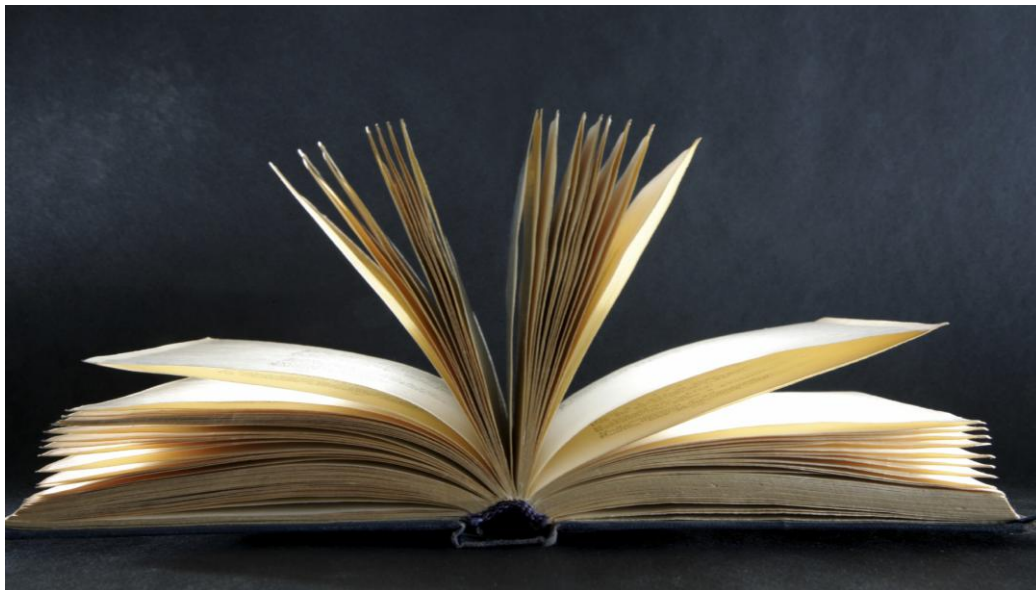


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Foreword

EFL/ESL Teacher Identity

Dr. Rahma Al-Mahrooqi

Teachers, despite all current technological interventions in the processes of pedagogy, remain central for educating the young and advancing communities (Smit & Fritz, 2008). As individuals, they differ widely, forming a population of men and women with varied life experiences and professional backgrounds. In the school context, as in the community and society at large, they interact with other individuals - students, administrators, parents, supervisors, colleagues, and workers. They thus negotiate meaning “and adjust behaviour in response to the actions of others” (Ibid, p. 92). Both negotiation and adjustment shape and reshape their identities, which can be viewed as complex (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), dynamic and multifaceted (Tsui, 2007), changeable, shifting, evolving, and personally, socially and professionally determined (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). Because it is bound to influence practice, teacher identity has recently been recognized as an important area of research (Beijaard, et al, 2004; Gu, n.d.; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Tsui, 2007; Wu, Palmer, & Field, 2011). Among topics already explored during the last two decades are the multi-dimensional nature of a professional identity, the relationship between identity's social and professional facets, and the importance of teacher choice and agency in identity formation (Tsui, 2007, p. 657). Teacher narratives and reflection are also studied in identity research and are regarded not as reflections of identity but as ways of shaping and reshaping it.

Despite a growing body of research, however, exploration of teacher identity is still in its infancy, with very few studies targeting teacher identity development (Kanno & Stuart, 2011). More research is urgently needed, especially on new teacher identity formation (Dotger & Smith, 2009) because there is a disciplinary movement away from a skills acquisition focus to one addressing teacher identity development (Gu, n.d.), since this has profound implications for loyalty to the field and pedagogic

practice. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 175), studying teacher identity can serve a number of functions:

It can be used as a frame or an analytic lens through which to examine aspects of teaching. ... It can also be seen as an organizing element in teachers' professional lives, even a 'resource that people use to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and to the world at large' (MacLure, 1993, p. 311).

Beauchamp and Thomas also make the sensible point that a better understanding of teacher identity could be used to enhance the conception and development of teacher education programs. But increased research is also needed on this matter in the field of EFL and ESL teaching because of its complexity and multi-faceted nature. Teachers here vacillate between different worlds and paradigms as most are likely to receive their English teacher education in different parts of the globe, teach an international range of students, and so must negotiate meaning at various levels and labour to iron out and balance differences.

This volume is an attempt to fill the existing gap in EFL/ESL teacher identity research, focusing on its various findings across the world. Patrick Ng's "Contextual influences on the Teaching Practice of a beginning TESOL teacher: A narrative inquiry" targets the contextual influences that shape the reality of classroom practice. Through the narrative of a new EFL teacher in Japan, his paper answers the question "What role does the teaching context play in the teaching practice of a beginning TESOL teacher in the Japanese classroom?" His findings reveal that this new teacher's practices are influenced by learners' language proficiency and attitudes, institutional culture, mentors from outside the classroom, teaching's sociolinguistic context, and the local teaching philosophy. Hence, practice is not only a result of teacher training or of personal convictions, but also an outcome of a myriad other factors.

Fennel's article demonstrates how moral and pedagogical orientation to the "good" shapes the teacher-self and manifests itself in practice. The findings reveal that, unfortunately, sometimes an orientation to the "good" does not necessarily find materialization in actual classroom practice.

Perception of one's self as a non-native English teacher is sometimes fraught with insecurity. This is what Josh Wang reveals in his article "Moving towards the transition: Non-native EFL teachers' perception of native-speaker norms and responses to varieties of English in the era of the global spread of English". He shows that, despite accepting the idea of "World Englishes", Asian countries have continued to recruit native English-speaking teachers to introduce "authentic" or "standard" English. Wang's results show that even non-native English teachers themselves view native English-speaking teachers as more capable of teaching English, a model, Wang urges, that has to be reconsidered by these teachers, teacher educators and teacher education programs.

Cook's article investigates Japanese English teachers' beliefs, practices, and rationale for using activities based on the Communicative, Audio-lingual, and Grammar Translation approaches. Using a questionnaire given to 10 teachers, the study showed that the teachers held positive attitudes towards communicative activities. However, there were both consistencies and inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and reported practices due to contextual factors.

In their article "Towards a globalized notion of English language teaching in Saudi Arabia: A case study", Elyas and Picard show how through narrative we can unpack competing discourses on the identities of EFL teachers. Contextual factors and relationships between professional training, life experiences, and beliefs, and how these influence practice, are delineated in the paper, providing an understating of how different tensions or discourses may shape a teacher's professional identity.

Stan Pederson's "Collaborative play-making using ill-structured problems: Effect on pre-service language teachers' beliefs" describes a classroom activity based on collaborative play-making, investigating its impact on teachers' beliefs, which are often viewed as un-amenable to change. The author used a pre-test and post-test technique to measure the degree of change in student-teachers' beliefs and found a 25% shift in responses across the agree/disagree dichotomy; hence, the procedure had produced a considerable amount of change, which in turn could be the result of teachers' personal reflections on the controversial topics they read. Thus, reflection is a technique that can shape and reshape beliefs and identity.

In addition to the articles mentioned above, the volume also includes reviews of the following four books relevant to the teacher identity theme:

Postcolonial English. Varieties Around the World (first edition) by Edgar W. Schneider. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (reprinted 2009). Pp. xvi + 367. Reviewer Silvia Bruti.

Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-Native Speakers by Andrea DeCapua. New York, N.Y.: Springer, 2008. Pp. xviii + 444. Reviewer Ozgur Yildirim.

Spelling and Society: The Culture and Politics of Orthography Around the World by Mark Sebba. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xix + 189. Reviewer Jing Zhao.

Listening in the Language Classroom by John Field. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. X + 366. Reviewer Zeng Yajun.

I wish you a happy and fruitful reading of this June 2012 issue of the Asian EFL Journal.

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Contextual influences on the Teaching Practice of a beginning TESOL teacher: A narrative inquiry

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Abstract

Traditionally, learning to teach was viewed as applying discrete amounts of teaching knowledge in one context and developing teaching skills in another context. However, in recent years, there has been a paradigm shift in teacher education focusing on the specific teaching context that shapes the reality of classroom practice. According to Freeman and Johnson (1998), the teaching context such as schools and classrooms are the sociocultural terrains in which the work of teaching is conceptualized, implemented and evaluated (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 408). This paper attempts to fill the gap in the effects of contextual factors on the teaching practice of a new EFL teacher in Japan. Thus the research question for this study is, "What role does the teaching context play in the teaching practice of a beginning TESOL teacher in the Japanese classroom?" Elbaz (1983) has demonstrated that teachers' knowledge is largely held tacitly in holistic, often narrative, forms, suggesting that narratives of

teaching will allow new ways to understand the experience of L2 classrooms. Through a narrative inquiry of my teaching experience in Japan, I attempt to show that the teaching practice of TESOL teachers in Japan is influenced by contextual factors such as students' linguistic proficiency and learning attitudes, the institution learning culture, mentors in the out-of-classroom context, teaching philosophy and the sociolinguistic context of teaching. It is intended that this study will add on the knowledge of contextual influences on teaching practice in teacher education.

Key words: Teaching, Context, Practice, TESOL Teacher, Japan

Introduction: Embarking on a teaching journey in Japan

I was filled with excitement when I first arrived in Fukuoka, a metropolitan city located in Kyushu, Japan, for an international English language conference. I was given a travel grant to present a paper at the TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) conference. After my presentation, I decided to view some books displayed by some publishing companies at the exhibition hall. Suddenly, my eyes caught sight of a man trying to set up a booth at a remote corner. I introduced myself as an English lecturer from Singapore and asked which publishing company he belonged to. However, he told me that he is not a representative of any publishing company, but a professor trying to recruit English teachers for a new international university in Kyushu. He then asked me, 'Are you interested to teach English in Japan?' I did not expect such a question but as I was curious to know more about teaching English in Japan, I immediately responded by saying, 'Sure, why not?' I was then invited to attend an interview and after an hour of intensive 'grilling' about my teaching experiences, the team of interviewers were pleased with my teaching credentials and decided that I fitted the bill for an English teaching post available in their university. Although I had never taught English to Japanese students, I nevertheless decided to accept the job offer as I had just completed an Ed.D. (Doctorate of Education) in TESOL. I felt I could put my teaching qualifications and experience to good use in a country where there is a great demand for English teachers. However, little did I realize that embarking on a TESOL teaching career in Japan is like sailing into

uncharted territory. Although I was an experienced teacher of English in Singapore and possessed some knowledge of TESOL theories and knowledge, entering the TESOL profession in Japan was a daunting venture as the teaching context was totally different from my previous teaching profession as a Communication Skills lecturer in Singapore.

With the advent of globalization, the importance of the English language is increasingly emphasized in expanding circle countries such as Japan. Despite its limited range of functions, English is increasingly prevalent in the Japanese society. Its position continues to soar as a result of the awareness among Japanese of the importance of English as the key to maintaining the nation's global status in the 21st century. There is a high demand for English teachers in Japanese schools and universities as policy makers articulate the need to develop Japanese students' proficiency in communicative English (The Ministry of Education in Japan, hereafter termed Monbusho, 1989, p. 98). There is also a demand for English teachers to work in private language schools as a result of the increasing demand for English conversation from a wide range of learners.

Although many teachers were recruited, Yoshida (2002) observes that TESOL teachers trained in the conventional TESOL teaching methodology often experience frustration in their teaching in Japan and he attributed this to their inability to accept the fact that the sociolinguistic environment in which English is taught is different from the environment that was assumed in TESOL teacher training programmes. Miller (2001) suggests that it is important for teachers to be aware of the Japanese context of English learning and teaching.

However, the impact of contextual factors on the teaching of English in the Japanese EFL classroom has not been well documented. This article attempts to address the paucity of literature concerning the effects of contextual factors on teacher education through the lens of the teaching practice of a beginning TESOL teacher in Japan. The research question for this study is:

What role does the teaching context play in the teaching practice of a beginning teacher in the Japanese classroom?

Recent work in teacher education focuses on the ways in which teachers' narratives shape and inform their practice. Through a self-narrative account and reflections of my teaching journey, I attempt to show that teaching practice in the Japanese EFL classroom is mainly influenced by contextual factors such as: students' linguistic proficiency and learning attitudes, the institution learning culture, mentors (teaching colleagues, administrators, departmental head etc) in the out-of-classroom context, teaching philosophy of the instructor, and the sociolinguistic context of teaching. It is hoped that my story will add on to the existing knowledge of teacher education by encouraging, changing or provoking other EFL professionals to ask new questions about the use of a contextually appropriate teaching approach to achieve the best teaching outcome. The outline of this paper is as follows:

I will first provide a literature review on the history of English teaching in Japan. I will then review the literature on the impact of contextual factors on teaching followed by a discussion on the use of narrative inquiry as a research methodology in teacher education. Next, I will discuss the impact of contextual influences on my teaching practice in Japan based on my narrative notes and comments on my teaching experience. I will then reflect on the contextual influences on my teaching practice to draw out some implications for EFL teaching.

English language teaching in Japan

This section will first highlight the reasons and problems in the implementation of English language teaching in Japan. It will also describe some major curricular reforms in English education and provide comments on communicative language teaching in Japan.

Fujimoto (2006) investigated the history of English language education in Japan over the past 150 years and concluded that English language education was a means to

catch up with the West in terms of technology and commercial expansion. The first Course of Study for Junior High School students was implemented in 1947 to teach the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Since then there have been various revisions to the Course of Study. In 1989, a new revised Course of Study was proposed to help Japanese students develop basic skills to communicate in English for the purpose of cultivating basic international understanding (Monbusho, 1989, p.98). The reform coincided with the spread of Communicative Language Teaching (hereafter CLT). Monbusho stressed the need for CLT teaching as a break from the grammar-translation method favored by the mainstream system for the past 100 years. The 2001 Course of Study stated that the overall objectives of studying foreign languages was to develop Japanese students' practical communication abilities such as understanding information, and helping them to express their own ideas. In 2003, Monbusho launched the Strategic Plans to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities and the overall objectives of the communicative curriculum was spelt out as follows:

With the progress of globalization in the economy and in society, it is essential that our children acquire communication skills in English, which has become a common international language [...] for living in the 21st century. This has become an extremely important issue both in terms of the future of our children and the further development of Japan as a nation. (MEXT, 2003).

However MEXT's attempt to promote CLT was met with resistance by educators, politicians and academicians. LoCastro (1996) believes that it is difficult to implement CLT in Japan as other aspects of the education system are in conflict with the CLT curriculum. Hence many teachers mildly approve of the communicative English curriculum endorsed by MEXT because of a lack of institutional support for teachers to teach communicative English (Gorsuch, 2001). Even Monbusho admitted its failings with the teaching of communicative English citing reasons such as: "a lack of exposure to spoken English, lack of confidence in communicating in English, large class size, difficult teaching materials and adherence to traditional method"s (Lamie, 2005, p.161).

