession in this country is still far from being satisfactory. The salary base for all public servants is actually the same, provided that they belong to the same rank. However, the incentives for teachers are far less than incentives for other professions such as nurses and bank clerks. I can understand if we receive less than doctors yet I can't understand why nurses or bank clerks are valued more than teachers!"
>
> (Mr. Yato, a teacher at Public School 3)

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"I think the financial reward that Indonesian teachers receive is still very little. We don't get much incentive. For example, I'm only paid 1,000 Rupiah (15 cents) per hour for doing personal development and 40,000 Rupiah (AUS$ 5.00) per month for supervising extra curricular activities."   (Mr. Tono, a teacher at Public School 5)

"In general, the financial reward is very concerning. But the situation is even worse for a part-timer like me. I have to work hard but am only paid 11,000 Rupiah (AUS$ 1.30) per hour."
                    (Ms. Risa, a teacher at Islamic School 1)

A number of those interviewed, however, felt that financial reward should not be an issue for a teacher. Regardless of the reward, teachers should always be professional. Financial rewards for teaching profession, according to some of the participants, are 'relative' – it is enough if one thinks it is enough, but is always insufficient if one is never satisfied. Two teachers from private schools made the comments about their salaries:

"I think the key is being thankful for whatever we get. Of course we'll always think Indonesia teachers are not properly rewarded if we keep comparing ourselves with teachers from other countries, such as Japan and Malaysia. Instead, we have to compare what we are getting now and what teachers in the past received. I believe that if we keep comparing with other countries or other professions, we will feel that our rewards are too little. The fact is, it is enough if we think it's enough."
                    (Ms. Adina, a teacher at Private School 2)

"Although some people think that teachers only receive very little salary, I believe as teachers we shouldn't think about money. The bottom line is we must love the profession no matter how much we are awarded. I personally see teaching as my hobby and as a Christian, it is also my act to serve others. I have been in the profession for more than 30 years and have always been thankful for what I get even though I'm only a part-timer and work at a marginalised school. I'm sure what is more important is the reward that you'll eventually get in heaven, not on earth."   (Mr. Dewa, a teacher at Private School 1)

Moreover, more rewards do not automatically guarantee one's professionalism, as observed by one teacher when asked about the relation between increased reward and increased professionalism:

"I don't think more financial reward means better performance or more professional. It all depends on the teachers' personal characters – that is, whether or not they are willing to improve themselves[…]"
                    (Mr. Suto, a teacher at Private School 6)

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Based on the interviews during the fieldwork, the condition of Indonesian teachers as being poorly paid is fairly evident. It is understandable why teachers complained and expressed their concerns, particularly because these days they are expected to work twice as hard in order to prepare their students to face the standardised national examination. Two teachers at an Islamic school, for example, said that often they had to stay longer at school because they had to drill their third-grade students with grammar exercises to prepare them for the national examination.

Due to the low salary, the phenomenon of Indonesian teachers taking a second job seems to be a common practice. More than half of the teachers interviewed admitted that they had a second job. The job they mentioned was mainly doing/providing private tutorials outside school hours for students from other schools. This is because English lessons are in high demand (among high school students) as it is one of the compulsory subjects included in the national examination. Usually those teachers conduct their private tutorials in the afternoon. In addition, part-time teachers who are still seeking permanent appointment usually teach at two or three different schools or institutions at the same time. One part-time teacher at Islamic School 1 admitted that he taught at three different schools in one week and had had more than 30 teaching hours as a result. Such a condition obviously affects teacher professionalism and professional development as they can no longer concentrate fully on their main duties at school, let alone participate in professional development programs or other learning opportunities. In Mr. Adi's case, he could no longer join the discussion forum for English teachers held every Tuesday because he had to teach on that day.

At the same time, a number those interviewed also believed that a condition of poor pay should not be a reason for a teacher to act 'unprofessionally'; improving students' learning outcomes should be the priority and thus teachers should enhance their professionalism regardless of the financial rewards. It is nevertheless a worrying picture for the country's long-term teaching force if teachers often have to bear all the cost in order to be professional, or if they are not sufficiently rewarded.

Concluding Remarks

The paper has explored how English teachers in Indonesia perceive and construct their professionalism and professional development in terms of their motives of becoming a teacher in the first place and the rewards that Indonesian teachers normally receive. In sum, the notions of the English language teacher professionalism are indeed related to one's initial motives for entering the teaching profession. These motives include genuine passion for teaching, religious duties, financial hardship, the love for English language, perceived roles of women, or failure to enter other professions. Such motives bring implications to teachers' professionalism and their further growth. The concepts of teacher professionalism are closely linked to autonomy, professional judgment, engagement with matters of curriculum and assessment, collaboration with others, power sharing with other stakeholders, and continuous learning (e.g. Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). Someone who becomes an English teacher because of their sole passion for the language, for example, is perhaps not enthusiastic or willing to engage with curriculum and other pedagogical matters. Those who enter the profession in order to serve God and other people regardless of their knowledge or academic qualifications may face problems to exercise their professional judgment. Elsewhere, female teachers, who are usually expected to look after and care for their families at the same time, may feel hesitant or face dilemma to actively join professional development program or to conduct further learning if such program or learning takes their time off their families.

With regard to teaching rewards, receiving a relatively low financial reward in the Indonesian teaching service does affect English teachers' day-to-day teaching duties. This will in turn have implications on their professionalism and their further professional development, particularly if those teachers have to take a second job or teach many hours per day or per week. As a result of such a condition, for instance, many English teachers will have restricted time and energy to have professional discussions with their colleagues or conduct their own learning for their professional growth.

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A Socio-pedagogic Theory of Classroom Practice
to Support Language Teacher Development in Asia

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Abstract

This paper describes a two-phase study conducted in Australia that led to the development of a teacher-generated theory of classroom practice. In the first phase grounded theory development procedures were used to collect, examine and categorize qualitative data gathered through extended teacher interviews (n = 28) until a conceptual framework supported by research insights from social psychology was identified. In the second phase the social-psychological development over time of eight classes of adult language learners was documented through weekly teacher interviews (n = 80), ongoing classroom observations (240 hours), and student interviews (n = 140). The data were later supplemented by three further studies in which extended interviews were conducted with an additional 65 teachers working in a wider range of contexts.

The socio-pedagogic theory that emerged from the research proposes that effective classroom teaching involves not only teaching content in a proficient manner but also developing a relationship with the class in such a way that teaching and learning become a collective, collaborative endeavour in which the overall atmosphere of the

class lifts the performance of individuals. This concept is encapsulated in the term 'class-centred teaching'.

The paper concludes by suggesting that the notion of class-centred teaching may be a useful means of encouraging locally-trained language teachers in the Asian region to reflect upon their current teaching and class management practices and to modify them in ways that are congruent with their personal belief systems and appropriate for their local educational contexts.

1. Introduction

It is now widely accepted that English has established a dominant position as the lingua franca in our increasingly interconnected world. As a result the demand for English language tuition has increased exponentially in countries around the globe. In China approximately 350 million Chinese are currently learning English (Li, 2006, quoting information from a 2005 article in the *China Daily*).

The need to expand the English language and teaching skills of locally-trained teachers of English to help students develop proficiency in English is recognised throughout the Asian region. Recent debate has focused on methodology, with intense discussion in the pages of the *English Language Teaching Journal* on whether or not initiatives should be taken to implement the precepts of the communicative approach in countries in the region (Ha, 2004; Hiep, 2005; Hu, 2005; Liao, 2004). Jarvis and Atsilarat (2006) support Bax's call for a paradigm shift from a communicative to a context-based approach in the Asian region.