Theoretical framework: Contextual factors in teaching

Conventional TESOL teacher education programmes usually operated under the assumption that teachers needed discrete amounts of teaching theories, methodology and knowledge to be effective in their classroom. However, the way teachers teach in the classroom is usually influenced not by the teaching methodology alone but by the context in which their teaching takes place. According to Freeman and Johnson (1998), the knowledge-base of a teacher is derived from both the domain of schools (the schools and classrooms) and schooling defined as the sociocultural historical processes in which teaching and learning take place (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 408). The process of schooling includes the concept of “the apprenticeship of observation” described by Lortie (1975) as teachers’ personal experiences of being a learner and their own observations of their teachers. This is particularly evident among pre-service Japanese teachers whose teaching approaches are mainly based on their own teaching experiences during pre-service training and are reticent to develop as in the “front-loading” (Freeman, 2002, p. 11) of teacher knowledge. Takagi (2002) also observes that Japanese teachers are in general reluctant to develop or talk about teaching.

Stritikus (2003) is also explicit about the influence of the contextual dimension on pedagogical practices in the classroom and states that the way teachers implement teaching in the classroom is closely connected to the “context in which their teaching takes place, their beliefs towards pedagogy, as well as their political and personal ideologies” (Stritikus, 2003, p.33).

In a similar vein, Toohey (2007) stresses that teachers are not agentive in their own right but are constrained by specific societal factors such as the institutional culture in which teaching takes place. Kumaravadivelu (2006, p. 69) emphasizes the importance of a context-sensitive approach to teaching through his notion of the “particularity of teaching.” Adopting a postmethod pedagogy, Kumaravadievelu (2006) states that the context-sensitive approach entails encouraging pedagogical practices that are

sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 538).

Other researchers highlight the importance of the contextual factors in the development of teacher knowledge base. Elbaz (1983) refers to teacher's practical knowledge as a kind of knowledge oriented to the practical context and is highly experiential and personal. Elbaz summarises her conception of teacher's knowledge as follows:

This knowledge encompasses first hand experience of students' learning styles, interest, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills. The teacher knows the social structure of the school and what it requires, of teacher and student, for survival and for success; she knows the community of which the school is a part, and has a sense of what it will and will not accept (Elbaz, 1983, p. 5).

Connelly and Clandinin (1995) adopt the metaphor of 'teachers' professional knowledge landscapes' to show the contrast between the personal practical knowledge of teachers as opposed to the technical rationalistic approach to teacher knowledge. According to Connelly and Clandinin, the professional knowledge landscape is composed of two different social contexts: the 'out-of-classroom' and the 'in-classroom'. The 'out-of-classroom' arises from other people's vision of what is right for teachers, and has references to metaphors that allude to imposed prescriptions by the school authority: 'what's coming down the pipe', 'what's coming down now', 'what will they throw down on us next.' As observed by Clandinin and Connelly:

... researchers, policy makers, senior administrators and others using

various implementation strategies, push research findings, policy statements, plans, improvement schemes and so on down what we call the conduit into out-of-classroom place on the professional knowledge landscape (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999, p.2).

On the other hand, the in-classroom has been identified as a place where teachers exercise their agency in their teaching practice. According to Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p.2):

Classrooms are, for the most part, safe places, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice. These lived stories are essentially secret ones.

Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p. 2) also refer to Crites's (1971) term 'sacred story' and 'secret story' to illustrate the difference between stories told about people and about institutions. A growing body of research shows that contextual factors impinge on language teaching and learning in specific ways. Bax (2003a) cogently argues that effective teaching in the EFL classroom is shaped not by teaching methodology alone but by contextual factors which involve teachers exploring the numerous aspects of their particular, local context such as the needs their students, the school culture, existing syllabuses, language-in-education policies, and the wider sociopolitical context in which learning and teaching takes place (Bax, 2003a, p.278). Bax believes that methodology and context should be combined and teachers should be empowered to use their own judgement and abilities to analyse their teaching contexts productively (Bax, 2003b, pp. 295-286). Barkhuizen (2008) provides the rationale for a context-sensitive approach to language teaching by suggesting that

... teachers teach best and students learn best in situations that are compatible with their backgrounds, beliefs and expectations.
(Barkhuizen, 2008, p. 233).

Barkhuizen's context of teaching is not merely restricted to the school context, but

includes the personal context of the teacher (inner thoughts, ideas, and theories of teachers) and the sociopolitical context (national language-in-education policy, imposed curriculum from official educational policy planners and the socioeconomic circumstance in a region). The impact of contextual factors on learning and teaching is clearly applicable in the Japanese educational context. Okano and Tsuchiya (1999, p.9) observed that Japanese schooling socializes Japanese learners into accepting the dominant ideology to be true or universal. Sato and Kleinasser (2004) conducted a research study on the teaching practice of Japanese high school English teachers and discovered that the teaching approach is based on the observation of other teachers. They also stated that teaching collaboration among teachers often reinforced existing teaching practices, eroding teachers' motivation to learn to teach in a specific context.

Methodology: Narrative Inquiry of Teacher Knowledge

In recent years, there have been substantial claims made by educational researchers about the value of narrative inquiry in both the theoretical and empirical literature on language teacher education. Based on Dewey's (1938) educational philosophy that we are all knowers who reflect an experience, narrative inquiry has been constructed as a mode of thinking (Bruner, 1996) and a particular variable for representing the richness of human experiences. Narrative inquiry has been placed center stage in teacher education (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995). According to Connelly and Clandinin, the personal practical knowledge of teachers is best understood through teachers' narrative:

Our best understanding of teacher knowledge is a narrative one... In this view of teachers' knowledge, teachers know their lives in terms of stories. They live stories, tell stories of those lives, retell stories with changed possibilities, and relive the changed stories. In this narrative view of teachers' knowledge, we mean more than their way of being in the classroom is storied. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1995, p.12).

The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are story telling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. Although some may argue that life-story narratives can be misleading (Johnson, 1997), narrative inquiry can bring about a transformative quality in teachers' professional lives such as empowerment of teachers to change situations, an epistemological shift and a change in the relationship between teachers, researchers and theory (Johnson and Golomber, p10). Barkhuizen (2008) posits that a narrative inquiry on teaching entails introspection and interrogation. Through the sharing of teacher stories, teachers get the opportunity to reflect on their own practice and to articulate their interpretations of their practice. I agree with Barkhuizen that a narrative approach to exploring one's teaching has important implications for teachers in terms of their teaching craft and by extension, implications for the learning outcomes of their students (Barkhuizen, 2008, p. 232).

In addition, narrative inquiry is also reflective inquiry. The emphasis on reflective practice and teacher research has strengthened the focus on listening to the voice of teachers and hearing their stories. I resonate with Schon's (1983) idea of a reflective practitioner as narratives are a way for teachers to reflect their teaching experiences and are possibly transformative in nature. As a way to reflect on my teaching experiences, I frequently kept narrative notes of my teaching experiences during my initial teaching years as an EFL instructor. After each lesson, I made field notes based on my observations and students' reactions to class activities. In addition,

I also refer to journals, letters and class reflections that documented individual students' learning response to a specific lesson. I also recorded advice, comments and suggestions from mentors (colleagues, administrators, researchers, conference attendees etc) from the out-of-classroom context to help me 'stay afloat' in my teaching.

Narrative Findings: Teaching English in the Japanese EFL classroom

To understand the impact of contextual influences on my teaching practice, I interweave the narration of my classroom instructional practice with comments related to the teaching situation, my immediate teaching context or the wider sociopolitical context in which my teaching is situated. This allows me to connect with other teacher educators engaged in self-study of their teaching practices. It also enables me to focus on my own teaching and helps me to monitor my students' learning (Loughran, 2002).

My teaching context

25 December 2006

It's Christmas Day today. I was surprised to receive a call from a professor from the university in Kyushu informing me that I had been offered a teaching post. I was really surprised by the news but yet excited at the prospect of teaching English in Japan. The professor also told me that four other native English teachers from America, Canada, England and Australia were recruited. I was also informed that I would be teaching English at a Language Center. The English programme at the center was aimed at developing the English language and academic skills of students with an emphasis on the teaching of reading, speaking, listening, writing and test-taking skills.

I soon discovered that a majority of students enrolled in the English programme were Japanese students from different parts of Japan. The average age of students was 18-20 and their average TOEFL score was about 300-400. I was allocated six teaching periods (90 minutes per period) per week. I taught 2 classes of Intermediate English, two classes of Fundamental English, one class of Business English and Advanced English. The Intermediate English classes were conducted twice a week while other English classes were conducted once a week. There were about 20 students in each class.

Unravelling the mystery of the Japanese EFL learner

Although I had previously taught English to international students from Malaysia, China, Indonesia and Thailand, I have never taught Japanese students. However, I soon realized that teaching English to Japanese students was a challenging experience.

13 April 2007

Today is my first day of teaching. I was excited but I was also keen to know more about my students, in particular their learning attitudes and behaviour. When I entered the class, some students gave me a warm smile. I greeted the class and then asked each individual student to reciprocate with a self-introduction. However, there was instant silence. I was really surprised. Each time I posed a question, the class became as quiet as a cemetery and the response would be the same. After a while, I realised that students were afraid to respond to my questions because they did not feel 'comfortable' speaking English in class. I could sense that many students are not so confident in their spoken English.

Although most Japanese students began learning English in junior high school and have completed six years of English education, they are *false beginners*. The English ability of the average Japanese student has been described as:

...having difficulty giving anything more than the most basic information about themselves and discussing matters much more complex than the colour of pens. (Helgesen, 1992, p. 38).

According to Yoshida (2002), the typical Japanese student's learning behaviour during English lessons is best described as a 'goldfish in a fishbowl' (Yoshida, 2002).

Just like a goldfish that relies on its owner to feed it, my students expected me to ‘feed’ them English regularly to help them attain their desired English proficiency. After teaching English in the university for several weeks, I discovered that the learning behaviour of my students is rather similar to Yoshida’s description of Japanese students. During lessons, they rarely start a new topic or initiate a discussion in class, and they seldom ask me questions for clarification or volunteer to answer questions.

25 May 2007

Some students did not know the difference between the past tense and past participle. I explained the difference by writing some sentences on the board. Students were pleased with my explanation. I realized that students were unable to learn English on their own. I will have to do lots of explanations in class to help them improve their English skills. I should pitch my teaching at a lower level and provide sufficient scaffoldings to help students in their learning.

During the next few days, I constantly reminded myself that my students are learning English as a foreign language and I should not have too high an expectation on their spoken English. Knowing that my students were afraid to respond to my questions in English, I encouraged them to communicate their ideas with their partner instead.

The institution learning culture in Japan

Japanese universities are usually four-year institutions and are spread throughout the country. To gain admission to prestigious universities, most Japanese students study very hard in their high schools to pass the 入試 ‘nyushi’ (University entrance examination). However, the irony is that once students are admitted into the university, they usually do not continue to pursue their studies with much diligence or fervour. According to Nozaki (1993, p. 28), the prevailing attitude of Japanese students towards the university is that of a ‘leisureland.’ It is not uncommon to see

many university students devoting much time and energy to part-time jobs rather than focusing their attention on their academic studies.

16 October 2007

I have been teaching in Japan for several months. The learning culture in this university is so different compared to Singapore. In Singapore, almost all university students are motivated to acquire a good command of English believing that proficiency in the language will offer them better employment opportunities in the future. But students in this university do not seem to be motivated to learn English. Some students confided to me that they actually spend an average of four hours per day working in various places (restaurants, amusement centers, departmental shops etc). During the festive seasons such as the 'bonenkai', (end-of-year party), many students told me they could not attend my class as they have to work longer hours.

I was disappointed by the low attendance. I decided to use a variety of teaching materials (DVDs, newspaper articles, graded readers, audiotapes, photos, artifacts, PowerPoint slides, YouTube, and the Internet etc) to ensure that my lessons are interesting and relevant to my students' learning needs. Of course, there were some 'hits and misses' in selecting the appropriate teaching material. However, I was able to stay afloat in my teaching and sustain my students' interest in learning through a careful selection of teaching materials.

Advice from colleagues

After teaching for several months, I was disappointed by my students' lack of interest in speaking English in class. I kept asking myself: *Why are my students so quiet in class? What should I do to encourage them to speak up in class?* Driven by frustration and anxiety, I decided to consult my colleagues on teaching methods or materials that are effective amongst Japanese students.

20 November 2007

I spoke to Tim, an experienced native teacher from Australia who had taught English in Japan for many years. I asked Tim, “What did you do to make your students talk in class?” The response from Tim was shocking but yet helpful, “Patrick, you have to make them relax in class first. Try using fun and interesting activities during the first few lessons. Most Japanese students usually experience high anxiety in learning to speak a foreign language when they enter the university.” Tim also explained that a majority of Japanese students have been taught from young that, ‘The nail that sticks up gets pounded down.’ After the conversation with Tim, I began to realize that my students were reluctant to respond to my question because they were afraid of being singled out for making mistakes and being ‘hazukashii’ (embarrassed) in front of the class.

Besides Tim, I also received lots of encouragement from my colleagues from other departments. There were moments when my status as an English teacher was brought into question when some students told me that they could not understand my English accent. However, several colleagues outside my department reminded me that my strength lies in being able to empathise with the learning difficulties of my students. Another colleague also reminded me that the beauty of being a non-native speaker teacher lies in being able to empower my students through empathy, and sailing with my students to the shore instead of summoning them from the shore.

My early development as a TESOL instructor was not merely shaped by my colleagues working in my department but I also gathered a lot of teaching ‘tips’ through my participation in ELT conferences such as JALT (Japan Association of Language Teaching) and JACET (Japan Association of College English Teaching).

22 November 2007

I attended the JALT conference this week. I discussed with Professor Tanaka my teaching experience in my university. I told him that some of my students are not keen to learn English. He suggested that I try collaborative learning in my teaching. Professor Tanaka explained to me that mainstream Japanese students are more comfortable learning English in small groups than on their own as they can tap on the resources of other students if they experience any difficulties in their learning.

After the conference, I began to read up on collaborative learning in Japan. I learned that assigning specific roles such as ‘hancho’ or ‘apprentice teacher and trainee manager’ (Simmon, 1990, p. 105) is a common practice in the Japanese classroom. I also learnt that these small groups encourage feelings of intimacy and belonging; they also exist to protect its individual members, support them and even ridicule them into conforming to their norms. This peer group intimacy is termed as *uchi*, an important state of dependency which is taken with the child in to later years of education and then adulthood (Shimahara, 1979, p.24). I decided to design project-based learning activities that would allow my students to engage in group discussions and to produce output that would be shared with other members in a collaborative setting. The professional knowledge that I gained from my colleagues in the ELT conferences kept me informed about the TESOL teaching culture in Japan and sustained my TESOL teacher identity.

Establishing the L2 identity of Japanese students

My philosophy of teacher education is constructivist, relational, and grounded in an understanding that “education is development from within” (Dewey, 1938, p. 17). As a new teacher, I was eager to develop the L2 identity of my students. To alleviate their fears in speaking English, I straddled the role of an instructor, a mentor and a learning companion.

15 January 2008

The class was beginning to show interest in trying to speak English in class. However there was still a minority of students who refused to participate in class discussions. To encourage students to use English to communicate their thoughts and ideas, I told them that learning a language means being able to function in it. I also reminded students that English is an important communicative tool in the globalised world. At the end of the lesson, I showed students YouTube videos of other Asian students from Hongkong, Taiwan, Singapore or Malaysia engaging in debates or discussions in English. Students were greatly inspired when they saw that non-native English speakers in other countries were able to express their thoughts and ideas fluently in English. I was glad that some students were able to sense the importance of English as a lingua franca to help them connect with other English speakers around the globe.

On the whole, students appreciated my intentions and they were inspired to improve their English. They also realized that they did not have to reach native-like English fluency in order to communicate in English.