It is generally acknowledged that communicative language teaching (CLT) initiatives in a range of countries have either been unsuccessful or at best enjoyed limited – and often temporary - success. Orafi and Borg (2009) provide a comprehensive review of studies that have shown that the uptake of an educational innovation can be limited when it is not congruent with and does not take into consideration the cognitive and contextual realities of teachers' work. In an article that gives a historical overview of major attempts to reform secondary school English language teaching methods in

Japan, Smith and Imura (2004) conclude that reforms which ignore local contexts and conditions have largely failed in the past and are likely to fail in the future.

What is the best way forward? Might it be preferable to approach the problem of pedagogic reform in the region by reaching a deeper understanding of what quality teaching is all about – rather than by assuming that communicative language teaching represents best practice and seeking to implement it in contexts for which it was not designed?

2. Background

A number of researchers in the field of second language acquisition have drawn attention to the lack of overall theoretical frameworks for understanding classroom processes (Allwright, 1988; Chaudron, 1988; Mitchell, 1985), while teacher educators have frequently lamented the ever-present gap between theory and practice (Ramani, 1990, Richards & Nunan, 1990, Widdowson, 1990). In an early article Widdowson (1984) suggested that fostering dependence on teaching techniques alone, without at the same time developing awareness of how technique relates to theoretical principles, militates against healthy development in the ELT profession. Kumaravadivelu (2001, p. 541) argues for a pedagogy of practicality that aims for a teacher-generated theory of practice. In his view no theory of practice can be useful and usable unless it is generated through practice itself.

Over the past 25 years there has been growing recognition of the fact that the social context in which language learning takes place cannot be ignored. In a seminal article Breen (1986) drew inspiration from the anthropologist Malinowski, likening language classrooms to coral gardens and calling for them to be understood in all their richness and complexity. Much recent research has adopted a social constructivist view of language classrooms which emphasises the dynamic nature of the interplay between learners and their peers and their teachers and others with whom they interact (Brown, 2000, p. 286). However, much classroom-based research has continued to focus narrowly on the relationship between teaching and learning and to pay little

attention to the overall classroom context within which the teaching and learning occur.

This paper describes how a study that took a holistic view of classroom teaching and learning and that sought to understand the relationship between a wide number of classroom variables resulted in the formulation of an explanatory theory of classroom practice known as 'class-centred teaching'.

3. The study

3.1 Phase One: the development of a conceptual framework

The objective of this phase was to answer a broadly-framed research question surrounding the nature of good language classes. Why is it that language teachers are so readily able to distinguish between classes that are a pleasure to teach and those that are a struggle? What precisely do language teachers mean when they say that certain classes are 'good'? Do they simply mean that such classes contain compliant, hard-working, high achieving students - or do they mean something more fundamental?

In order to answer this question it was decided to follow the precepts of grounded theory development. Grounded theory is a well-established research approach in nursing, a field of endeavour that is similar to teaching in that it consists of large numbers of practitioners working at the grass-roots level whose challenges are not always recognised and whose practical expertise is often neither valued nor fully understood. Chenitz and Swanson (1986, p. 3) define grounded theory as a highly systematic approach for the collection and analysis of qualitative data for the purpose of developing explanatory theory that furthers the understanding of social and psychological phenomena.

For the study 28 language teachers working in a single institution in Australia completed open-ended questionnaires and were then interviewed individually for approximately 45 minutes each. Grounded theory development procedures, as

outlined by Strauss & Corbin (1998), were followed. See Senior (1999, p. 15-34, or 2006a, p. 17-30) for a description of the strategies used in this particular study.

The results of Phase One were unambiguous. For all informants the essence of good classes was that they functioned in a cohesive manner, the students within them responding in a unified way to the teacher's initiatives and influencing others through their collective behaviour to do likewise.

Only when the notion of language classes functioning as groups had been established was the group dynamics literature explored. The purpose was to identify notions that would enable a deeper understanding to be reached of how language classes developed (or failed to develop) a spirit of cohesion. The following notions were identified as being particularly relevant to the study (Senior 1999, p. 35-43):

(1) Small groups progressing through different stages of development towards a stage of maximum productivity;

(2) A variety of group members playing leadership roles in the social evolution of the group (leadership not being the sole prerogative of the assigned group leader);

(3) Two different kinds of roles being equally important: group task roles (that enable the group to progress towards the achievement of group goals), and group maintenance roles (that help the group develop and then maintain a sense of togetherness).

The above notions were used to guide the data collection in the second phase of the study.

3.2 Phase Two: The social evolution of class groups

The second phase documented the social evolution of eight intensive English language classes held in five different institutions in an Australian city. The aim of the study was to identify and describe the social patterns and processes that appeared to help (or hinder) the development of class cohesion. The courses were intensive, the

teachers having between 13 and 20 contact hours with their classes each week. The classes that were selected were as varied as possible in terms of language level (beginners to advanced), size (ranging from 10 to 20 students), student type (four of the classes containing migrant and the other four containing fee-paying students), type of institution, focus of course and so on (Senior, 1999, p. 92-140). The data were gathered through weekly observations and weekly teacher interviews conducted for the duration of each ten-week course, supplemented by student questionnaires and interviews (Senior, 1999, p. 61-91).

The classes were multicultural, with students required to interact in English with classmates from a range of national, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Forty eight per cent of the students in the eight classes came from the Asian region, with the following countries represented (in descending order of student numbers): Korea, China, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Burma, Malaysia and Hong Kong. The remaining students came from a range of countries around the world. The classes were unbalanced in the sense that in some the majority of the students came from a single country, in others two nationality groups predominated, while in others there was an eclectic mix.

All the teachers in the study taught communicatively, requiring their students to engage in pair work, group work or whole-class communication activities for at least part of each lesson. However, they interpreted the communicative approach individualistically and implemented it in strikingly different ways (Senior, 1999, p. 115-118), routinely supplementing their courses with personally-selected additional materials. All the teachers used an eclectic mix of teaching techniques, with some using those associated with pre-communicative teaching methodologies, including substitution exercises and chorus work.

The students provided a range of illuminating insights into their learning experiences in communicative classrooms. Many were astonished and some embarrassed by the kinds of tasks they were required to perform – which clearly confounded not only their expectations about what classroom language teaching and learning would

involve but also their assumptions about how linguistic proficiency is most effectively developed (Senior, 1999, p. 155-158 and 443-444). Although most students interacted willingly with their peers once they understood the purpose of the task (and were convinced of its utility), certain students from both European and Asian countries continued to be reluctant to engage in certain interactive tasks.

The classroom behaviour of the students in the eight classes revealed the widest possible range of individual personalities, linguistic strengths and weaknesses, short and long-term goals, home circumstances and so on. The behaviour of certain students was clearly influenced by personal histories (particularly if they were refugees), by individual concerns and often by high expectations for how much language they could learn within a short space of time (Senior, 1999, p. 118-140). There was no evidence of students from any country or region of the world behaving in uniformly similar ways - such as students from Asian countries displaying the characteristics of the stereotypical 'Asian learner'. Individuals with extroverted personalities – regardless of their country of origin - often emerged as natural class leaders who were both supportive of and valued by their teachers (Senior, 1999, p. 187-191).

For the teachers, the establishment of learning environments in which individuals felt relaxed and safe was of paramount importance. They believed that students would be more likely to interact in the target language and to participate more fully in tasks if they considered that their efforts to communicate in the target language would be received favourably by a classroom community characterized by mutual support and trust. Students themselves were readily able to identify the prevailing atmosphere of each class (Senior 2006a, p. 264). For a description of how western-trained language teachers typically set about creating the classroom climates that they consider conducive to language learning see Senior (1999, p. 147 and 160-186), or Senior (2006a, p. 79-101).

Despite the teachers' efforts a significant number of the students in the various classes were disappointed by their personal rates of progress – even when assured that

their fluency was improving because they were speaking more readily in class. In two of the classes a significant number of students from both Asian and European countries believed that the teaching was not sufficiently rigorous and that they could have learnt more had they been taught in more traditional ways. Certain individuals in the remaining classes held similar opinions. It is difficult, of course, for students to make their views known to their teachers for a variety of reasons, including common courtesy and diffidence about providing feedback to those in authority.

A key finding related to how the teachers positioned themselves in their classes. Having established rapport - a practice that many regarded as a necessary precondition for successful classroom teaching and learning (Senior, 2006a, p. 264-266) - the teachers would often temporarily switch roles, functioning as integral members of their class groups one moment (laughing alongside the class at something amusing, for example), and reverting to more traditional pedagogic roles the next (when outlining behavioural expectations, giving instructions and so on) (Senior, 1999, p. 33, 162-164). By behaving informally in their classes from time to time - and showing that they valued spontaneous student responses - the teachers encouraged their classes to join with them in the collaborative endeavour of teaching and learning. (If all spontaneous behaviour is ignored or frowned upon, social processes may lead students to develop into a cohesive group united against their teacher). For further discussion of issues of authority see Senior (1999, p. 284-286) or Senior (2008b).

Despite the fact that they were teaching adults the teachers faced the same range of problems as teachers everywhere: students being reluctant to do what is required, individuals behaving in challenging ways, groups of students behaving inappropriately, the class becoming over-excited and so on. See Senior (1999, p. 197-213) for a description of the range of low-key techniques that the teachers in the study routinely used to deal with behaviour that they considered inappropriate.

Communicative classrooms containing students from a range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds provide contexts for an additional range of problems that can

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impede the teaching and learning process: nationality groups forming into cliques, cultural stereotypes being reinforced, communicative tasks providing students with the opportunity to use the target language in ways that upset classmates and so on. The majority of the teachers were sensitive to classroom 'vibes' and took steps to restore the social equilibrium of their class groups when they sensed that action was necessary. Individual teachers had preferred strategies for dealing with crises of an interpersonal, intercultural or intra-cultural nature. See Senior (1999, p. 278-293) for a description of some of the incidents that occurred and how the teachers dealt with them (not always successfully).

The findings of the study revealed that each class group is a unique social entity that evolves as a result of the interaction between a multiplicity of interpersonal and contextual factors that combine in unpredictable ways. All but one of the teachers behaved for the most part in ways that were likely to lead to the development and maintenance of a spirit of social cohesion within their class groups. Teachers whose classes responded in an enthusiastic, collective manner to their personalities and teaching styles reported lifting their own performance and teaching in more energetic, creative and engaging ways (Senior, 2006a, p. 159-163).

Three additional studies comprising extended interviews with a further 65 teachers were subsequently conducted (described as Studies Three, Four and Five in Senior, 2006a, p. 7-8). The aims of these studies were: (1) to validate the findings from Phases One and Two of the study by exploring the insights so far gained and establishing the degree to which they resonated with language teachers teaching in alternative settings; and (2) to complete the gaps in the emerging jigsaw-puzzle of the experience of language teaching in a western country at the turn of the century. The experiences, insights and classroom practices reported by these additional informants were integrated into relevant categories within the database.

A significant finding from Study Three related to the implementation of the communicative approach by native English-speaking teachers with limited teaching experience. (See Senior, 2006a, p. 36-54 for a description of the nature and scope of

preparatory certificates in English language teaching.) While most teachers had a good grasp of how to set up communicative activities, many lacked a fundamental knowledge of learning theory and often start teaching with a limited understanding of the structure of English. There was evidence of some teachers avoiding focusing on aspects of the language (including error correction) in their lessons, concentrating instead on creating relaxed classroom atmospheres and setting up communicative activities that encouraged students to interact in lively ways with their peers. It was easy for such teachers to confuse fun with learning (Senior, 2006a, p. 183-185).

3.3 The emergent theory

After the study had been completed a term was sought that would encompass the notion that effective classroom teachers focus on <u>both</u> the learning <u>and</u> the social well-being of their class groups. In an article in the ELT Journal (Senior, 2002) the term *class-centred teaching* was used to describe the fact that, when set up appropriately, many learning tasks can be seen to fulfil both these purposes. When the data from all the studies were examined from a class-centred perspective it could be appreciated more fully that class management problems were often related to the fact that the teachers did not behave in class-centred ways.

Some time later the notion of class-centred teaching was re-examined using the qualitative research technique of exploring with metaphors. Snow (1973) explains the relationship between metaphor and theory building, saying:

> "Metaphors may be the ratiomorphic roots of theory, where art and science are indistinguishable mixtures of fact, fantasy, intuition and reasoning in the theorist's mind from which spring the scaffolding of formal models and eventually full-blown theories."   (p. 83)

Metaphors had already been used in Phase One of the study (Senior, 1999, p. 26-28). At that point it was considered that language classrooms could usefully be regarded as biological organisms that were in a state of dynamic equilibrium. This view accorded with van Lier's proposal that language classrooms should be regarded as complex adaptive systems in which a multitude of forces interact in complex, self-

organizing ways that create both predictable and unpredictable changes and patterns (1996, p. 148).

While writing *The Experience of Language Teaching* (Senior, 2006a) it became necessary to re-examine language classrooms through the use of metaphor. This time the goal was to identify an image that would accommodate the notion that pedagogic and social processes in language classrooms are inextricably linked in such a way that the one cannot be understood without reference to the other. The biological image of a double helix was selected to reflect this insight – and to represent what could then be termed a *socio-pedagogic theory of classroom practice* (Senior, 2006a, p. 277-83).

The notion of *class-centred teaching* has since been proposed as a framework for language teacher education, since it encourages teachers to reflect not only on their teaching but also on their class management practices – and to regard them as two sides of the same coin. It also helps teachers to understand the relationship between a wide range of classroom variables and effective language teaching. After a presentation on class-centred teaching given at the IATEFL 2008 Exeter Conference in the UK (Senior, 2009a), certain individuals expressed high levels of interest in class-centred teaching, believing that it provided valuable affirmation of their intuitive approach towards teaching and class management.

At the end of 2008 the researcher was invited to host an online discussion forum for the IATEFL Teacher Training and Education Special Interest Group on the topic of class-centred teaching (reported in Senior, 2009b). During this forum, which generated 30,000 words within an eight-day period, affirmation was received from native English-speaking language teacher educators working in a range of locations around the world that the notion of class-centred teaching was meaningful and might provide a useful framework for teacher training and development, particularly once specific principles had been articulated.

4. Position statement

The socio-pedagogic theory of classroom practice reported in this paper provides an explanation for why some classroom teachers are more likely than others to have alert, responsive classes that are rewarding to teach and that provide them with a worthwhile professional experience. The notion of class-centred teaching, which embodies the theory, is neither a teaching method nor a teaching approach. Rather, it is a framework for understanding the nature of effective language teaching that enables teachers to reflect on their practice and to adapt or modify their classroom behaviour in ways that they consider appropriate. Although it emerged from an examination of the classroom practices and behaviours of native-speaking English language teachers working in an English-speaking country where the precepts of CLT are firmly established, class-centred teaching is not based on the assumption that CLT, in and of itself, embodies best practice.