Teaching English in a Japanese-speaking environment: Meeting the challenges

After teaching for a year, I observed that many of my students were learning English in a homogenous linguistic environment that offers them little opportunity to use English in their everyday lives. I began to realise that teaching English in Japan is different from teaching English in the conventional TESOL teaching context as a majority of Japanese students study English to pass test and gain admission to higher institutions of learning (Yoshida, 2002). Although Japanese students have a strong fascination for English, English has no official status in the country, and there is no necessity for them to acquire fluency in the language for use in their daily lives (Yano, 2008). As a result, they did not make good progress in their spoken English.

25 January 2008

I asked students to give me some feedback on my teaching today. To be frank, I was apprehensive of students' evaluations on my teaching. I felt I had not helped them progress in their spoken English. A particular student wrote me a note to explain why it was difficult for her to improve her spoken English: 'I thank teacher for teaching us English and we have learnt a lot of good vocabulary from you. But who do we use English to communicate with? Everyday, I use Japanese with my friends in school and when I come home, I speak Japanese to my family'. Another student also lamented that he did not improve in his spoken English: 'I think my spoken English skills have not improved very much because there are few chances to speak English in my daily life. I hope there are more opportunities for English communication with others in the class.'

I was a bit disappointed by such comments but at the same time, I heard my students' pleas to provide them with a communicative context for them to practice their spoken English. I also became more aware of the difficulties that Japanese students experience in learning English. As suggested by (Seargeant, 2009), the Japanese are not very good at learning foreign languages because very few people need to speak English well.

In order to provide the opportunity for my students to speak English, and to increase their confidence to speak the language, I decided to implement a simple script writing drama activity called 'Readers Theatre' (Adams, 2003). As Readers Theatre involves all aspects of language use, I felt it would provide my students with an authentic communicative context to practise their spoken English.

10 February 2008

I conducted Readers Theatre in class today. Honestly speaking, I wasn't really sure whether students would respond favorably to this activity. However, I observed that students were willing to participate in the Readers Theatre activity. At the end of the lesson, I asked students to write their opinions regarding the Readers Theatre activity

in their journal. Their comments in their journal entries showed that they truly enjoyed the use of drama and saw it as an innovative approach to learning English. One student wrote: 'I really enjoyed this activity because I have never done it. However, it was a bit hard for me to work on this activity. We had to make a scene, write the script, practice the script and do many things. But because of this activity, we could learn how to speak English more fluently. It was also fun watching other groups perform. Although writing the script was difficult, this experience would help me improve my English speaking skills.' Another student also had positive experience with Readers Theatre: 'It was very interesting! I couldn't help laughing when I watched other groups' performances. Everyone tried their best to put up a good performance. In the beginning, we were not really good in our reading but finally we were able to do it properly. Thanks to this activity, we could enjoy ourselves practicing in English.'

Convinced that my students were motivated to improve their English skills through drama performance, I made it a point to include drama activities in my lesson planning. Subsequently, I felt emboldened to experiment with more innovative teaching styles and methods that would provide a communicative context for students to speak English. The positive feedback from students during my early years of teaching affirmed that I was on the right track. The favorable course evaluations that I received after the first semester of the second year validated the changes I had made to my teaching practice. I was greatly encouraged by students' comments such as:

'Thanks Patrick. I always enjoy your class. You are really a good teacher' and 'Thank you for the awesome lecture! We had so much fun!'

Discussion: Reflections on my teaching journey

Doing this narrative exercise has been a productive experience for me. It has enabled me to reflect critically on my own classroom instructional practice, and in the process I am able to direct my own professional learning (Kitchen, 2005). As I reflected on

my own teaching practice and the comments by my students on their learning experiences, I became more aware of the importance of sociocultural factors that might affect my teaching effectiveness. I realized that it is important to understand the background of my students to be effective in my teaching. To bring my teaching to a higher level, I will need to enhance my knowledge of my students:

*How did they perceive their learning experiences in the junior or senior high schools?
Did they enjoy learning English? How many hours of English lessons did they attend?
Did they learn conversational English? Did they enjoy writing academic essays?
What type of class activities or teaching approaches work best for Japanese EFL learners?*

I believe that if I blindly follow teaching theories and knowledge of teaching, and neglect the socio-cultural norms of learning, I will not be able to meet my learners' needs.

Prior to teaching in Japan, I have always believed that my role as a TESOL instructor is to develop my students' communicative competence through meaningful communicative activities. However, through this exercise, I came to question the applicability of the CLT approach in the Japanese classroom. I am convinced that the CLT approach does not square with the reality of Japanese culture of learning due to students' low English proficiency, particularly their fluency in English, students' lack of motivation and resistance to class participation. I also realize that it may be difficult for me to focus merely on CLT in my instructional practice as the Japanese society focuses more on using language for intracultural rather than intercultural communication (Honna & Takeshita, 2009). As I have reflected on my students' reluctance to communicate in English, I will need to lower my expectation on the amount of student talk in my classroom. In the next phase of my teaching, I have decided to focus less on the communicative competence but stress more reading and listening skills. While it is true that English is a global language for a wide variety of cross-cultural communicative purposes, I believe that there is a need to consider how English is embedded in the local context when developing an appropriate teaching pedagogy (Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996, p.211).

To move my teaching forward, I will have to design classroom activities and teaching methodologies that are congruent with the local culture of learning.

By narrating and reflecting on my classroom teaching, I became aware that a teacher's knowledge is related to the world of practice (Tsui, 2003). I agree with Freeman and Johnson that the social and cultural contexts such as the schools and classroom function as frameworks of value and interpretation in which language teachers must learn to work effectively (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 409).

Conclusion

In this paper, I adopt a narrative inquiry approach to examine the impact of contextual factors on my teaching practice. By engaging in an inquiry into my own practices, I discover that effective teaching in the EFL classroom is shaped not by language teaching methodology alone but by the context in which teaching is situated. This study also allows me to reflect critically on my own teaching methods and provokes me to ask new questions and take other actions to move my teaching forward. I have learnt to pay careful attention to the background of my students, in particular their learning attitudes, their linguistic proficiency and their specific learning needs. It is hoped that through my 'story,' other teachers will take time to reflect on their own sociocultural contexts of teaching either by writing their teaching life histories or recording significant or problematic teaching situations in their classrooms (Barkhuizen, 2008). By doing so, they would engage with the context of their teaching and be responsive to the needs of their students and the school community.

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‘To act in a good way’ – Constructions of EFL teacher-self

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Abstract

This article examines the notion of ‘good’ in the construction of the teacher-self. Brown (2005) challenges those “of us involved in ESL teaching...to resist complacency in the construction of ESL teacher identity as a force for good and remain aware of the potential to be much less than this” (2005, p.18). This article addresses such a challenge drawing on data collected from a doctoral study into the lives of Nicaraguan Secondary School English language teachers – ELTs (Fennell 2007). The study presented a multi-layered model of the teacher-self and it is the second layer which is the focus of this article, showing how an orientation to the good (moral and pedagogical) influences the construction of the teacher-self and how, too, this orientation with its perceived outcome in classroom behaviour falls short in actual classroom behaviour.

Keywords: Teacher-Self, Orientation to the Good (Moral and Pedagogical), Nicaraguan Secondary School English Language Teachers

The Teacher-Self

Individuals encounter different types of experience over their life-time, experience which “helps us to develop and maintain a sense of self” (Shiever & Carver, 1980, p.232). For it is from these experiences that individuals construct stories about themselves and so make sense of their lives, of who they are (Hekman, 1995). Tyler and colleagues (1999) stated that the basic proposition of the social self “is drawn at least partly from group membership” (p.4). Therefore, if the group was of teachers then part of the larger social self would be a teacher’s self - the way in which “individuals think about themselves as teachers – the images they have of self-as-teacher” (Knowles,1992, p. 99). Brown, too, uses this ‘notion of self as a teacher’ (2005, p.18) in writing about the construction of the ESL’s teacher-identity, highlighting in its construction an orientation to the good or as she puts it “a force for good” (2005, p.18).

Orientation to the good (moral and pedagogical)

Brown argues that in this development of ‘a force for good’ there is “engagement with the moral and social purposes of the teacher work” (2005, p.18). The moral orientation to the good is a theme developed by the philosopher, Taylor (1989). He argues that moral philosophy has tended to focus on “what is right to do” (Taylor, 1989, p.3) couched in statements that prescribe or commend (Railton, 2003) concerned as they are with “defining the context of obligation” (Taylor, 1989, p.3). For Taylor, morality is less an obligation and more an “orientation to the good” and the “nature of the good life” (1989 p.3) as perceived by the individual, which he defined as “anything considered valuable, worthy, admirable, of whatever kind of category” (1989, p.47).

Moreover, having this “sense of qualitative discrimination” (Taylor, 1989, p.47) requires that an individual move through a moral space; “a space in which questions arise about: what is good or bad; what is worth doing and what not; what has meaning and importance for you; and what is trivial and secondary” (Taylor, 1989, p.28). These questions, he continued, supply a framework for judging where we stand on the orientation to the good, defining the things that have meaning for us; in other words, addressing the issue of who I am. As the individual moves through this space of moral orientation his/her self is formed: “[w]e are, ourselves in so far as we move in a certain space of questions, as we seek and find an orientation to the good” (Taylor, 1989, p.34).

Taylor, writing as a philosopher, is not concerned with the specifics of the teacher-self, unlike Brown (2005). Yet, as a way of exemplifying what is to ‘the good’, he describes this as some special value attached to the rank or station that people have attained in their lives (Taylor 1989) and which confers a sense of dignity on the individual. If the rank or station is that of a teacher then that which is to ‘the good’ has a moral orientation. In other words, the construction of the teacher-self includes a moral orientation to the good.

However, there is more to this orientation to the good than just what is perceived as moral. Definition of a self, wrote Taylor, “usually involves not only his [the individual’s] stand on moral and spiritual matters but also some reference to the defining community” (1989, p.36). If that defining community is of teachers and teaching, then Taylor’s concept of the self may be modified to equal the moral *and* pedagogical orientation to the good. What is to ‘the good’ may not only be derived from moral orientation. For if “most justifications of specific actions operate by citing some other source, authority, or principle from which they derive their goodness” (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997, p.199), then teachers could justify their classroom behaviour by citing the authority of a particular approach and the ‘goodness’ of what Woods (1984, p.46) termed ‘pedagogical orientation’. Such an orientation “includes aims, philosophies and ideologies and sustained or intensified by critical area influences” (Woods 1984, p.46). It was this combination of moral and

pedagogical orientation to the good which was applied to the lives of the four participant teachers in the doctoral study.

Methodology: Data collection and analysis

The Doctoral study with its central research question: *How, within the context of Nicaragua, do life-experience and orientation to the good influence teachers' professional sense of self and their classroom behaviour (the self in practice)?* , adopted a methodology that was interpretative in nature. “Interpretative research focuses more on understanding people” (Sarantakos, 2005, p.11) an understanding which comes from within rather than without and permits the collection of data “glossed with the meanings and purposes of the people who are their source” (Cohen et al, 2000, p.28).

The chosen approach was that of narrative descriptions, interpreted through a combination of comprehensive content analysis and thematic textual accounts. Moreover, being ethnographic in method not in intent (Wolcott 1987), semi-structured interviews, conversations, field notes and classroom observation were the utilized data collection tools. The data was collected in three phases over a period of four years in a multitude of locations which fell within the contextual boundaries of the study – the family and community, personal education, professional experiences, and national educational policy.

The first phase, 12 weeks in the summer of 2001, involved the informal and unstructured observation of day to day life at the case study school. It gave the researcher a sense of and feeling for, the teachers' different sets of perceptions, those of their roles as English Language Teachers (ELTs), of their colleagues, of the school itself, and of the economic hardships they faced. The purpose of Phase two – 11 weeks in the summer of 2002 was to explore in greater depth the teachers' sense of self and their classroom practice, much of which was recorded on audiotape. The

eight days of Phase three in January 2005, was a follow up visit giving a longitudinal feel to the study. The study was of four ELTs in Nicaragua, all of whom taught in the same government secondary school (one male and two female ELTs declined to participate in the study). The sample was as follows – all names are pseudonyms:

Franco – Senior/ELT, in his early 30's, qualified, with 12 years of teaching experience, married with two young children.

Miguel - ELT , in his late 20's, 5 years of teaching experience, in his 5th year of a university training course, married with one child.

Enrique – ELT, in his early 30's, 7 years teaching experience, in his 5th year of a university training course, married with two children.

Vilmar – ELT, in his early 30s, 4 years teaching experience, in his 3rd year of a university training course, married with one child.

I was interested in the participants' lives as teachers so the primary focus was on the classroom and the school. However, aspects of their teacher-self were to be discovered in locations other than where they taught; their staffroom, the university where they trained, their second place of work, their town, their neighbourhoods, and their homes. I needed, therefore, to sample these. This secondary focus came through chance (meeting one of the teachers at the town fair), possibility (participation in the Ninth National Annual Conference of ELTs) and invitation (to attend the lectures of one of the participant teachers' university lecturers). Taking Taylor's modified concept of the self as the moral and pedagogical orientation to 'the good', the data for each teacher was examined by asking the following questions:

What is of value?

What is good?

What is bad?

What is worth doing?

What is of secondary importance?

What are the issues on which a stand is taken?

What is the orientation – moral or pedagogical?

What motive impels their narratives?

The analysis of the participant teachers' moral orientation to the good, came not from having directly asked the question posed by Taylor but rather from interpreting conversations and observations, extrapolating what for them was important, of worth, of value – a virtue. Coding the data accordingly – a profile of the teachers' moral and pedagogical orientation was produced which could then be matched with the observed behaviour.

Findings: One teacher's moral and pedagogical orientation to 'the good'

For the purposes of brevity, the findings for one teacher only are presented – that of Franco. Franco showed a moral orientation to the good in which he attached value to “doing good” in the local and national area. He explained this feeling of ‘doing good’ as taking “an opportunity in which I can help to better things. I am doing something good.” His reasoning was to leave behind improvements, not just in his area of English language teaching but elsewhere in the school or in whichever place he found himself working. Indeed, he took pride in being part of a group of teachers who made themselves available to work with the best students out of school hours.

Money was not the motivation because they did not receive any extra pay, though they were sometimes provided with lunch. When asked why he did it, he replied, “If we are interested in improving things we just take advantage of any opportunity to do what we want to do. We are interested in getting the best from ourselves and our students.” Evidence could be found in his comment: “We don’t say we have the best teachers or the best students but we have the best student and we have the best players of football and we have the best musical band.”

This orientation to “doing something good” while general and moral was also specific and pedagogical. Franco valued collective educational change in the local and national arenas as a way of getting the best from his students, the specifics of which were to establish a team committed to research and realising a national English language syllabus. Research was important because it facilitated the transfer of theory into practice. A national syllabus was important because its realisation prompted ELTs’ professional understanding, benefited their classroom experience and improved the learning experience of the student.

Franco recognised that he could not achieve this on his own and therefore, sought to establish a committed team of teachers. “What is important is the formation of a team...who are ... how do you say ‘comprometido’ [committed]?” As Senior ELT and acknowledging “that we don’t have a syllabus here”, he had the opportunity to both design and pilot an English syllabus in the school before taking it nationwide. He wanted ELTs in all secondary schools “to feel aware of having a syllabus when they plan anything, when they follow any course book.” However, this inclination was not shared by others in those very arenas (local and national) so he sought to influence his own teachers, and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD). It was his belief that the school ELTs with an orientation favourable to the promotion of educational interests could work as a team to produce an English Language syllabus – a syllabus that because it had been trialled in the classroom would win acceptance by the Ministry. He saw this as generating a proposal based on research practitioners’ experience in known classroom conditions.