5. The relevance of the theory for locally-trained teachers teaching in Asian contexts

The educational contexts of countries in the Asian region differ significantly from the context within which the theory was developed. As a compulsory school subject, English is taught to classes of students who already know each other and who share the same mother tongue. Class sizes are often larger than their equivalents in English-speaking countries. The importance of exams in determining the direction of students' careers and future lives leads English language teaching and learning in many institutions to have a strongly utilitarian focus, with English regarded as a body of knowledge to be absorbed for the purpose of scoring well in exams - rather than as a communication skill. Much class time is devoted to teaching grammar and vocabulary items on the assumption that, the more facts they can absorb, the better students will score on discrete-item tests. Accustomed to having their competence evaluated in terms of the marks achieved by their students, and feeling themselves constrained by institutional, pupil and parental expectations, many teachers are reluctant to teach in more student-centred, communicative ways.

Does the socio-pedagogic theory of classroom practice have relevance for locally-trained language teachers teaching under such circumstances? In other words, is it helpful for classroom language teachers who teach in traditional contexts to examine their pedagogic practices through the lens of class-centred teaching?

Preliminary evidence from Japan suggests that locally-trained English language teachers find class-centred teaching a useful construct to enable them to reflect upon and adjust their current teaching practices. One teacher with 25 years of classroom experience reported that he now realized the importance of displaying warmth and support when students made errors and of being more generous with praise when praise was due. He also reported that the construct of class-centredness helped him decide how to address perennial problems such as how to deal with attention-seeking students. In his words: 'The more I read about class-centred teaching, the more I realize the power of simply asking myself, 'How class-centred am I?'."

Another teacher believed that class-centred teaching was compatible with the educational system in Japan, saying:

> "Although Japan might be considered as an educational environment that is unfavourable to class-centered teaching and communicative learning, in actual fact there are many ways in which English teachers can implement a more class-centered approach that still fits within the current educational system."

A Japanese-born teacher of English identified the importance of relationships in the language classroom, saying:

> "When we do something with other people, the relationship we have with them is one of the keys of its success. In the classroom, even if the teachers are great teachers, and even if the students are good students, if the teachers don't have a good relationship with their students, or if the students don't have a good relationship with other classmates, the lessons will not be so good."

This same teacher provided an example of establishing rapport with a particular class in the elite high school where he taught, saying:

> "For a few minutes at the beginning of the lesson, I chatted to the class about the basketball game they played the previous day at the school athletic meet. I praised them for their effort. They smiled joyfully. We started our class in a good atmosphere. I believe this chat sustained their solidarity as well. Then, we listened to the story about Evelyn Glennie [and] translated it into Japanese. When I appointed a student to translate a sentence, I said to him, 'The student who shot a 3-point basket in the basketball game , please translate this sentence into Japanese'. The class smiled about it. This created a climate of harmony. Then I had students read the sentences in pairs."

An article on ways of developing rapport in language classrooms (Senior, 2008a) was used as the basis for a teacher development workshop presented at the North East Asian Region Language Education Conference in Niigata City (May 2009). In email correspondence the workshop facilitator reported high levels of interest in the topic from a range of Japanese teachers of English including university lecturers, conversation school teachers, high school teachers and Japanese teacher-trainees preparing to teach in the state school system.

In sum, a sample of Japanese-born teachers of English appeared to relate to the notion of class-centred teaching and to identify ways in which it could benefit their teaching. In the words of one of the teachers,

> "The Japanese people, even young people, have really group-oriented mind in their nature, so the notion of class-centered teaching emphasizing the class group seems to be really relevant to teaching English to Japanese people."

Findings such as these support a study by Littlewood (2000) into the attitudes towards learning of students in eight Asian countries (Brunei, Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam) and three European countries. Littlewood found that Asian students, along with their European counterparts, want above all to learn alongside their peers in friendly and supportive classroom environments.

In conclusion, feedback from teachers in Japan suggests that the socio-pedagogic theory of classroom practice described in this paper could provide locally-trained English language teachers with a means of reflecting upon and modifying their current classroom behaviour in order to improve the quality of their teaching. It might be beneficial in the future for language teacher educators in the Asian region to provide class-centred teaching workshops for practitioners working in a range of educational institutions in their respective countries.

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Distance Doctor in Education Degrees: Past Experiences, Current Developments and Future Possibilities in Asia

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Abstract

ELT practitioners used to be able to acquire a TESOL certificate, travel the world and earn a decent living, but growing professionalism in the field has led to calls for improved teacher training and standards of instruction, accreditation as well as 'credentialism' in the field. One particular type of credential that is growing in popularity with TEF/SL professionals throughout Asia and the Middle East is the Doctor of Education (EdD) distance degree.

This paper explores the current academic thinking surrounding the emergence, evolution, trends, problems and future possibilities in modern distance learning, particularly with respect to EdD programs. It argues that the growth of distance EdD programs is closely aligned to the increased popularity, appeal and accessibility of distance or blended higher education programs. However, it points out that the emergence and growth of distance EdD programs have not been devoid of significant problems. These issues include the quality of instruction, course design and delivery as well as specific instructor and student related concerns. Problems with technology misuse and/or malfunctions and difficulties in finding employment for distance EdD graduates also exist. This paper concludes with several recommendations for future research and reminds readers that future distance/blended EdD programs need to continue to focus on developing comprehensive, inclusive and thoughtful distance learning models that facilitate true virtual teaching and learning communities (VTLCs). These types of academic communities utilize the latest forms of

technology, are based on traditional models of doctoral programs and rely on the equitable participation of all of the students in a particular research community.

Introduction: A Brief History of Distance Learning

As technology has changed, so has the definition of distance learning. The term 'distance learning' can be traced to correspondence courses that started at many European universities in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the beginning, these programs relied on traditional mail services to transmit all forms of communication between the university, professor and student. By the mid 20th century, instructional radio and television became more popular in the mid 20th century and this type of communication was gradually incorporated into higher educational teaching. Since the late 70's and early 80's, we have witnessed the advent of audio and video-taped lectures. This technology increased flexibility and has made it far more accessible. Nevertheless, it was the development of the personal computer, the Internet, distributed multimedia and compressed two-way video conferencing systems that has taken distance learning in entirely new directions and opened up limitless realms of teaching and learning possibilities (Denton, 2001; Valentine, 2002).

When one considers the fact that the history of distance learning encompasses a vast array of possible teaching and learning variables, environments and experiences, it is difficult to come up with a particular definition that is appropriate in all situations and settings. Greenburg (1998, cited in Valentine, 2002), for example, defines distance learning as "a planned teaching/learning experience that uses a wide spectrum of technologies to reach learners at a distance and is designed to encourage learner interaction" (p. 1). Teaster and Blieszner (1999, cited in Valentine, 2002), on the other hand, argue that the term distance learning can be applied to a variety of instructional methods, but "its primary distinction is that the teacher and the learner are separate in space and possibly time" (p. 1). Lastly, Keegan (1995, cited in Valentine, 2002) suggests that distance education results from the technological separation of student and teacher. This ultimately frees the student from having to travel to "a fixed place, at a fixed time, to meet a fixed person, in order to be [taught]" (p. 2). With the help of these aforementioned definitions we can determine a modern

working definition of distance learning. Essentially, the student and teacher must be separated by space (and possibly time) and they must ultimately rely on the latest technological advancements, such as live and prerecorded audio or video and computer technologies, to communicate in a synchronous or asynchronous manner and engage in two-way and multi-faceted forms of teaching and learning activities (Valentine, 2002).