Franco, though, was to be frustrated finding that some of his teachers did not share similar feelings, their loyalties reserved for interests outside the Institute. As regards teamwork, they needed some induction into the process, to think about “what they have to do sometimes when they need help or when they think they are not sure about what they are doing.” Yet some were unwilling to seek advice, preferring to work on their own and avoiding acknowledging their mistakes within the group.

This lack of commonality in perceptions led Franco to seek out another group of educators who felt the same about teamwork, research development and syllabus design. His life narrative changed as he followed deeply held feelings about how he should act. He enrolled in a succession of postgraduate qualifications, which enabled him to study with a team of postgraduate students and international course leaders committed to syllabus promulgation. In doing so, he also hoped to win recognition by the MECD for his work as a research practitioner, thus demonstrating personal ambition mixed in with altruism.

While Franco believed that educational interests ought to be of paramount importance to MECD, he expressed disappointment that they were in fact secondary to political interests. Officials tended to be political appointees who had little intention of improving education, being more concerned with serving the political interests of the governing party. He recounted how the local MECD official had admitted to him that he had no knowledge of, nor interest in, the need to introduce a national English Language Syllabus. While Franco felt that he had the knowledge and the responsibility (as the recognised English language specialist in the region), his failure to do so was in part because “maybe they [MECD officials] just take into account if I belong to their political party.”

Franco’s moral orientation to the good was to do good things, to leave behind improvements in the local and national arena. This orientation through deeply held feelings for his profession was translated into a pedagogical orientation. Locally, he met with partial success in his students achieving national bests in their chosen fields.

However, he failed in his desire to establish a shared community of practice amongst his team of ELTs and was forced to move the focus of his orientation to his fellow postgraduate students and the national and international expertise of his course teachers. In doing so, he hoped to gain the attention of politically appointed ministry officials and secure acceptance of a new research based national English language syllabus. Here, too, within the time framework of the present study he failed to achieve his goal.

Discussion

The data showed how a moral and pedagogical orientation to the good – a force for good – helped shape the construction of the ELT teacher-self. Brown (2005, p.13), in writing about the construction of ESL’s teacher identity, cautions us against unqualified celebration of the good for its realisation or not defines “the ways of being available to ESL students” (2005, p.18). In other words, it behoves those of us involved in English language teaching to question the actuality of such a force in practice.

With Franco, his failure to get the other ELTs in the school to compile and pilot a new, research based, potentially national syllabus, is an acknowledgement of his having fallen short in what he termed as ‘doing good’. This led him to turn his efforts to his fellow postgraduate students switching his allegiance (at least in part) from the classroom to his postgraduate research projects.

This switch in location emphasis created a ‘shortfall’ in an area not recognised by Franco, that of his actual classroom behaviour. One of Franco’s core components of his teacher-self, which held significance for him and determined the way he taught was the fact that, as he put it, “I am the CLT (communicative language teaching) specialist”. The way of teaching as a CLT specialist meant the emphasis was on teaching meaning not form; English was used to complete activities which require

student to student interaction through pair and group work; his lessons were structured to include presentation, practice, spontaneous speech with the teaching of vocabulary through which to understand use; he avoided being in front of the class and always the focal point of the students' attention; finally he emphasised cooperative learning in which the better students were used to support peer correction.

However, despite the conviction with which Franco described his perceived classroom behaviour (driven as it was by his moral and pedagogical orientation to the good) there was a total lack of consonance between his perceived and observed classroom behaviour.

1. Contrary to Franco's assertion that students learn about structures through use, he was observed teaching via formal transmission of fixed structures, drawing attention to the structures to be learnt before giving the grammatical explanation.
2. In his observed classroom behaviour there was very little evidence of English being used for activity based interaction through pair work and group work. With the one exception being the role-play of dialogues, nearly all interaction was teacher directed. Moreover, there was a noticeable absence of English being spoken in class. Spanish was used not just in the translation of words, sentences and exercises, but also in giving instructions and explanations.
3. While the inclusion of a presentation and practice stage was observed, opportunities for the production of spontaneous speech were missing.
4. Only when groups of students were role-playing a dialogue to the rest of the class did he move away from the front of the class and from directing the interaction. However, even then he would interrupt to correct the students thereby diverting the focus of the lesson back on to him.

5. Franco believed in getting the better students to help their classmates, however, no such behaviour was observed, though on occasion, students' answers were put to the class as a whole for correction.

Franco's moral and pedagogical orientation to the good, when stymied by the constraints of the context he shared with other teachers, that of the school and its environment, led him to focus not on his own classroom behaviour but rather on the postgraduate research projects with which he was involved and through which he sought to do good by bringing about improvements in the local and national arena. This switch in allegiance (at least in part) from the classroom to his postgraduate studies led to his losing sight of his classroom practice in favour of a broader national practice where the constraints of the local context could be circumvented.

Conclusion

There is a part of the teacher-self whose construction is orientated to the good, or as Brown terms it "a force for good" which, as Brown states, we as teachers need to question "and remain aware of the potential for it to be much less" (2005, p.18). As the case of Franco has shown; the capacity to fall short, to achieve less than its potential is real and "located within a genealogy of context" (Goodson 1992, p.248). An orientation to the good is not in itself enough to ensure teachers' potential benefits to students' ways of learning. It is dependent also on the changing nature of life-experience, in particular the constraints of school and environment in which the teachers find themselves: such that EFL teachers struggle with the push for communicative language teaching and find themselves "increasingly caught in the dichotomy between the forms and functions of language in use" (Kramsch, 1989, p. 70).

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Moving towards the transition: Non-native EFL teachers' perception of native-speaker norms and responses to varieties of English in the era of global spread of English

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Abstract

In Asia, the dominance of English as a foreign or second language has greatly contributed to the prevalence of Standard English and Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs). Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan have been officially recruiting NESTs to introduce “authentic” Standard English to their citizens. However, as globalisation continues throughout the world, the genres featuring native speaker norms have been challenged for failure to equip English learners with English as an International Language (EIL) or World Englishes (WEs) competence to communicate with other non-native English speakers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds in international settings. The present study is based on this

conceptual problem and investigates how Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) perceive native speaker norms and respond to varieties of English developed outside the Inner Circle, and how they are prepared to operate in the EIL/WEs contexts in their training programs. The paper ends with a discussion of the implications to Asian EFL/ESL teacher education.

Keywords: NNESTs, NESTs, English Teacher Education, Standard English, Varieties of English, World Englishes

Introduction

Linguistic theory has traditionally considered “native speakers” as the only reliable source of linguistic data (Chomsky, 1965). English language teaching historically evolved around the notion of the “native speaker”, the adherence to “Standard English”, and the assumption that NESTs who are born in English speaking countries know best how English should be taught (Quirk, 1990). Theories about language learning typically posited the figure of native speaker as “the ultimate goal in language pedagogy” (Van der Geest, 1981, p. 317). It was the figure of the native speaker that invariably served as the yardstick with which to measure the adequacy of policy decisions, the efficacy of methods and authenticity of materials, the learners’ proficiency (Rajagopalan, 2004).

Benefiting from the overwhelming ideologies of native speaker and Standard English in the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession, the spread of English has eventually contributed to the spread of certain varieties of English, namely American English and British English (Bamgbose, 2001). For the past few decades in East Asia, the dominance of English language as a foreign or second language has greatly contributed to the spread of Standard English and the prevalence of Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs). The governments, societies, and English learners in East Asia are normally convinced that the “native speaker model” should be taught in the classrooms, and the teaching practices of Non-Native English Teachers (NNESTs) are based on American or British English. The goal of English teaching is that learners should become speakers of American or British English (Hu, 2005; Jenkins, 2006a;

Matsuda, 2003). In China, over 78% of English teachers at schools prefer teaching American English (Hu, 2005). Learners of English strive to imitate RP or General American and may be proud of their native-like accent (Yun & Jia, 2003). In Hong Kong, the sources regarded as most authoritative are dictionaries and grammar or usage books from native speaking countries such as Britain (Tsui & Bunton, 2000). In Japan, English is being taught based almost exclusively on American or British English using textbooks with characters and cultural topics from the Inner-Circle countries (Matsuda, 2003). The English teaching goals are that learners should become speakers of American English (Kirkpatrick, 2000). In Malaysia, vast majority of English learners opted for RP as the model that should be taught (Gill, 1993, cited in Bamgbose, 1998). In the Philippines, English instruction in classrooms is also based on Standard American English (Friginal, 2007).

With Standard American or British English being the only varieties considered worth learning in most parts of the world, then equally, those considered best-placed to teach English in those places are its native speakers (Jenkins, 2006a). It is this perspective which informs the so-called English villages recently established in Japan, Korea and Taiwan, where learners of English are immersed in an environment with native speakers of English for weeks at a time (Jenkins, 2006a; Ku, 2007). It is also this perspective that causes the prevalence of native English teachers. Sakai and D'angelo (2005) observed the ecology of English teachers in Japan and found in the decades of the eighties and nineties, there were 'more and more native-speaking teachers, and fewer and fewer local Japanese teachers of English' (p.324). In China as well, there is little doubt that the politicians and bureaucrats consider native-speaker models to be superior and that they are looking to native-speakers of English to act as teachers (Kirkpatrick, 2006). It is estimated that there are more than 150,000 foreign English teachers working in this nation (Jeon & Lee, 2006). In Malaysia, the government also uses the British Council's expertise to train more than 1,000 local teachers (British Council, 2005). In many Asian countries, being a native speaker of English is often the only qualification to teach English, and the local employment market prefers hiring an uncertified, untrained NEST rather than a certificated, well-trained, experienced non-native English teacher (Braine, 1999; Katchen, 2002; Sealey, 2006). The popularity of Standard English and NESTs also underlines

national policies to bring NESTs to East Asia, for example, the Native-speaking English Teachers (NET) Scheme in Hong Kong, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in Japan, the English Program in Korea (EPIK) in Korea, and the Foreign English Teacher Recruitment Program (FETRP) in Taiwan. Governments of these countries believe the introduction of NESTs in English classrooms is crucial in terms of helping English learners achieve “native-like” competence.

In the past 15 years, nevertheless, English has achieved its status as an international language (EIL) or a Lingua Franca (ELF) in global contexts and domains. In its purest form, ELF is defined as a contact language used only among non-mother tongue speakers (Jenkins, 2006a), and ELF interactions are interactions between members of different linguacultures in English (House, 1999). The majority of ELF researchers nevertheless accept that speakers of English from both the Inner and Outer circles also participate in intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2006a). Although ELF researchers seek to identify frequently and systematically used forms that differ from the Inner circle forms without causing communication problems, their purpose is not to describe and codify a single ELF variety. EFL researchers do not believe any such monolithic variety of English does or ever will exist. They believe that anyone participating in international communication needs to be familiar with, and have their linguistic repertoire for use, as and when appropriate, certain forms (phonological, lexicogrammatical, etc...) that are widely used and widely intelligible across groups of English speakers from different first language backgrounds (Jenkins, 2006a). Although there is controversy regarding the legitimacy of ELF (e.g., Bolton, 2004) and debate about the entire notion of ELF research on the basis that the term is not being used in its original sense, and that it is ‘loaded’ (Kachru, 2005, p. 224), the phenomenon seems slowly to be gaining recognition in East Asia, Europe, and Latin America (Jenkins, 2006a). Also it has been argued that EIL or ELF is a suitable model because it liberates EFL/ESL learners from the imposition of native speaker norms (Kirkpatrick, 2006).

Accompanying the arrival of EIL/ELF used most frequently among its non-native speakers from different first language backgrounds (Jenkins, 2006a; 2006b) is a

growing consensus among sociolinguists on the importance of language awareness in the Inner, Outer and Expanding Circles (Kachru, 1985). The consensus asserts that English teachers and learners need to learn not a variety of English, but about World Englishes (WEs), their similarities and differences, issues involved in intelligibility, the strong link between language and identity (Bolton, 2004; Seidlhofer, 2004). In several countries of the Outer Circle, for example, where English has taken a firm hold as a major language, local forms of English have emerged as a result of ‘nativisation’ processes (e.g., Nigerian English, Indian English, Hong Kong English, and Singapore English). Meanwhile, in many Expanding Circle countries, English has also appeared in different forms (e.g., Chinese English and Japanese English). These new varieties of English are felt to be appropriate models for EFL/ESL learners in view of their endo-normative potential (Kachru, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 2006).

Acknowledging the changes in the English language landscape, some scholars argue that the notion of “native speaker” has become obsolete in a modern world where people are often native speakers of more than one language, and where linguistic boundaries are no longer clear. Globalisation and the intense mix of cultures currently taking place in the world means speakers of multiple varieties of English will have to communicate and negotiate more often and better than before, rather than all speakers of English will speak the same variety of English, preferably the Inner Circle variety (Canagarajah, 1999, 2005). In that sense, English no longer belongs to native speakers of the Inner Circle. Instead, it is used by speakers in bilingual/multilingual situations with various forms of pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax and discourse (Kubota, 2001). According to WEs researchers, the whole idea of native speaker has been “rendered somewhat blurred, if not hopelessly meaningless” (Rajagopalan, 1997) and an insistence on Standard English is “difficult to justify” (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 159). Since new competences are required for communication and literacy in today’s world, a single dialect of English “fails to equip our students for real-world needs” (Canagarajah, 2005, p. 15). Arguing the legitimacy of Standard English from, Jenkins (2000; 2006b) contends that native speaker accents are not only sociolinguistically inappropriate for communication in which native speakers are rarely involved, but also psycholinguistically and socio-psychologically unachievable for the majority of English learners. Her framework of English accents (Jenkins, 2006b) reverses the

imposition of Standard English norms on non-native-speaker learners, and takes a sociolinguistically-oriented view of L2 (second language) divergences as differences, not deficiencies. This perspective redefines pronunciation errors not in terms of proximity to Standard English but the degree to which intelligibility in ELF communication is affected, and thus recognizes the rights of non-native speakers to their own 'legitimate' regional accents rather than regarding any deviation from native speaker pronunciation norms as an error.

According to WEs researchers, awareness raising fits well with another area of broad agreement that there is a need for a pluricentric rather than monocentric approach to the teaching and use of English. This approach would enable English learners to reflect their own sociolinguistic realities, rather than that of a distant native speaker (Jenkins, 2006b). Scholars argue that since English by now is used as a lingua franca among its non-native speakers in international communication settings, it would be unrealistic and inappropriate to apply the uniform native speaker English norms to ELT. They claim that the supremacy of a native speaker model and the strict adherence to native speaker norms should be disregarded, and the notion of a monolithic, unadaptable linguistic medium owned by its original speakers and forever linked to their rules are naïve and untenable (Alptekin, 2002; Jenkins, 2006b; Seidlhofer & Jenkins, 2003). From this perspective, second language pedagogy should also no longer prepare English learners with the kind of communicative competence based on descriptions of a native speaker model since “the whole mystique of the native speaker and [his/her] mother tongue’s becomes totally irrelevant as we contemplate the scenario unveiled by the spread of WE [World English]” (Rampton, 1990, p. 97).

From WEs scholars' view, English is strongly influencing the lives of children and young adults to face a world where the economy, educational reforms, politics, culture, and societies at large are shaped by their knowledge (or lack of knowledge) of English (Moussu & Llurda, 2008). It seems doubtful to these scholars that this knowledge of English will be restricted to one single variety of the language. Instead, they claim that new varieties of “Englishes” are emerging throughout the world with

words, expressions, accents, sociolinguistic rules, and even grammatical rules transformed and adjusted to fit the different contexts (e.g., Berns *et al.*, 2007; Jenkins, 2007; Kachru, 1992; Mesthrie, 2006; Modiano, 1999; Seidlhofer, 1999). The focus of English learning and teaching should not be given exclusively to the accurate application of a set of prescribed rules with the aim of achieving international intelligibility, but to tolerance of diversity and appropriacy of use in specific sociolinguistic contexts (Rubdy & Saraceni, 2006).

Taking into consideration the changes in the use of English today, WEs scholars argue that it is crucial not to teach English learners one single accent or model (Moussu & Llurda, 2008). Instead, it becomes imperative to present English learners with a large array of English varieties represented by teachers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Jenkins, 2000; 2007). Several sociolinguists (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 2006; Rajagopalan, 2000) argue that the global spread of Standard English gives NESTs the control of the linguistic codes and norms. In other words, the power of NESTs derives from the unquestioning acceptance of the norms of Inner Circle English and threatens NNESTs as the other kind of ELT professionals. On the other hand, given the argument of pragmatism, the development of different varieties of English in the Outer and Expanding Circle should be attributed to pragmatic needs and desires for English rather than pre-determined imposition given by certain native English speaking countries. In that case, NNESTs should be the ones who are in a stronger position in overseeing the usage, management and education of the global language.

The conceptual debate and argument regarding the notions of Standard English, native speaker model, and the positions of NNESTs in ELT in the contemporary EIL/WEs contexts pose the major problems for English teacher education, saying, while scholars argue for a pluricentric approach, there is still, overwhelmingly, submission to native speaker norms. In their article on NNESTs research, Moussu and Llurda (2008) see the investigation of NNESTs' professional self-esteem as the significant topic that deserves further exploration. The study is partially inspired by their quest. The study approaches the debate by looking into NNEST's perceptions of native speaker norms oriented from the Inner Circle as well as their responses to

varieties of English developed in Outer and Expanding Circle countries. In addition, Moussu and Llurda (2008) address the necessity of investigating how different contents and methodologies used in teacher training programs worldwide affect NNESTs in different settings and whether NNESTs receive adequate teacher preparation, specifically addressing their needs. In the literature, several scholars (e.g., Braine, 1999; Carrier, 2003; Holliday, 2005; Kamhi-Stein, 2000; Liu, 1999; Oka, 2004) suggest that the theoretical and pedagogical courses in North American TESOL programs have not adequately recognized and addressed the needs and interests of NNESTs. However, little has been done to examine the contents of TESOL programs in the EFL context in relation to preparing NNESTs to operate in contemporary ELT classrooms. The study also seeks to fill the gap.

The study¹

Methods

In the studies dealing with NNESTs, surveys and interviews are two of the most frequently used methods by researchers (Moussu & Llurda, 2008). Among them, surveys have been proven to be a very useful method of research since Reves and Medgyes (1994) asked NNESTs about their self-perceptions. Many other studies have resorted to the use of surveys at a later time (e.g., Llurda & Huguet, 2003; Mahboob, 2003). In research on NNESTs, the use of questionnaires in surveys allow researchers to report on very large numbers of participants and provide the first empirical accounts on the nature and perceptions regarding NNESTs, as seen by their students, by program administrators and supervisors, or by NNESTs themselves (Moussu & Llurda, 2008). In addition to surveys, personal interviews have proven to be another fruitful method in research on NNESTs in providing insights into the thoughts of NNESTs due to their yielding more complex and deeper data than simple responses to questionnaires. Since a number of scholars have used interviews as a complement to questionnaires and gained informative data from NNESTs (e.g., Bayyurt, 2006; Cheung, 2002; Holliday, 2005), the author believes combining qualitative and quantitative methods would provide greater insights into these issues.

Participants

The majority of the subjects were recruited from the Departments of English at two national normal universities and three national universities of education located in northern, central and eastern Taiwan in the spring and summer of 2007. These English Language Departments offer four-year programs leading to a Bachelor degree and two-year graduate programs leading to a Master's degree. These departments have their own curriculum on ELT and are the major sources of public primary and secondary English teachers in Taiwan. Also, the study reached nine primary schools (8 public, 1 private) to recruit a minority of in-service Taiwanese English teacher subjects. These schools were located in five different counties and had had different lengths of history in hiring both NESTs and NNESTs as their teaching staff at the time the study was conducted. A total of 258 students enrolled in the Departments of English at the five universities were recruited as subjects of the survey, including 219 (84.9%) females and 39 (15.1%) males. Among the participants, 126 (48.8%) were studying in their third year, 115 (44.6%) were in their fourth year, and the remaining 17 (6.6%) were at graduate school. It was expected that the completion of two years of training and the learning experience with NESTs would help the participants to understand and respond to the questions asked. Out of the 258 participants of the survey, 35 (26 females, 9 males) were recruited to participate in an in-depth interview. In addition, a total of 11 primary English teachers (10 females, 1 male) took part in the survey as well as in the follow-up interview. They all had had an experience of working together with NESTs at schools for a period ranging from 6 months to 3 years by the time they were recruited for the study.

Data collection and analysis

Data collection was divided into two phases. In the first phase, relevant Likert-scale items and closed-ended questions from a larger survey² were used to investigate relevant issues. In the second phase, individual in-depth interviews were used to collect data from both the pre-service and in-service teachers. The interview questions were semi-structured and were conducted in Mandarin with the assumption that the participants would be able to express their feelings and perspectives more clearly through the use of their mother tongue. In addition, a close examination of the

required courses in the curriculum of two departments of English among the recruited universities was conducted by the author. A code book was assembled to conduct the data coding of the completed questionnaires for computer analysis, which included the coding frames and coding instructions of valid and missing data. After the process of coding and entering data into the computer, a series of data cleaning operations such as a frequency check and range check were performed on the complete data set to pick up possible inconsistencies. This was followed by frequency analyses. With regard to the qualitative data, the author translated and categorized the data, identified the themes, and generated assertions for each theme using the qualitative data analysis software *Nvivo 7*.

Statement of ethical issues

The author collected both quantitative and qualitative data from the pre-service and in-service teachers, during which a number of ethical issues were attended to. First, the author had no institutional or former relationships with any of the participating universities or schools. Neither did the author have any power relationships with the research participants. Second, all the participating universities and participants were given a written statement in both English and Mandarin to help them become informed about the study before the consent forms were distributed to them. Third, all the research participants were free to withdraw during the data collection. Upon withdrawal, any information they might have contributed would not be used. Fourth, all of the interview participants were allowed to see the transcript and had the right to delete and verify any information they might have provided during the interview. Fifth, all the participants had the author's e-mail address and were encouraged to contact the author if there was any matter that they would like to clarify after the data collection. Finally, no participant would be identified by name, and pseudonyms or case codes would be used in any reporting of the results of the present study.

Results

Native speaker norms and NESTs

Understanding the participants' perception of the current status of English in the world would help understand their responses concerning these issues. The survey shows that the vast majority of the participants (96.1%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that English is the most important foreign language in Taiwan, while only 1.2% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Moreover, as high as 82.5% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that English is the most useful language in the world, while only 3.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed (see Table 1 & 2). The results suggest that the majority of the participants perceived English as the most useful international language in the world.

Table 1: English is the most important foreign language in Taiwan

(N=257*)

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Number	1	2	7	68	179
%	0.4	0.8	2.7	26.5	69.6

*One participant missed the question concerned.

SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neither agree, nor disagree; A = agree; SA = strongly agree

Table 2: English is more useful than other languages in the world

(N=257*)

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Number	1	9	35	127	85
%	0.4	3.5	13.6	49.4	33.1

*One participant missed the question concerned.

SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neither agree, nor disagree; A = agree; SA = strongly agree

Even though the majority of the participants regarded English as the most useful international language in the world, they believed only native English speakers could use it “correctly” and “perfectly”. They also believed in the ELT classrooms, only NESTs could teach “authentic” and “beautiful” English, in particular in the phonological aspects. The survey shows that as high as 90.4% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that NESTs can teach Pronunciation well. Also 88% of them either agreed or strongly agreed that NESTs are good at teaching Speaking. Over half of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that NNESTs are not good at teaching Pronunciation and Speaking (see Table 3 & 4).

Table 3: Areas NESTs are good at teaching

(N=258)

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean (SD)
Vocabulary	2.3%	17.1%	31.0%	34.5%	15.1%	3.43 (1.02)
Pronunciation	1.6%	2.7%	5.4%	29.5%	60.9%	4.45 (0.84)
Listening	0.8%	8.9%	24.8%	40.3%	25.2%	3.80 (0.94)
Speaking*	0.8%	3.5%	7.8%	37.0%	51.0%	4.36 (0.88)

*N=257

Table 4: Areas NNESTs are not good at teaching

(N=258)

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean# (SD)
Vocabulary	8.5%	50.0%	28.7%	11.3%	1.6%	2.47 (0.86)
Pronunciation	2.3%	15.9%	29.5%	43.4%	8.9%	3.41 (0.94)
Listening	1.9%	28.7%	38.8%	25.6%	5.0%	3.03 (0.91)
Speaking	1.6%	19.0%	24.0%	48.1%	7.4%	3.41 (0.93)

The results of the survey were further confirmed by the interview data from both kinds of participants. The following comments made by Janet³ and Theresa, two trainee participants, were representative of the perceptions of the majority of the trainee participants about native speaker norms and NESTs:

“Their [NESTs’] pronunciation is better, much better. The input students take is very standard.” (Janet)

“The first thing come to my mind about NESTs is their authentic pronunciation.” (Theresa)

Most of the trainee participants, like Janet and Theresa, believed NESTs’ pronunciation is “standard”, “authentic” and better than that of Taiwanese English teachers. Maggie, a third trainee participant, indicated that NESTs could pronounce “precisely”, and that was the thing Taiwanese English teachers could not do. Another teacher trainee, Luke, concurred with Maggie’s perspective by saying that NESTs could help learners learn “better” accent and receive “natural” input:

“They [NESTs] let us [Taiwanese English teachers and students] know how to pronounce precisely, and this is something quite different from Taiwanese teachers. We can learn how to pronounce correctly from them.” (Maggie)

“Their [NESTs’] speaking and pronunciation help students learn a better accent. They can offer students fluent and natural input. Students’ listening skills can also be improved a lot by NESTs.” (Luke)

Glen is in his final year as a primary English teacher trainee in a university of education located in northern Taiwan. He perceived pronunciation as a significant

aspect in the teaching of English and described NESTs' pronunciation as "very correct" and their intonation as "pretty fluent". He also believed that Taiwanese English teachers might not be able to pronounce "correctly":

"I believe pronunciation is very important in teaching English. Due to the fact that English is the mother tongue of NESTs, their pronunciation is very correct and their intonation is pretty fluent...Their feelings about pronunciation and intonation are very important to young learners...Taiwanese teachers may not be able to pronounce correctly even though they may teach very well." (Glen)

Glen's perspective was also shared by Andy and Becky. They described Taiwanese English teachers' pronunciation as "not standardized", "unauthentic", "strange" and "difficult to change". They did not believe Taiwanese English teachers could do as well as NESTs when the teaching of phonological skills was concerned:

"Taiwanese English teachers are weak in terms of their pronunciation. Their pronunciation is not standardized pronunciation." (Andy)

"Sometimes their [Taiwanese English teachers'] pronunciation is unauthentic. Their pronunciation is strange even though they have had experience of staying abroad for quite a long time, and I think their pronunciation is difficult to change." (Becky)

The respect for native speaker norms and preference for NESTs shows not only in the trainee participants' comments, but also in that of in-service teacher participants. Veronica teaches English in a private primary school and in her comments there is an unquestioning submission to native speaker norms:

“The English we [Taiwanese English teachers] speak is not as beautiful as that spoken by native English speakers...The English we speak is not that beautiful; our pronunciation is not that beautiful; and the vocabulary and sentences we use are not that beautiful.” (Veronica)

Such a submission to native speaker norms appeared repeatedly in the comments made by other in-service teacher participants during the interviews. Julie and Elisa both work at primary schools located in rural areas and they recognized the differences in pronunciation between NESTs and themselves. Such phonological differences, in fact, were referred to in terms of “correctness”. They regarded their pronunciation and intonation as incorrect while described NESTs’ as “beautiful” and “natural”:

“What they [NESTs] pronounce is correct and students have a good model to imitate. When reading an article, their intonation is also more beautiful than ours. Their intonation varies in a natural way, which is quite different from ours...The presence of NESTs provides students with something we can’t provide, such as pronunciation. Pronunciation is something in which we can never be as good as native English speakers.” (Julie)

“In terms of pronunciation, sometimes I pronounce differently from NESTs. In addition, sometimes their usage of oral English is different from that in our textbooks...They know the correct form of their contemporary oral English, which is something I do not know.” (Elisa)

“Taiwanese English teachers are weak in terms of pronunciation. Our pronunciation is not standardized pronunciation...One example is that Taiwanese English teachers may not pronounce standard forms as NESTs do. When teaching vowels and consonants, they can’t pronounce as clearly as NESTs.” (Andy)

One major reason influencing the participants' preference for native speaker norms is their attitude towards the role of culture knowledge in the teaching of English. Culture knowledge of English language is regarded as a valuable characteristic of a successful English teacher to a great number of the interviewees, including the pre-service and in-service teachers:

“I think teaching a language requires understanding not only the language itself, but the culture of the language. A language represents a culture. Teachers may not be able to offer extensive and deep knowledge about a language if they have no cultural knowledge of the language.” (Emily)

“The use of English must take into account English culture background. NNESTs do not know how to express some specific terms because they themselves don't understand the meanings of these terms quite clearly. And they don't understand the meanings of the terms because they don't have English culture knowledge. They might thus misuse some words or phrases due to their limited cultural knowledge.” (Petty)

The other significant reason contributing to participants' preference for native speaker norms is their belief that parents and students prefer learning Standard English from NESTs. In the interviews, a number of participants mentioned that even though they were confident in their knowledge of the subject matter, they didn't think that they were favoured by the public:

“Taiwanese society thinks all the English teachers from abroad are good if they look like foreigners. NESTs are good because they are foreigners. They are advantaged over us (Taiwanese English teachers) in every aspect in the Taiwanese society. This is the concept that is generally accepted by the society. The criterion the public uses to judge whether a teacher is good or bad is to see if he/she is a foreigner or

not...Students may tend to prefer foreigners and feel that foreigners are more professional.” (Daniel)

“My experience is that learners always look for foreign teachers rather than Taiwanese teachers if they want to have tutors to teach their speaking and listening and to practice their conversation. Even though I believe my speaking and listening are as good as foreign teachers, I am not eligible to apply for the positions just because I am not a native speaker of English.” (Helen)

“NESTs have certain advantages because parents always like NESTs. Every time when we [Taiwanese English teachers] apply for tutor positions or something, parents always ask for our experience of living abroad. Otherwise they prefer hiring foreigners. They don’t care what the NEST might teach. They only care about the accent. They wish for us to learn that kind of accent.” (Chloe)

The results of the survey and the quotes suggest that even though most of the participants believed that English is currently widely used as an international language, they did not think English could be used or taught “correctly”, “naturally”, or “beautifully” by NNESTs, in particular English phonology. They tended to perceive variation in phonological characteristics such as intonation, accent and pronunciation of vowels and consonants as deficient, and they worshiped NESTs’ phonological performance. Their submission to native speaker norms reveals their preference for a native-speaker model to be the authoritative usage in the teaching of English. And this preference is caused or/and enhanced by their attitude towards the role of culture knowledge in English teaching and their belief that parents and students prefer learning Standard English from NESTs.