Recent Developments in Higher Education

During the past 10 years, there has been an unequivocal and indisputable explosion of distance learning programs throughout higher education. Students from around the world now have access to an enormous array of undergraduate and graduate degree programs. While this growth has relied, in part, on technological advancements and the extended use and development of computer networks, audio and video streaming and distributed multimedia systems (Charalambos, Michalinos & Chamberlain, 2004; Lee & Nguyen, 2007), it is also a reflection of current economic circumstances. Sumner (2000), for example, has pointed out that current methods of distance education such as e-learning and computer conferencing are effective means of communicating, but in addition the expansion of these technologies has created a growing multi-billion dollar industry. Shapiro (2002) and Winsboro (2002) have suggested that this multi-billion dollar industry is essential to the growth and continuation of the modern higher education institution which is the reason administrators and policy-makers are increasingly referring to it as the "mainstay of the new millennium curricula" (Winsboro, 2002 p. 247). Today, a broad range of people from all walks of life (e.g. non-traditional students) are increasingly demanding access to higher education, and distance education is one of the most cost-effective ways of reaching these types of students (Shapiro, 2002; Winsboro, 2002). Essentially, universities and colleges can now save an enormous amount of money and resources by providing distance education/e-learning opportunities to students who are unable to attend traditional lectures or classes because of time or distance constraints. The theory is that as class sizes and enrollments increase, higher education institutions will be able to better serve the needs of their students keeping their overhead costs relatively low (Valentine, 2002).

Emergence of the Distance EdD (Doctor in Education) Program

A Doctor in Education degree (EdD) program retains many characteristics of a traditional PhD program and is commonplace in most tertiary academic communities worldwide. Nevertheless, it remains different from the traditional PhD for several reasons. The students, for instance, are often mid-career or senior practitioners in the field of education who wish to engage their professional practice at a deeper or more academic level. They also wish to eventually apply and transfer their acquired knowledge to their respective profession. In this way, the EdD is generally considered to be a professional degree program which usually consists of taught courses and research components that can be conducted on campus/in residence, by distance study or a by a combination of both (i.e. blended learning). On the other hand, there are typically residency requirements, fewer courses and a larger research component in PhD programs (Adams & DeFleur, 2005; Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004).

Many prospective doctoral students are now choosing to acquire an EdD degree as opposed to a PhD. This recent growth is likely the result of several factors. First, the market for this degree is probably a sign of increased 'credentialism' in the field of education. Wikeley and Muschamp (2004) suggest that "in the past, practical knowledge gained through experience would have been enough to gain promotion, [but] evidence, in the form of some accredited qualification, is now more likely to be required" (p. 126). An EdD, therefore, is an excellent means of achieving a meaningful, accepted and accredited credential in the field of education.

The second major influence on the growth of EdD programs is partially aligned to the expansion and popularity of the distance education market. Like the PhD, the EdD program relies upon the traditional (i.e. medieval) and hierarchal apprenticeship model of doctoral study (Dooley, Kelsey & Lindner, 2003). The supervisor is generally someone with expertise in an apprentice's area of research. This person will not necessarily work on the same project as the apprentice, but they will offer assistance, advice and encouragement (Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004). The apprentice, on the other hand, is expected to engage in work that "engenders 'original thought', 'critical judgment' and [a] 'contribution' to knowledge'" (Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004, p. 127) in the field of education. It is generally believed that this type of study can only occur in a clearly defined research community where doctoral

students can engage and interact with the existent community of educational researchers at the university and also with each other as a part of a wider community of researchers. As Dooley, Kelsey and Linder (2003) suggest:

> "[D]octoral degree programs anchor the practice of study in five…constructs: immersion in advanced study and inquiry, interaction with faculty members and peers, access to the educational resources of the university, interchange of knowledge with the academic community and broadening of educational and cultural perspectives." (p. 44)

Thus, the unique structure and requirements of traditional doctoral level programs have made them difficult to pursue through distance education for many years, but the emergence of new distance learning pedagogies as well as computer networking, digital and e-learning technologies and compressed audio and video, which is delivered in real time, has now made it possible to mirror the traditional doctoral experience in a virtual teaching and learning community (VTLC) or distance setting. This has led to a dramatic increase in the number of distance and blended EdD programs being developed and initiated throughout the world and it has made it much easier for prospective doctoral students to undertake their studies (Dooley, Kelsey & Lindner, 2003; Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004).

It would appear that the evolution and expansion of distance EdD programs have been mutually beneficial to higher education institutions and educational practitioners wishing to advance their careers. Students from all over the world can now participate and engage in rigorous academic study at the doctoral level, interact with their professors and peers, undertake worthwhile and original research, and gain a useful credential by distance study. Universities, on the other hand, have developed cost-effective and lucrative course and curriculum delivery systems that enable them to preserve the traditional foundations, requirements and principles of doctoral studies, while 'internationalizing' their programs and serving the ever-changing dynamics and needs of their clientele around the world.

Potential Problems with Distance EdD Programs

Technological advancements during the past 10 years have enabled distance EdD programs to continue to expand and it has been a boon for universities and students

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alike. Nevertheless, their emergence in the academic setting has not been devoid of significant problems. There have been issues surrounding the quality of instruction, course design and delivery as well as specific instructor and student related concerns. Problems with technology misuse and/or malfunctions and difficulties in finding employment for distance EdD graduates also exist. These issues will now be addressed.

(1) Quality of Instruction

The first issue is the quality of instruction that is provided through distance learning programs. An early study by Inman and Kerwin (1999) suggests that the overall quality of distance instruction depends on the attitude of the instructors. Data collected by these authors demonstrates that instructors typically rated the quality of their distance courses as only equal to or lower in quality to similar classes taught on campus and these types of attitudes and opinions hardly seem conducive to an effective teaching and learning environment.

Another problem that relates to instructional quality is the fact that administrators often believe that distance education is the panacea of higher education and that the technology itself will improve the quality of the classes and curriculum (Shapiro, 2002). However, Pallof and Pratt (2000, cited in Valentine, 2002) state that "technology does not teach students; effective teachers do" (p. 3). They make the point that the issue is not necessarily the technology itself, but it is more a case of instructors not knowing how to tailor their lessons to distance students or how to pedagogically take advantage of the technology that is available to them. Valentine (2002) argues that instructors and administrators often loose sight of the true goals of distance learning programs and they need to understand that the success or failure of distance learning programs is largely a result of the instructors' level of preparation, training and understanding of the needs of the students as well as an organizational or administrative understanding of the target population or clientele.

(2) Course Design

VTLCs for doctoral programs are relatively new and are still experiencing some growing pains with respect to course design and delivery. Wikeley and Muschamp

(2004) have reported, for example, that logistical difficulties in distance doctoral education can often be overcome by technology, but a more pressing concern is the socialization of students into the academic community in which they are operating. They argue that VTLCs must be designed to ensure that students feel comfortable enough to take risks in discussions, challenge the literature and/or instructor and to listen to, and build on, each others' contributions while participating in virtual communications.

An additional problem with distance course design and delivery is the fact that instructors typically perceive doctoral distance students as being a series of individuals and not a collective group. DuCharme-Hansen and Dupin-Bryant (2004) and Wikeley and Muschamp (2004) argue that VTLC instructors need to be adept at creating and sustaining the entire doctoral group by effectively encouraging, promoting and facilitating discussion by all participants. This requires proper lesson and curriculum planning, skill and training in moderating and mediating electronic academic discussion boards and an ability to motivate some particular students who may be more or less inclined to contribute to this unique type of academic community.