Varieties of English outside the Inner Circle

The preference for a native-speaker model revealed from the participants' perceptions of Standard English and NESTs can also be detected from their attitude towards varieties of English developed in Outer and Expanding Circle countries. Chole, an English teacher trainee, mentioned that even though English is widely spoken by non-native English speakers, their Englishes are unauthentic Englishes. She questioned non-native English teachers' "nativeness":

"I have met foreigners who came to Taiwan to teach English. They are not native speakers of English because English is their second language. Their Englishes are not that authentic even though they are foreigners." (Chole)

Chole's comment was not the only one in the interview data from trainee participants. A number of trainee participants indicated that varieties of English developed in the Outer and Expanding Circles were not "correct" Englishes when compared with Standard American or British English used by native English speakers. Sarah, for instance, described English used by the Americans or the British as "the most correct form" in comparison with other Englishes. To these participants, Englishes developed outside the Inner Circle are not popular or worth learning due to their lack of authenticity and correctness.

Another trainee participant Laura is studying in her third year as a primary English teacher trainee in a university of education. She is aware of the emergence of the globalised world but she mentioned that she had been told by her teachers to imitate native English speakers' accents. Another teacher trainee, Harry, who is studying as a senior student in a normal university also mentioned he had been encouraged to imitate native English speakers rather than any other varieties of English since he started learning English:

“We [Taiwanese people] are now emphasizing internationalization. So our teachers tell us to imitate the way NESTs think and talk. There is no need to think too much before talking. I think what’s most important is accent.” (Laura)

“I have been imitating native speakers of English since I started learning English. The training I have been taking in our department also aims to prepare students with native-like English competence.” (Harry)

The reservation about the development of varieties of English was also found in the comment made by another teacher trainee, Bruce, about the emergence of diverse Englishes in non-native English speaking countries:

“Nowadays there are many countries such as Hong Kong and Singapore in which English is also widely spoken. In these countries English has merged with local languages. Some people think this is not bad but personally I don’t think it’s great.” (Bruce)

These quotes show that to a number of participants, English used or spoken by native English speakers is the most authentic, beautiful, pure English form. The English norms developed by native English speakers are the most correct usage and thus should be strictly followed by all non-native speakers. Englishes developed in the Outer and Expanding Circles, on the other hand, are not correct and authentic Englishes, thus should not become the authoritative usage in the ELT classrooms. Since teacher education plays a significant role in shaping teachers’ professionalism, the study also examines the major curriculum requirement in two departments of English in Taiwan and presents the findings in the next section.

Preparation in teacher education

A close examination of the required courses in the curriculum of the recruited Departments of English in the universities revealed there are no courses concerning variational sociolinguistics. And the courses concerning the written form of English are supported only by the studies of Western English literature. Table 5 shows that in one of the departments of English, in addition to the courses about English Language Proficiency (e.g., Pronunciation Drill; Basic Writing), Linguistics Knowledge (e.g., English Phonetics and English; Grammar and Rhetoric), and Pedagogy Skills (e.g., Foreign Language Acquisition; Methods and Resources for EFL/ESL Teaching), there are a number of courses in the field of Literature. These Literature-related courses, however, are exclusively Western-based (e.g., Introduction to Western Literature; English Literature: Up to the Nineteenth Century).

Table 5: Required Courses in the Curriculum of the DoE in University A*

<i>Freshman</i>	<i>Sophomore**</i>
Pronunciation Drill (1) (2)	Introduction to Western Literature (1) (2)
English Conversation (I) (1) (2)	English Conversation (II) (1) (2)
Approaches to Literary Works (1) (2)	Intermediate Writing (1) (2)
Basic Writing (1) (2)	English Literature: Up to the Nineteenth Century (1) (2)
English Phonetics	Introduction to English Linguistics
	English Grammar and Rhetoric
	Foreign Language Acquisition
<i>Junior**</i>	
English Conversation (III)(1)(2)	Methods and Resources for EFL/ESL Teaching (1)(2)
Speech and Debate (1) (2)	History of the English Language (1)(2)
Advanced Writing	Translation

Business Writing

Senior

English Teaching Practice (1)(2)

* *Pseudonym*

** *Students must study either French or Japanese as a second foreign language*

The curriculum of another department of English also shows a similar pattern. There are some courses in the fields of English Proficiency (e.g., English Pronunciation; Intermediate Writing), Pedagogy Skills (e.g., Introduction to TEFL; Guided Writing), and Linguistics Knowledge (e.g., English Phonetics; Introduction to Linguistics). In the field of literature, courses such as English Literature: Romantic Period to the Present, American Literature, English Literature: Medieval Period to the Eighteenth Century, and History of the English Language are all based on Western contexts (see Table 6).

Table 6: Required Courses* in the Curriculum of the DoE in University B**

<i>Freshman</i>	<i>Sophomore</i>
English (1)(2)	English Literature: Romantic Period to the Present (1)(2)
Approaches to Literary Works (1)(2)	Introduction to Linguistics (1)(2)
English Phonetics (1)(2)	Grammar and Rhetoric (1)(2)
Guided Writing	English Conversation
Pattern Practice	Intermediate Writing
Basic Aural-oral Training in English	Intermediate Aural-oral Training in English
English Pronunciation	

Junior

American Literature (I)	English Literature: Medieval Period to the Eighteenth Century (1) (2)
Introduction to TEFL	
Public Speaking	History of the English Language (1)(2)
Advanced Writing	Advanced Aural-oral Training in English
Research Methods	

Senior

American Literature (II); English-Chinese Translation; Discussion and Debate

* *Additional Requirements: scoring 213 or higher on the computer-based TEFOL test or passing score at the high-intermediate level of the GEPT test or at equivalent levels of other English proficiency tests such as IELTS and TOEIC.*

** *Pseudonym*

Discussion

The results of the study reveal the major problems in Asian English language teacher education and much of these problems, as Seidlhofer (2005) argues, results from a mismatch between the meta level, where WEs scholars are asserting the need for pluricentrism, and “grassroots practice,” where there is still “(unquestioningly) submission to native-speaker norms” (p. 170). The participants in the study showed their submission to native speaker norms and reservation to the varieties of English developed in the Outer and Expanding Circle countries. The findings confirms the attachment to “Standard” Inner Circle native speaker model remains firmly in place among NNESTs in the Expanding Circle (Butler, 2007; Jenkins, 2007; Llurda & Huguet, 2003; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005), in which NNESTs showed little sign of acknowledging the fact that Outer and Expanding Circle Englishes are now firmly established varieties with their own norms and consistently oriented most positively to Standard English and the native speaker model. The findings further suggest that one significant reason for the participants’ preference for the native speaker model is their perception that learners and parents adore Standard English and prefer hiring NESTs

in the ELT employment market. The literature has provided numerous similar stories showing the prevalence of NESTs in Asian ELT classrooms due to the popularity of native speaker model. In this study the participants' perception of the public's favour of NESTs can be seen as the root for their self-marginalization and devaluing.

Arguably, NNESTs' submission to "native speaker fallacy" (Phillipson, 1992) has been deconstructed through showing the lack of substantial evidence behind such a concept. NNESTs should forsake the pursuance of "nativeness" and concentrate on utilizing their unique assets that NESTs do not possess, namely their language learning experiences and multicultural backgrounds (Kramersch, 1997; Medgyes, 1994). Particularly in the EIL/WEs contexts, where the learners' major reason for learning English is to communicate with other non-native English speakers from different first language and culture backgrounds and with different communication purposes (Jenkins, 2006b; Kirkpatrick, 2006), and globalisation is still shaping the workplace and language curriculums around the world, exposing English learners to multiple accents and cultures can only be beneficial to them (Moussu & Llorca, 2008). NNESTs should liberate themselves from purchasing "nativeness" so that their students can then, as Bentahila and Davies (1989) claim, make a choice and decide for themselves what is most relevant to their experience and context.

To help NNESTs deconstruct their submission to native speaker fallacy and construct their own identities as ELT professionals, the inclusion of specific issues related to NNESTs in language teacher education programs should be an effective way of empowering NNESTs. Training programs tailored to the needs of NNESTs would increase future NNESTs' motivation and self-esteem and allow NNESTs to develop an understanding of their own assets, values and beliefs (Kamhi-Stein, 1999, 2004). Teacher educators have a responsibility to assist NNESTs in "gaining a sense of self as teacher, in creating an atmosphere that fosters respect and in providing guidance in culturally appropriate norms of behaviour and discipline" (Brinton, 2004, p. 202). More importantly, in order to raise NNESTs' awareness of the need for a more appropriate model for the teaching of English in the era of globalization, a wide exposure to varieties of English developed outside the Inner Circle needs to be

prioritized in teacher training programs. This exposure, as suggested by Melchers and Shaw (2003), might help NNESTs recognize diverse sociolinguistic features of English, including variation in phonology, grammar, syntax, lexis, and pragmatics. The more varieties of English they are exposed to, the greater the awareness of the varieties of English they will have. The exposure is also likely to encourage NNESTs' confidence in their own English varieties, and in turn "reduce the linguistic capital that many learners still believe native-like English to possess" (Jenkins, 2006a, p. 174). In practice, the exposure can be increased through the application of more global-based teaching materials (e.g., radio programs, magazines, Internet Webs) and textbooks in the training programs in English teacher education and professional development. Furthermore, training programs should include courses discussing Seidlhofer's (2001) project in establishing the norms used for English in international communication and codifying a standard independent of native speakers, Jenkins's (1998; 2006b) work in identifying features for the pronunciation of EIL, and Sakai and D'angelo's (2005) initiatives to strengthen the acceptance of WEs. These courses would help NNESTs achieve a better understanding about the application and implication of EIL/WEs to Asian EFL/ESL classrooms.

At last, the examination of the contents of the two TESOL programs in this study reveals that the participants were only asked to study Western-based literature. Arguably, to a great extent these programs facilitate the participants' adherence to the native speaker model and their submission to native speaker norms through focusing purely on Western-based literature and excluding global literature in the curriculum. Some participants further mentioned that the teacher educators in their departments have been consciously encouraging them to imitate native English speakers, particularly their "authentic", "pure" accents. In many Asian countries, students are socialized into a culture of learning in which there is strong emphasis on memory, imitation, and repetitive practice (McKay, 2003). English language education tends to be limited to the teaching of grammar, reading, and translation. This practice has been perpetuated by national exams which mainly measure students' grammatical competence. Accordingly, English teaching at schools is still dominantly didactic, product-oriented, and features great amounts of repeated drilling and emphasis on learning by rote (Campbell & Zhao, 1993). The culture of teaching and learning in

local educational contexts might influence or enhance the participants' imitating practices. Nevertheless, non-native speaker competence in effect contributes to a better understanding of the various ways English is used for international communication and purposes (McKay, 2006). The goal of achieving native-like competence in English must be put aside. The identified TESOL programs, like many others contextualizing North America, do not correspond to what is needed by NNESTs operating in the EIL/WEs contexts or encourage NNESTs to stand back and think hard about not only the choices that *have* to be made, but also about the choices that *can* be made, especially when those are far removed from current concerns and fashions in the Inner Circle (Seidlhofer, 1999).

Facing the challenges brought by globalisation and advance of EIL/WEs, teacher educators need to re-examine their professional roles as well as the needs of their students. For example, teacher collaboration has been identified as one of the key features for effective professional development, improved student achievement, and continued school success (DelliCarpini, 2008). In ELT, NESTs-NNESTs team teaching is one significant form of teacher collaboration. The idea that NEST and NNEST work together by building on each other's strengths is based on the assumption that some roles may be better played by the NEST rather than the NNEST, and vice versa (Tajino & Tajino, 2000). Hence, theoretically, given that an ideal ELT environment is one in which NEST and NNEST can complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses (Medgyes, 1992), it seems that the concept of team teaching can successfully build an ideal ELT environment for learners, even though this collaborative model may cause certain tension and conflict between NESTs and NNESTs (e.g., Carless, 2006; Fujimoto-Adamson, 2010; Tajino & Tajino, 2000). Teacher educators need to take greater responsibility for preparing both NESTs and NNESTs for collaborative work taking into consideration the current development of EIL/WEs.

Conclusion

Accompanying the changed English language landscape, the norms featuring Standard English and the ELT services provided by NESTs have been challenged for their failure to equip English learners with proficiency in varieties of English they need in international communication settings. Today, English is most frequently used by non-native speakers from different first language and culture backgrounds as a lingua franca for a wide range of purposes and needs. NNESTs should reconsider whether the prevailing native speaker model is truly the appropriate model that can meet their students' needs in international communication settings, and English teacher education and teacher educators must take more responsibility during the process of ideology transition.

Notes

1. The study is part of a larger study conducted by the author.
2. The questionnaire used in the larger survey consists of 55 questions, from which relevant items regarding the issues concerned in the present study were selected.
3. All names are pseudonyms.

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Statement of ethics

The ethical approval for the present study was granted by the Ethics Committee at Deakin University, Australia. And all the participants of the present study gave informed consent to participate in the present study and all the institutional information were de-identified in the present study.

Revisiting Japanese English Teachers' (JTEs) Perceptions of Communicative, Audio-lingual, and Grammar Translation (*Yakudoku*) Activities: Beliefs, Practices, and Rationales

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Abstract

Research has shown that teachers' beliefs about language teaching are shaped by a myriad factors, among them, their own experiences as language learners, their pedagogical training, and the contexts in which they work (Borg, 2003; Fang, 1996; Freeman, 2002; Lortie, 1975). How their beliefs influence their practice has also been studied, and it has been found that whether teachers consistently put these beliefs into instructional practice varies considerably. For example, while some research on reading and literacy instruction has demonstrated a clear relationship between teachers' theoretical orientations and what they do in their classes, other research has found this relationship to be weak, with teachers tending towards inconsistency; in other words, not doing what they believed was appropriate (Fang, 1996). Contextual factors are cited as the main reasons why inconsistency tends to occur.

This research, part of a larger case study project tracking the outcomes of an overseas 4-month program of language and pedagogy designed for Japanese junior and senior high school teachers, used an adapted version of Gorsuch's (2001) questionnaire which was designed to explore the beliefs of Japanese teachers of English (JTE) about the appropriateness of communicative language teaching (CLT), audio-lingual, and grammar-translation activities. The questionnaire was given to 10 JTEs participating in an overseas pedagogical program to determine if consistency existed between their beliefs and practices prior to the commencement of the program. This study's results revealed similarities to Gorsuch's original research with regards to JTEs holding positive attitudes about CLT activities; however, it also revealed both consistencies and inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and reported practices for a number of reasons, largely relating to do with the contexts in which JTEs worked.

Key words: Teacher Education, Beliefs and Practices, Japanese Teachers of English

Introduction

Language teachers' beliefs about language teaching have been shaped, among other things, largely by their own experiences as language learners (Borg, 2003; Lortie, 1975), and to some extent by teacher education programs they have been enrolled in (ibid). Their beliefs and practices are also affected by the context of the teaching; in fact, the demands of "parents, principals' requirements, the school, society, curriculum mandates, classroom and school layout, school policies, colleagues, standardized tests and the availability of resources" (Borg, 2003, p. 94) as well as "mutual teacher-student respect, classroom management and routine, and the amount of assistance needed by low- or high-ability students, the way students learn, and social and emotional characteristics" (Fang, 1996, pp. 53-54) and the need for classroom privacy (Denscombe, 1982) may even obstruct teachers from adopting practices which in fact do reflect their beliefs.

It has been suggested that it is necessary to examine teachers' goals and interpretations of classroom processes, because such goals may be complicated and perhaps unrelated to "optimizing student learning" (Nespor, 1987, p. 325). Some

argue that researching teachers' beliefs can lead to greater understanding of how teacher trainees are incorporating what they are learning as well as enhancing and guiding teacher training programs (Pajares, 1992). These rationales for studying teachers' beliefs are highly applicable to the Japanese educational context.

Japanese teachers of English face a number of constraints which influence their ability to teach, especially, communicative English, as mandated by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). Table 1 highlights Lamie's (2001) "impact area" framework of constraints on the teaching of communicative language teaching in the Japanese context in particular, which is useful in highlighting the kinds of problems faced by JTEs.

Table 1: Constraints grouped by impact area

Personal attributes	Deficiencies in oral English; deficiency in sociolinguistic and strategic competence; traditional attitudes
Practical constraints	Wider context of curriculum; traditional teaching methods; class sizes & schedule; resources and equipment; lack of CLT texts; students' not accustomed to CLT; difficulty in evaluation; too much preparation time; grammar-based examinations; lack of exposure to authentic language; grammar-based syllabus; insufficient funding
External influences	Low status of CLT teachers; students don't perceive a need for it; student resistance, due to CLT practices being different from traditional teacher/student interactions; lack of support for government agencies, colleagues, etc.
Awareness	Misconceptions about CLT
Training	Lack of training; few opportunities for retraining

In the Japanese educational context, JTEs are reported as tending to avoid using English in class because of a lack of confidence in their own ability or a belief that they do not possess the required proficiency to conduct English-medium lessons (Sato, 2002; Wada, 2002). One practical constraint is strong tradition of grammar translation, or *yakudoku*, considered useful in preparing students for entrance

examinations (Crozier & Kleinsasser, 2006; Sato, 2002; Wada, 2002; Guest, 2000). *Yakudoku*, “the” method of teaching English in Japan according to Hino (1988, p. 46) “is defined as a technique or a mental process for reading a foreign language word-by-word, and the resulting translation reordered to match Japanese word order as part of the process of reading comprehension” (Hino, 1988, p. 46). When students are taught to read English, they almost always learn this method; their teachers’ aim is to enable students to do it independently.

Other practical constraints are a requirement to use textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education and a high priority on keeping pace with colleagues and teaching textbook topics simultaneously (Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Required to “cover” a certain number of grammar structures, vocabulary items, and so on, teachers work together to make tightly-planned schedules, which they feel compelled to follow.

As for external influences, since teachers generally work on teams, their classroom practices are reinforced by others; this is especially true in a hierarchically-organized society, where convention requires junior teachers to conform to the practices of senior teachers and also in an environment where teachers are apprehensive of challenging parents and students’ demands for English classes which will guarantee their success on university entrance examinations (Sato, 2002).

Regarding awareness of communicative language teaching (CLT), the situation has not changed much since early articles about it (Scholefield, 1997). Japanese English teachers generally receive scant or no information about CLT and are likely to be unenthusiastic when forced to attend workshops helping them to understand it due to time constraints or a lack of interest (Sato, 2002; Takaki, 2002). Research has revealed that most JTEs feel that they are not sufficiently trained for teaching anything other than grammar translation (Browne & Wada, 1998; Lamie, 2001). Pre-service training that does occur tends to lack adequate English components (Nagasawa, 2004), and because most teachers major in English literature or linguistics in university they are not always required to take courses in second language acquisition theory, second language teaching methodology and techniques (although they may take courses in Grammar Translation Methodology). JTEs appear to have what has been deemed as insufficient and unsuitable practicum experience, as well as

few opportunities to or rewards for attending in-service training (Nagasawa, 2004; Yonesaka, 1999). Thus, too little trained and compelled to follow the practices of their peers, JTEs tend to carry on the methodological status quo: to teach using grammar translation methods (Sakui, 2004).

Gorsuch's (2001) quantitative study focusing on JTEs' beliefs about the appropriateness of teaching activities associated with communicative, audio-lingual, and grammar translation approaches to foreign language instruction found that they reported having positive attitudes towards communicative activities. Among such activities, however, they tended to prefer those which were highly controlled and focused on passive skills. JTEs also reported a tendency to favour audio-lingual activities in which students used memorized speech; again, teachers' control of students' output was a decisive factor for their approval. Gorsuch concluded that overall JTEs "mildly" approve of CLT activities, although they face impediments in doing so. This study seeks to understand these impediments in more detail in order to reveal the factors constraining teachers from making their beliefs a reality in their classrooms.

Purpose/Research Questions

While Gorsuch's (2001) results yielded significant information about the beliefs of JTEs regarding the appropriateness of communicative, audio-lingual, and grammar-translation activities in English classes, it did not necessarily demonstrate if there was a correspondence between what JTEs said and did. For the purpose of the current study, a modified version of Gorsuch's questionnaire was distributed to 10 JTEs prior to the commencement of a MEXT-mandated 4-month program of CLT-oriented pedagogy in Canada in order to determine where correspondences existed between beliefs and practices, and if not, to explain reasons in detail. The questions that guided this research were the following:

- 1) Is there consistency between what JTEs say about the appropriateness of communicative, audio-lingual, and grammar-translation activities and their actual classroom practice?

- 2) If there is no consistency, what are the reasons?

Method

Participants

Participants were 10 mid-career public junior or senior high school JTEs taking part in the pedagogical portion of a four-month overseas programme of language and pedagogy in Canada sponsored by MEXT. In university, four of the teachers had majored in education, while the remaining six majored in other disciplines such as English literature (3), linguistics (1), international relations (1) and French literature (1). Table 1 highlights the participants' teaching experience, and current teaching situations at the time of the study in 2007. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities.

As Table 1 indicates, this group of JTEs had been teaching from between 7 to 19 years. All but two of them were high school teachers, class sizes ranged between 18-40 students, and Japanese was generally the medium of instruction, unless teachers were working with an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT).

Table 2: Participants' Demographic Information

Name	Years' Experience	Current Placement	Average Class Size	Language of Instruction	Use of ALT
Mr. T.	19	Public academic high school	40 students	Japanese	No
Mr. C.	17	Public integrated (commercial/industrial) high school	40 students	Japanese English	Every day
Ms J.	13	Public academic high school	40	Japanese English	1 x week
Mr. H.	14	Public junior high school	23	Japanese English	Every day
Mr. M.	13	Public integrated (academic/vocational) high	30	Japanese	1 x week

		school		English	
Mr. K.	13	Public integrated (commercial/industrial) high school	30	English	1 x week
Ms I.	13	Public junior high school	20-25	Japanese	2 x month
Ms S.	13	Public academic high school	40	Japanese	No
Ms D.	11	Public academic high school	18	Japanese English	1 x week
Mr. N.	7	Public integrated (commercial/academic) high school	20	Japanese English	Every day

Data Collection

Data collection took place during the week prior to the commencement of the overseas programme. Participants were offered the choice of either English or Japanese version of the questionnaire to complete, which, at their request, were emailed to them to complete electronically. The researcher collected them to refer to during oral follow-up interviews.

Data was collected using a slightly modified version of Gorsuch's (2001) questionnaire which asks teachers about the appropriateness of three categories of classroom activities: audio-lingual, grammar translation, and communicative (see Appendix). Instead of a Likert scale, JTEs were asked to simply respond "Yes" or "No" to the statement "This is an appropriate activity for my English classes" for each item, followed by "Yes" or "No" to the statement "I do this kind of activity in my English classes." In addition, the words "The teacher" in the original items were replaced by "Tanaka-sensei" in order to help JTEs form a mental picture of a typical JTE.

Results

Audio-lingual Activities

Of all three types of activities, JTEs' responses revealed the most consistency with regard to those falling under this category. As Table 3 reveals, almost all teachers thought audio-lingual activities were appropriate for their classes, and almost all JTEs reported doing them.

Table 3: Appropriateness of Audio-lingual Activities

(n=10)	Appropriate for English Classes	I do it in my classes
Choral repetition of minimal pairs (Item 5)	YES 9 NO 1	YES 9 NO 1
Recitation of memorized sentence patterns (Item 6)	YES 10	YES 8 NO 2
Practicing memorized dialogue in pairs (Item 8)	YES 10	YES 6 NO 4

Grammar-Translation Activities

For grammar-translation activities too, there was mostly a consistency between what JTEs thought and did. Interestingly, although some of them reported that they felt some of these activities were *not* appropriate for their English classes, they did them nonetheless. Table 4 highlights JTEs' responses.

Table 4: Appropriateness of Grammar-Translation Activities

(n=10)	Appropriate for English Classes	I do it in my classes
Unscramble an English sentence suggested by a Japanese translation	YES 8	YES 8

(Item 10)	NO 2	NO 2
Translate English text into Japanese for homework (Item 1)	YES 6 NO 4	YES 7 NO 3
Recite Japanese translations in class (Item 4)	YES 2 NO 8	YES 4 NO 6

Communicative Activities

This section showed the least consistency between beliefs and practices of all three item categories. For each item in this section, almost all of the JTEs said they thought that these communicative activities were appropriate for their English classes. However, teachers reported actually doing only about 1/3 of such activities. Table 5 highlights JTEs' responses.

Table 5: Appropriateness of Communicative Activities

(n=10)	Appropriate for English Classes	I do it in my classes
Unscramble sentences to make a paragraph (Item 12)	YES 9 NO 1	YES 8 NO 2
Match pictures to a story (Item 11)	YES 10	YES 2 NO 8
Oral information gap (Item 3)	YES 10	YES 7 NO 3
Opinion gap (Item 9)	YES 10	YES 5 NO 5
Write predictions of the ending of a picture story (Item 2)	YES 10	YES 2 NO 8
Write letters to a classmate (Item 7)	YES 9 NO 1	YES 1 NO 9

Rationales for not doing “appropriate” communicative activities

Rationale 1: Lack of Experience/Familiarity/Resources

JTEs may be aware of the existence of some communicative activities, but perhaps have not attempted using them in their classes. For example, while one JTE said that she was familiar with unscrambling sentences to make a paragraph (item 12), she had never tried it. Other JTEs reported that they had never seen or done Items 2 (writing predictions), 7 (writing letters), 11 (matching pictures to stories), or 12 (unscrambling sentences). Two JTEs also said that they didn’t think they could do Items 3 (oral information gap) and 11 (matching pictures to stories) because they didn’t know “what kind of levels or context should I choose” and “... because I have no material.”

Rationale 2: Time Constraints

Four teachers explicitly said time constraints prevented them from preparing or executing picture strip stories, letter writing, or scrambled paragraphs (Items 2, 7, and 12). Mr. C. felt that letter writing would be especially time-consuming: “So, it’s tough for them, and it takes a long time... short letter, short passage, that’s okay, but write a letter?” Mr. T. felt that re-arranging sentences into a paragraph would also be too time consuming for class, but suggested it might be assigned for homework: “It could be very difficult for students to arrange the sentence in the proper order and because of this difficulty it takes a lot of time, so it could be a homework assignment, but not in class. If I do that, I have to wait quite a long time.”

Rationale 3: Student Relationships/Behaviour

Two teachers, Mr. N. and Mr. H. both said that they would not ask their students to do picture strip stories, letter writing, or asking each other for opinions (Items 2, 7, and 9), because they were concerned about problems with relationships among their students. Mr. N., working at a particularly challenging school, characterized his students as follows, when discussing the picture strip story activity (Item 2):

They don't like English, or they have an inferiority complex. Then, why do they have an inferiority complex? Family problem is the first problem. And then bad friends. They get involved in gang friends and are influenced by them, personality, and so on, and become bad. It happens a lot. Why their families are bad is another problem. So, this is not the matter of studying, but a complex problem. We need to see their background.

He also felt that letter writing (Item 7) would be "risky," although he thought it was a good activity, because he was concerned that students might "write something teasing" to their classmates. Mr. M. felt that students would be inclined to write whatever their peers wrote, in other words, copy, as did Ms I. who said that junior high school students tended to do whatever their peers did, making it difficult for them to express their own opinions as required by the task in Item 9. Mr. N. also said that an activity like Item 9 might work as a novelty if taught at the beginning of the year when students are unfamiliar with the class, or if taught by an ALT or "very strict teacher."

Rationale 4: Student ability

A few teachers, such as Mr. N., said that they couldn't imagine doing communicative activities with their students because they felt their students were struggling with literacy issues. He felt that an activity such as letter writing (Item 7) would cause stress for students who could only write a few sentences. Others thought Item 9 (sharing opinions) sounded "nice" (Mr. M.) but that it would be difficult to ask his high school students to do it. Mr. H. too, thought such an activity would depend on the ability levels of students, saying that if there was a gap in academic ability, such an activity would be problematic. This suggests that JTEs may be reluctant to try communicative activities because they regard them as too difficult for or potentially embarrassing for slower learners or learners at lower levels than their peers.

Rationale 5: Entrance examinations

Ms J. said that in her writing class, writing activities tended to be done on an individual basis. She said, "The students read some description or see the graph and

then they describe about it. It is similar to the entrance examination for the universities.”

Rationales for Doing Something “Not Appropriate”

Rationale 1: Student levels

Both Ms D. and Mr. N. said that they did Items 1 and 4, both grammar translation activities, although they felt such activities were inappropriate for English language classes. Their reasons were similar in that they believed lower-level students were the ones who needed grammar translation because they were afraid of not understanding lessons and had little confidence in their ability. Ms D. felt that lower-level students required more time to understand English and the lower the level, the more such students required grammar translation. Mr. N. indicated that “academically low” students didn’t know how to study and simply copying what the teacher wrote on the board would help them feel that they understood and give them a sense of accomplishment.

Rationale 2: Institutional pressure

Both Ms S. and Mr. N. said that they did Items 1, a grammar translation activity. According to Ms S. “...this kind of thing has been done in my class, in my school”, but she also said “I don’t want my students to do that.” Mr. N., speaking for his colleagues in general, said, “Well, to be honest, I think Japanese teachers all know this is contradictory, but we have to do [it], although we think it’s not good.”

Rationale 3: Entrance examinations

Although Item 12 (scrambled paragraph) is a communicative writing activity, Mr. C. didn’t recognize it as such and appeared to feel it was inauthentic: “I don’t like such [an] activity from the viewpoint of English education, because... the sentences are split out and in the random order... in real situation[s], we never encounter such a situation.” At his current placement, he said he didn’t do such an activity, but when he worked at an academic high school in the past, he did because “The entrance examination had such a question.”