Another major concern with distance EdD programs are matriculation/graduation rates. An early study on the matriculation rates of doctoral students has shown that campus-based students have a greater frequency of successful graduation (overall, 80 percent successful) than distance education students (overall, 69 percent successful) (MacFarland, 1999). While the author does not provide any specific reasons for this disparity, he suggests that it could be related to poor course delivery and design (e.g. accessibility and availability of dissertation advisors and/or campus-based resources). Charalambos, Michalinos and Chamberlain (2004) point out that studies of this nature tend to underscore the importance of establishing effective VTLCs. In their view, successful VTLCs should do the following: promote ownership of all stakeholders; are structured to promote interaction and open communication; contain mechanisms for the provision of immediate feedback to all participants; provide opportunities to practice with the technology; access resources; and utilize a variety of methods for encouraging, evaluating and assessing student learning and participation in a distance learning setting.

A final issue that pertains to course planning for distance EdD students is the fact that students, particularly mid-career and senior professionals, sometimes have erroneous expectations regarding what it is they are getting involved in when they actually embark upon a doctoral program. Wikeley and Muschamp (2004) suggest that doctoral students often expect to acquire some content and instructor expertise and gain some knowledge that they did not already have. For many of these students, their doctoral work is seen as an advanced form of accredited professional development and their previous experience with professional development has often consisted of taught courses in a particular realm of knowledge. While most doctoral degrees do have didactic instruction, the instructors tend to focus on offering new "ways of understanding, ways of looking into practice and support for the students' own research journey in relation to the substantive content of the [subject matter] and its relationship to the [students'] professional context" (Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004 p. 139). This type of a shared learning process can be new, unexpected and daunting to some students and it is essential that faculty also take these types of issues into consideration when designing and delivering online/distance EdD courses.

(3) Faculty Concerns

Winsboro (2002) has demonstrated that faculty members in a variety of academic disciplines often express concerns about the workload of Internet and e-learning based courses. This is due to the "potential for protracted preparation time and teacher-student contact hours" (p. 250), which often puts them behind on activities they will be evaluated on such as grant writing and publishing. Other problematic areas involve intellectual rights and ownership over course content, archived student data as well as faculty-generated videotaped and online courses, instructional techniques and VTLC technology. Anderson and Simpson (2007) and Winsboro (2002) argue that these types of ethical issues need to be addressed or they will continue to have a significant impact on contractual expectations, faculty morale and the overall quality of instruction.

(4) Student Concerns

It is also possible that not all students are suited to distance learning. Lee and Nguyen (2007) have suggested that non-traditional mature students typically perform better than traditional younger students because they are already in professions, have well defined goals and are more motivated. "Perceiving the importance of obtaining higher education, non-traditional online students [are]…able to spend more of their time in [distance education] and still maintain a healthy balance between their family and work responsibilities" (Lee & Nguyen, 2007, p. 32). Valentine (2002) also points out that the successful distance student needs to have a variety of characteristics such as a tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility, a need for autonomy and the ability to work independently or with group members.

Similarly, DuCharme-Hansen and Dupin-Bryant (2004) and Wikeley and Muschamp (2004) have argued that students in distance learning environments can often feel isolated and as such it is essential that they collaborate and interact with other students and the professor. "When this is not encouraged, participation is generally low and dialogue is absent" (Valentine, 2002, p. 7). In addition, students need the attention of the instructors. This is difficult to obtain when eye contact, body language and spatial proximity are limited. Students may also find it difficult to read the reactions, non-verbal cues, etc. of their remote location class members and this can lead to frustration, miscommunication and misperceptions. Lastly, VTLCs can magnify the strengths and weaknesses of the instructor. Any type of disorganization or lack of direction on behalf of the instructor can lead to student apathy and absenteeism as well as poor faculty evaluations (Valentine, 2002).

A final issue that relates to students is the accommodation of people with some form of hearing impairment or print disability (e.g. students who are blind or partially sighted, students who are dyslexic or have other specific learning difficulties, and students with various physical or motor difficulties). While, these types of students do not typically make up a significantly large percentage of the student body, they have a multitude of complex educational needs, particularly when enrolled in a distance program. Some of these requirements, for example, may include specialized instructors, with pedagogical training in the methodologies of the hearing impaired or print disability instruction, that also have the ability to make the

necessary adaptations to courses that facilitate access to the educational curriculum (Dixon, 2007). In addition, further electronic systems and VTLC modifications may also be needed in order to allow these students the enhanced ability to search and retrieve information from the course materials and interact with their professors and doctoral colleagues in a far more effective manner. These modifications could include asynchronous transfer mode technology (ATM) for high bandwidth transmission of data, voice and video, personal computing tools, Web-based resources, network resources, audio tapes, voice recognition software, as well as print and non-print support devices (Dixon, 2007; Mitchell & Scigliano, 2000).

(5) Technological Issues

The emergence of VTLCs has made the growth of distance EdD programs possible, but it has also given rise to some serious technological issues. Students in EdD programs must have a certain level of computer knowledge and they must receive a proper induction to the specific technology and e-learning platforms that are used in their respective programs (Davies & Quick, 2001; Dooley, Kelsey & Lindner, 2003). Instructors, on the other hand, need to be trained to properly implement and utilize the technology and encouraged to adapt to new environments of distance education (Wikeley & Muschamp, 2004). Other related technological issues include equipment and hardware malfunctions. If doctoral students cannot research, communicate with their professors and peers and collaborate for discussions and assignments then the entire learning environment will be interrupted and everything may come to a standstill.

(6) Employment Concerns

A final concern that many people have with distance EdD degrees is the fact that employers are often reluctant to accept potential employees with online degrees. Adams and DeFleur (2005; 2006) and Carnevale (2007) have conducted several survey studies in order to determine the acceptability of online degrees in obtaining employment in corporations and in academic settings. Their research of those who evaluate potential employees and make hiring decisions (i.e. human resource managers, deans, faculty hiring committees etc.) indicate that there is a distinct bias

against online degrees. They have demonstrated that those who are responsible for hiring typically perceive distance degrees to be of a lower quality and that the employers who are most skeptical of online education are typically the ones who seem to know the least about it. While studies of this nature are significant, the authors concede that this type of research is preliminary. They point out that respondents in these types of surveys are not usually provided with information on the specific teaching methods used, the instructional design, or even the name of the institution offering the degree program. This type of information will undoubtedly influence the way in which people react to an online degree and research that incorporates these variables will be warranted in the future.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recent technological advancements and the creation of VTLCs have had a major impact on distance learning in higher education and the availability of EdD programs. While the research on distance learning has become extensive, there is still a need for studies that primarily focus on distance EdD programs. This research could focus on: the variables that influence employers' perceptions of distance EdDs; the attitudes, concerns and attributes of distance EdD candidates; matriculation rates of distance EdD students; characteristics and comparisons of specific distance EdD programs; and the technological and pedagogic advancements that have enhanced distance EdD teaching and learning communities. Additional research is also needed on the universal quality assurance issues and accreditation criteria of distance learning programs as well as the specific relationships between instructor commitment and attitudes to teaching distance courses.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to explore some of the current academic thinking surrounding the growth, evolution, trends, problems and future possibilities in modern distance learning, particularly with respect to EdD programs. Despite the need for improvement, the future for distance EdD programs does appear promising. More and more students are enrolling in these programs and an increasing number of reputable higher education institutions such as the University of Calgary, Nova

Southeastern University, Utah State University, the University of Phoenix, the University of Southern Queensland, Deakin University, the Open University, the University of Bath, Exeter University and Lancaster University are offering a program enabling students to acquire an EdD degree by distance or blended methods. However, we should not loose sight of the fact that this growth in distance education and EdD programs should not underscore the importance of developing comprehensive, inclusive and thoughtful distance learning models that facilitate true virtual teaching and learning communities (VTLCs). These types of academic communities utilize the latest forms of technology, are based on traditional models of doctoral programs and rely on the equitable participation of all of the students in a particular research community. Finally, due to the relatively recent induction of EdD programs into higher education forums, it is also of the utmost importance to conduct further research into the various issues involved in this type of learning context.

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Book Review

Second Language Identities

David Block. New York: Continuum, 2007. Pp. iv + 230.

Reviewed by Buripakdi Adcharawan

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Block's *Second Language Identities* addresses the complexity of identity constructs in second language learning (SLL) contexts. The book has a double aim. On one level, it is designed to revisit past and present research agenda in identity and adult second language learning. The second aim of this book is to provide suggestions for L2 identity research. It does both well. *Second Language Identities* is appropriate to be used as an introductory textbook for readers interested in how L2 identity research is constructed and developed.

In Chapter 1 Block begins with a description of identity perspectives from a personal concept to an academic one. He then employs the key poststructuralist theories that have set the stage for current identity research in the social sciences and SLL studies. In this respect, Block cites major research to investigate how some L2 researchers have incorporated identity into their work. He also reviews recent key work in related areas of social identity and identity negotiation in multilingual settings to address the history of identity studies.

In Chapter 2, Block engages the readers by grounding a poststructuralist view of identity. In essence, he examines the key constructs of current discussion of identity relevant to a broad poststructuralist theory. He then describes seven key perspectives on identity: race, ethnicity, nationality, migration, gender, social class and language.

In Chapter 3, Block reviews key studies carried from the 1960s-1980s to provide background information of L2 identity research. These include a good range

of SLL studies from adult migrants in the US to adult SLL in Canada. This research-based chapter offers historical knowledge for those who are new to the field.

In Chapter 4, Block explicitly addresses L2 identity by examining five case studies of adult migrants to present readers the current SLL context of workplace. Through the in-depth research discussion, Block contends that it is in the naturalistic adult migrant setting that carries the greatest potential of all the language learning for the critical experiences central to the emergence of new subject positions.

In Chapter 5 Block addresses how identity is an issue in foreign language (FL) contexts. He illustrates by examination of studies which take place in different FL contexts in the US, Australia, Japan, and France. Block discusses in detail four classroom-based case studies. Through the analysis of these studies, Block concludes that FL contexts provide few chances for the emergence of significant new subject positions.

In Chapter 6 Block addresses identity in study abroad (SA) contexts. In the first half of the chapter, his discussion centers on identity issues in Russia, Costa Rica and Spain. Block examines the relationship of the sexual harassment of female students and its impact on their opportunity to develop target language-mediated identities. He devotes the rest of the chapter to other identity areas emerging in SA research and ends it with his critiques about SA and L2 identity constructs.

In Chapter 7, Block concludes with a summary of what has been discussed in the aforementioned chapters. He further describes five directions for future L2 identity research: (1) Social class as a key analytical construct; (2) More expanded conceptualizations of L2 learners' first language; (3) The emergence of local *lingua francas;* (4) How SLL experiences are electronically mediated in various ways; and (5) Psychoanalysis as a source of analytical frameworks. Finally, Block ends the chapter by emphasizing that there is a need for both conceptual and empirical L2 identity research that not only problematizes contexts but also draws on multiple sources of data (e.g. interviews, diaries and recorded interactions) in order to generate ambitious yet possible research schemes.

Second Language Identities is written in a critiqued research/case-oriented approach that thoroughly reviews research in identity. Despite the book's rich content, some readers might find some chapters somewhat technical: Active L2

researchers will appreciate the depth of this overview; yet other L2 professionals may not require such in-depth analysis. Still the book contributes new knowledge of key poststructuralist theories about L2 identities. In light of these developments, Block's book represents a synopsis of current research as it offers critical perspectives and asks provoking questions associated with L2 identity theories and research directions.

Book Review

Academic Discourse

Ken Hyland. New York: Continuum, 2009. Pp. x + 215.

Reviewed by Jim Bame

Utah State University, USA

Academic Discourse by Ken Hyland is a comprehensive, insightful book. In it, the author discusses many types of academic language, both spoken and written, its key concepts, importance, and research. This is an important text, convincingly demonstrating that there are many ever-shifting academic discourses, not a single, static one.

The book contains an introduction and eight chapters, an author and subject index, and a reference section. The text is well-organized, non-technically written, and quite readable. The book is designed as an introduction to or quick update of academic discourse, specifically for university students, linguistic specialists and general readership.

In the short Introduction, the author gives a rationale for the text and argues for a disciplinary-specific view of academic discourse. He also lists the written and spoken evidence resources used in his descriptions and analyses of academic language.

In Chapter 1, Hyland describes clearly what academic discourse is and how it impacts academia. He discusses how academic discourse contributes to knowledge in education, creates disciplinary approved knowledge, and affects academicians' careers and reputations.

In the next chapter, Hyland outlines and evaluates various perspectives of the three general analytical approaches--textual, contextual and critical--that he uses in his discussions in the book's subsequent chapters. He concludes by stating that there is no one best method to analyze academic language because of the many ways of

understanding discourse and diverse approaches to its study. He further posits that all may help to frame a theory of how language works in academic settings.

Chapter 3 defines academic communities and outlines the idea of discourse communities which restrict and authorize professional communication within them. It then discusses the difficulties in identification because they continually shift and overlap. The author concludes that each field has its own variety of academic discourses due to being members of many discourse communities which have a variety of knowledge domains.

In Chapter 4, research discourses are defined functionally as producing knowledge within academia. Research articles and conference presentations are first focused on and evaluated as to their situation, creation, relevance, and discourse makeup and organization. Scientific letters, book reviews, and electronic journals are then briefly portrayed.

The instructional discourses of university lectures, seminars, and undergraduate textbooks are next described. After lucidly outlining various aspects of these central academic genres, Hyland concludes by saying that these genres are obviously not merely information-transfer modes, but ways students learn competence in a discipline and its language simultaneously.

Chapter 6 delves into student discourses--the academic literacy practices for undergraduate and postgraduate genres. Hyland argues that academic writing is difficult to learn because it forces students, undergraduates particularly, to drop their accustomed everyday persona and take on a new one as a disinterested seeker of truth. To further complicate this, each subject area seeks and reports differently, so students are constantly juggling their writing approach to match these shifting settings. The undergraduate genres of exam writing and final projects and post graduate thesis/dissertation, oral discussion leader, and acknowledgements are then outlined and discussed.

The next chapter outlines a novel inclusion in a book about academic discourse--popular scientific discourses, including TV documentaries, popular science books, mass media journals, weekly news journals, and newspapers. Hyland defines this discourse and describes each and shows what scientific discourse loses when popularized: inaccuracies, less jargon and more vagueness, different linguistic

forms, overstatements and altered emphases. He concludes by saying that this discourse is very important because of its influence on public perceptions and how people learn about science.

In the last chapter, Hyland sketches the economic power and ideological sway of academic discourses, and how political and economic realities affect them. He also claims that worldwide academic practices, publishing in English, and open access journals and global networks have made academic discourse a global phenomenon.

This book delineates the extensiveness of academic discourse and its wide range of genres. Hyland freely admits to the shortcomings of this book: outlining central features, not adequately representing disciplines, being brief and inconclusive and offering incomplete solutions, among others. However, these shortcomings merely demonstrate the breadth of the discussion and the complexity of the book's subject matter. The real weakness of the book was its binding which broke in two places, one to such an extent that the first twenty pages fell out and had to be re-glued. Binding aside, this book should be a staple in university TESOL and applied linguistics courses and English for Specific Purposes teachers/designers.

Book Review

Classroom Interactions as Cross-Cultural Encounters:
Native Speakers in EFL Lessons
Jasmine C.M. Luk & Angel M.Y. Lin. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates,
2007. Pp. xix + 241.

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Current ESL/EFL pedagogy is aimed at providing English learners with both
linguistic and sociocultural competencies (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002). *Luk and Lin's*
Classroom interactions as cross-cultural encounters meets this expectation. As part
of the EST & Applied Linguistics Professional Series aimed at to helping TESOL
professionals and policy makers better understand dialogic intercultural
communication theoretically and empirically, this 10 chapter volume addresses a
range of issues.

Chapter 1 presents the authors' socio-cultural and English learning
backgrounds. Through personal anecdotes, the authors depict how cross-cultural
encounters with English users from different socio-cultural backgrounds have shaped
the authors' perceptions and attitudes toward English learning and teaching. In
addition, the authors inform readers that the empirical data that the book is based on
are primarily from ethnographic approaches and case studies.

Chapter 2 highlights the background of the native English speaker teacher
scheme (NETS) implemented in Hong Kong and a brief history of the Hong Kong
government's initiative to hire native English teachers (NETs) to teach in local
schools. Such issues allow readers to know how cross-cultural dialogs have taken

place in Hong Kong and how the NETS is differently perceived by the policy makers, local English teachers (LETs), NETs, and students.

In chapter 3, Luk and Lin clearly define what native speakers are and then briefly address a debatable issue on the pedagogical effectiveness of the NETS along with its socio-political implications. The authors maintain that nativeness should be considered as "sociohistorically constructed" (Luk & Lin, p. 30). In short, they successfully examine how the notion of the NETS has been constructed, deconstructed, and problematized in the field of ELT.

In chapter 4, Luk and Lin comprehensively present the discourse analysis approach, the sociocultural approach, and the critical approach used in their classroom interaction study. Based upon these approaches, chapter 5 explores interesting issues such as activity theory, identities and interactive resources, asymmetrical power relations, and mediated dialogic interactions. The authors conclude that cross-cultural classroom interactions should be regarded as situated dialogic discourse practices.

In chapter 6, the authors describe the participants in context. They highlight core features of the education system at the time of the study, including the educational policies, teaching methodologies, and curriculum. The authors also illustrate the teachers' professional and academic history, school contexts, and *professiona*l beliefs in ELT as well as the students' attitudes toward English learning and their opinions about being taught by NETs and LETs.

From chapters 7-9, the authors go on to analyze the classroom interaction data collected in their study. Vivid excerpts are provided throughout these three major chapters. Chapter 7 presents specific different discourse practices between the teacher and students in sense-making, which includes both successful and unsuccessful sense-making practices. The authors conclude that meanings are linguistically and culturally negotiated.

In chapter 8, the authors eloquently examine the roles of language play through phonological and semantic manipulations of two languages--Cantonese and English. Particularly, they highlight how phonological play, social talk, teasing, and talking about taboos positively affect classroom interactions.

Chapter 9 focuses on how the teachers and students conduct their teachership or teacher identity and studentship, respectively, in an institutional setting through words, and how they further refashioned their institutional identities. This chapter also examines how tension and conflict occasionally take place owing to mismatching lesson agendas between the teachers and students as well as students' resistance to authoritative discourses.

Drawing from the data, findings, and discussions in the previous chapters, the authors go on to close the book by discussing the role of native speaker communicative resources in intercultural contexts and the impact of the students' diverse linguistic and cultural experiences in discourse practices. The authors argue that language teachers should explore pedagogies of local and global connectedness in intercultural communication instead of simply relying on NETs.

In general, the volume is theoretically and empirically grounded and can be useful resource and guide for TESOL professionals and policy makers who are interested in investigating an issue on dialogic intercultural communication between teachers and students and among students in the classrooms. Though the findings discussed in the book may not be generalizable to contexts outside Hong Kong and NET based classrooms, the focus of the study in this work can serve as a good model for further studies on intercultural classroom communication in EFL settings where native English speaking teachers are hired.

Reference

Savignon, S.J., & Sysoyev, P.V. (2002). Sociocultural strategies for a dialogue of cultures. *The Modern Language Journal*, *86*, 508-524.

Book Review

Classroom Management

Thomas S. C. Farrell (Ed). Alexandria, VA: TESOL, 2008. Pp. vi + 177.

Reviewed by Marilyn N. Lewis

The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Classroom management adds to the TESOL Classroom Practice Series and aims to introduce a wide readership of elementary to tertiary teachers to the theory and practice of organising a range of classes through a series of articles authored by teachers and researchers from a number of countries.

Farrell is the author of the first chapter which addresses general concerns such as the diversity of many classes. The next three chapters are set in the United States. One type of diversity, cultural differences, is the focus of chapter 2. Taylor and Sobel (academics from the University of Colorado) present a narrative in which the reader is taken on a classroom tour of a third grade classroom school in America. Forty percent of the children come from minority backgrounds, but, more challengingly, fifteen percent have special needs. Chapter 3, from Brown and Sharkey, the latter a classroom teacher, continues this theme by describing classrooms that include native and non-native English young children. Their lively account is illustrated with photographs of the second grade children and their work. Chapter 4 is by Meszaros and is concerned with character education and examines an American secondary classroom where the teacher's philosophy is *personalism*, which emphasises relationships as being at the heart of children's lives.

Chapter 5 moves to Singapore and reports Silver's observations of an impressive 110 lessons in different schools to see how peer work is organised. She first speaks about her findings in workshops where she reports common themes, such as the picture of the "scurrying teacher" rushing around the room during group work monitoring behaviour even when the task was set up "so that students [could] proceed to work in groups" (p. 48). In Chapter 6 Bournhonesque reports in detail a strategy

he developed for forming students into groups. The five pages of materials assist anyone who would like to imitate or adapt his ideas.

In Chapter 7 Le Pham reports on English discussion groups set in a university in Vietnam. A special feature is the inclusion of tape script extracts which clarify the theory. Chapter 8, from Stabler-Havener at a university in China, continues the theme of small groups, but shows how roles can be assigned. Continuing the case studies format, Chapter 9 puts the spotlight on the teachers and their roles as managers. Guilloteaux visits a Korean classroom of seventh and eighth graders, comparing reports from observers and from students as she writes about "three effective classroom managers" (teachers). Student involvement in documentary film making is the topic of Chapter 10, from Stillwell and Gillies at a university in Japan. Japan is also the setting for Chapter 11, but this time the author, Soresi, writes in particular about students who the author describes as both shy and low in language skills even after six years of study. Sketches illustrate the teacher's technique of wording and placing questions around the room. The contents of Chapter 12 will appeal to teachers who have trouble remembering students' names. Delaney's digital photo sheet helped him to master the names of his Japanese tertiary classes of up to 80 learners per class, a necessary prop. The ideas will appeal to teachers who know the difficulty of remembering unfamiliar names and yet believe this is important for classroom management.

Chapter 14 reports on two-way tutoring. It is set in a Costa Rican pre-university college preparation programme where peer tutoring is used to create cohesion amongst students from widely diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The last chapter in the book, Chapter 15, deals with the situation in Japan where group dynamics are fostered in a number of ways, including the use of portfolios.

Classroom management is recommended as a source of ideas for classes of all ages, since it is easy to see beyond the specifics of one age group or country to more generally applicable principles. The references from each chapter's opening literature review which are integrated at the end of the book is also a helpful feature.

Guidelines for Submissions

Submissions for the Quarterly Issue

Submissions guidelines

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The abstract should contain an informative summary of the main points of the article, including, where relevant, the article's purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, types of data analysed, subject information, main findings, and conclusions. The abstract should reflect the focus of the article.

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