Discussion

These findings are consistent with Gorsuch's (2001) in that these teachers tend to favour audio-lingual and grammar-translation activities over communicative ones, although they rate the latter as appropriate for their classes. The results suggest that JTEs are, as they were in 1997, still not learning about communicative methods in their teacher training or in-service programs. They also report not being provided with communicative activities in their textbooks, feeling concerned about preparing students for entrance examination success, and still tend to feel duty-bound to adopt the practices of their colleagues, doing activities they believe are not appropriate, such as grammar-translation. This research also reveals that communicative activities are deemed inappropriate by those teachers working with students at non-academic schools, that is, vocational or evening schools, which are lower-ranking and generally easier to enter (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999). Students attending are characterized as "...low achievers or youths who had either failed to pass the entrance exams for daytime high schools or been expelled from daytime high schools. Some students had school refusal syndrome in middle school..." (Ishikida, 2005, p. 98).

These students, for whom life in society is a struggle, may have low confidence and be less likely to interact easily with their peers. The JTEs' from this group reported the need to take these factors into account when choosing appropriate activities for such students.

What seems to stand out from these results is the idea that this group of teachers, perhaps because of a lack of pre- or in-service training, or even in spite of it, is likely teaching as they have been taught, since in spite of MEXT's communicative demands, they continue to use traditional methods. It is clear that the demands of their teaching contexts, most importantly, to prepare students for success on entrance examinations, as well as to conform to the practices of their (especially senior) colleagues, results in a seeming inconsistency between belief and practice.

Conclusions

This research supports previous findings reported above that "...context is everything" (Freeman, 2002, p. 11) and that contextual factors significantly constrain teachers' decisions of whether or not to teach communicative English. Although, as in Gorsuch's original study, this group of JTEs seems to have positive beliefs about communicative activities, they feel unable to use them because of a number of impediments, particularly a lack of familiarity with and resources for communicative language teaching methodologies. More crucial, beyond merely pedagogy, JTEs need to be aware of and learn how to create effective learning environments and acquire teaching strategies for dealing with mixed-ability groups, or with students with emotional or social handicaps.

Data for this part of the research was collected before the JTEs began the overseas pedagogical program; however, even after returning to Japan knowing more about communicative language teaching, almost all of the high school teachers interviewed said that although they attempted to do more communicative activities in their classes, they eventually abandoned them in favor of traditional methods largely because of entrance examination, textbooks, and pressures to cover material at the same pace as their colleagues (Cook, 2010).

Recommendations for institutions

Universities could attempt to solve this problem in two ways: first, by re-evaluating their examination requirements so that they are more in line with MEXT's communicative goals, and second, by offering prospective JTEs courses in not only content area (language) knowledge, but also pedagogy, classroom management, educational psychology, and others subjects which can help them teach effectively in today's Japan. As it seems to stand now, teachers appear to be teaching as they were taught and as their seniors and colleagues teach. If all teachers have a stronger

educational foundation, they may have more options to help them operate in their particular teaching contexts.

At present, there seems to be little relationship between MEXT's call for "Japanese with English abilities" (Ministry of Education, 2003) and the demands of entrance examinations; MEXT guidelines call for English that can be "lived" (Yoshida, 2002), yet learners and teachers continue to put priority on university examinations. However, if MEXT's demands for communicative competency can one day be reflected in such exams, JTEs may be more likely to incorporate communicative teaching practices into their classrooms (Lamie, 2002; O'Donnell, 2005). If examination requirements change, textbooks will undoubtedly begin providing suitable activities in line with such requirements.

With regards to the latter, as it is now, teacher training in Japanese universities is not standardized and individual universities design their course requirements quite differently from each other; some appearing rather minimal (Arimoto, 2004). There also appears to be an obvious discontinuity between what is taught and the reality of the classroom; instead of learning only about theories of education, teachers in training also require more practical preparation (Denscombe, 1982). Perhaps MEXT, or prefectural boards of education, could take a stronger role in regulating what is taught in order to provide some guidelines to universities offering educational certificates. Prefectural boards could make recommendations with regards to teacher certification, review teacher training programmes, and develop standards for training and accreditation. This may facilitate national initiatives, such as the Action Plan which places stress on communicative ability, to become explicit to all teachers in a standardized and practical manner (Lamie, 2002).

However, more importantly, as mentioned above, a focus on pedagogy alone may be insufficient. In modern Japan, problems such as dropping out of school, bullying, and delinquency are becoming more pronounced (Ishikida, 2005), and teachers need tools to deal with these issues. Academic success is unlikely to be achieved in dysfunctional classrooms.

In addition, current government-mandated training programmes for in-service teachers may not be as effective as they could be if they mainly take place through Japanese-medium transmission-based lectures and/or are taught by people recommending inappropriate theories. However, improvement could be achieved if JTEs have input in formulating the contents of their training (Shimahara, 2002), rather than having it imposed upon them. If JTEs could ask for and receive specific training in implementing MEXT's policies, and if those giving the training are knowledgeable about local conditions, there may be a greater chance for consistency between theory and practice.

Directions for future research

As stated previously, data collection took place prior to the beginning of the overseas pedagogical program; however, in order to see if the program had any lasting impact on teachers' beliefs, it would have been interesting to administer the questionnaire again immediately after they JTEs returned to Japan and then perhaps a year or two after that. In addition, although using an adapted version of Gorsuch's (2001) questionnaire was a useful tool for gathering data, classroom observations would have been helpful in supporting the claims of the JTEs about their classroom practice and fleshing them out further.

More detailed research on the content and character of current pre-service English teacher training is necessary, in order to determine how it could be enhanced to better serve future teachers. Because teacher training is so complex in Japan, all and any research on pre-service teacher beliefs that can be fed back into even the limited amount of teacher training JTEs receive would be helpful, too. If their beliefs are probed and used as starting points for their training, teacher education may be more relevant, effective, and answer their needs, especially helping them in their first years of teaching when they are likely to simply be trying to survive and may be most open to influences.

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Appendix: Questionnaire

		This is an appropriate activity for English classes	I do this kind of activity in my English classes
1	Tanaka-sensei asks students to translate English phrases or sentences into Japanese as preparation for class.	YES NO	YES NO
2	Tanaka-sensei has students look at a page that has a "picture strip story." The students can uncover only one picture at a time. Before uncovering the next picture, the students predict, writing the prediction in English, what will happen in the next picture. Students can then look at the picture to confirm or disconfirm their predictions.	YES NO	YES NO
3	Tanaka-sensei has the students work face to face in pairs. One student sees a page that has some missing information. The other student sees a different page that has that information. The first student must ask questions in English to the other student to find the missing information.	YES NO	YES NO
4	Tanaka-sensei asks students to translate English phrases or sentences into Japanese in preparation for class. Then in class, Tanaka-sensei calls on individual students to read their Japanese translation of an English phrase or sentence, and Tanaka-sensei corrects it if necessary and gives the whole class the correct translation with an explanation.	YES NO	YES NO
5	Tanaka-sensei has the students chorally repeat word pairs such as sheep/ship and leave/live.	YES NO	YES NO

6	Tanaka-sensei has students memorize and practice a short English sentence pattern. Tanaka-sensei then gives students a one-word English cue and has the students chorally say the sentence pattern using the new word.	YES NO	YES NO
7	Tanaka-sensei pairs off students, then asks the students to write a letter in English to their partners.	YES NO	YES NO
8	Tanaka-sensei has students memorize an English dialogue and then has the students practice the dialogue together with a partner.	YES NO	YES NO
9	Tanaka-sensei has pairs or small groups of students ask each other and then answer questions in English about their opinions.	YES NO	YES NO
10	Students read a sentence in Japanese, and then see an equivalent English sentence below where the words have been scrambled up. The students must then rewrite the English sentence in the correct order suggested by the Japanese sentence.	YES NO	YES NO
11	On one page, students see a picture. Underneath the picture are several short English stories. Students have to choose which story they think best matches the picture.	YES NO	YES NO
12	On a page, students see an English paragraph in which the sentences have been scrambled. Tanaka-sensei then asks the students to put the sentences into order so the paragraph makes sense.	YES NO	YES NO

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Towards a Globalized Notion of English Language Teaching in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study

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Abstract

This paper uses one case study at a Saudi Arabian university to illustrate the effects of competing Discourses on the identities of English language teachers in this context. Through an unpacking of their language teaching narratives, the notion of ‘global’ English language teaching emerges as a way of potentially resolving these conflicting identities/Discourses.

Keywords: Identity, English Language Teachers, Saudi Arabia

Introduction: Teacher Identity

The concept of ‘professional identity’ has been used extensively in the fields of Management, Education and Health for some time. It is used to distinguish those attributes and values individuals, or the community at large, ascribe to a particular group of professionals, and allow them to be distinguished from other groups. Identity involves the individuals’ image of self, and how this translates into action (Sachs, 2001). Also many scholars have argued that identity construction is perceived as a dynamic process closely related to, and affected by, social, cultural and economic processes (Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997; Duff & Uchida, 1997).

These identities are “co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed, on an ongoing basis by means of language” (Duff and Uchida 1997, p. 452). Although identities can change over time, it is important to point out that the process of transformation is difficult and complex. People tend to maintain their identities in order to make their lives coherent and stable (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Reflexive self-awareness “provides the individual with the opportunity to construct self-identity without the

shackles of tradition and culture, which previously created relatively rigid boundaries to the options for one's self-understanding" (Adams, 2003, p. 221).

The recent focus on the effect of the formation, and development, of teacher identity in teaching, has provided a potential approach that could sustain professional development and self-empowerment, while advancing accountability (see e.g., Britzman, 1991, 1994; MacLure, 1993; Danielewicz, 2001; Miller Marsh, 2003; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Robinson & McMillan, 2006; Clarke, 2008a). Also, some scholars have argued that this recent focus on teacher identity and professional biographies, may "[offer] a richer and more complex way of thinking about teaching than do the standards-based models that have contemporary political valence" (Day *et. al.*, 2007, p. 609). Yet issues of teacher identity have been consistently ignored in successive educational reform policies and strategies, leading commentators, in a number of contexts, to speak of a crisis in the teaching profession (Day *et al.*, 2007), and in teachers' professional identities (Clarke, 2008b).

The literature on the enactment of teacher identity/ identities in the classroom, suggests that teachers are, at the same time, "social products and social producers," who read and interact with the curriculum "[D]iscourses surrounding them, construct their own unique understandings, and, in the end, construct their own self-directed responses" (Clarke, 2008a, p. 119). These Discourses are multiple, and may be complex to understand. Thus, in order to understand language teaching, and learning in particular, Varghese *et al.* (2005) argue that, "we need to understand teachers: the professional, cultural, political and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them" (p. 22; cited in Clarke, 2008a, p 105). In the same vein, Pennington (2002) claims that every teacher "wears a number of different hats", and, therefore, every teacher's identity "involves multiple influences," and, perhaps, especially so in teaching English to speakers of other languages" (p.1). Hence, drawing on such views on the notion of teacher identity, "one can formulate a teacher-self that is a polymeric product of experiences, a product of practices that constitute this self in response to multiple meanings, which do not need coverage upon a stable, unified identity" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 107).

Although teachers possess this level of agency, and their actions arise out of their unique identities, “their actions [and indeed their identities as teachers] are mediated by the structural elements of their setting such as the resources available to them, the norms of their school, and externally mandated policies” (Lasky, 2005, p. 899). In the Saudi Arabian university context, the constraints of setting, norms and mandated policies, are particularly inhibiting with a rigid hierarchy underpinning the flow of institutional power as illustrated in Figure 1. below. However, as described earlier, both the official curriculum (as elucidated in curriculum documents and policies) and “delivered curriculum” (Eisner, 1992) (which is heavily influenced in this context by the textbook), are fraught with inherent contradictions of particular relevance in this study. Islamic discourse(s) conflict with the discourse(s) of ‘Global English’ and ‘economic modernization’, and it is in this context of conflict that knowledge is produced. These tension affect contradictions, sustain power struggles, which remind us that there is no such thing as context-free knowledge.

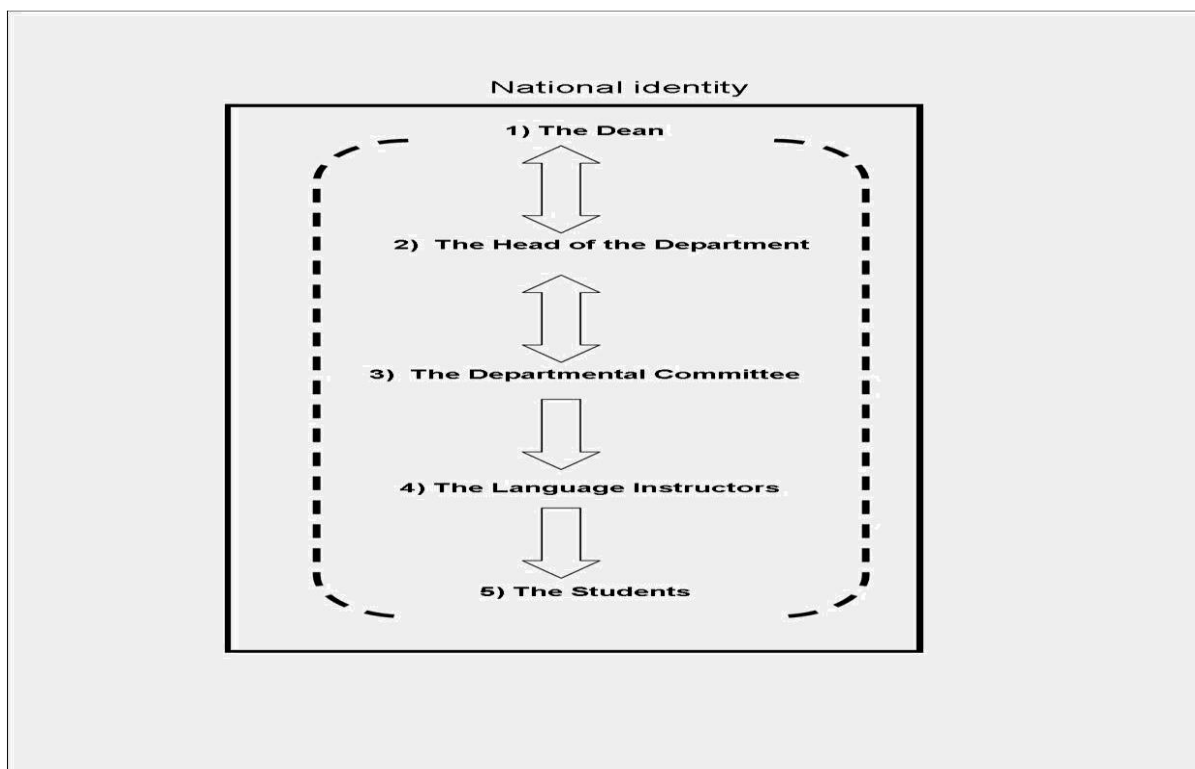


Figure 1. The typical flow of institutional power in a Saudi institutional context, adapted from Elyas & Picard, 2010

Narrative theory and identity

There has been a number of studies that focusing narrative theory and identity (see Labov, 1970). Narratologists study the internal structure of stories aiming to define the component parts, distinguish their different categories as well as make distinctions between narrative and non-narrative discourse (Benwell & Stokoe, 2005, p. 137).

Through narration, a self identity is formed in the actual discourse of the narration. If selves and identities, therefore, are constituted in Discourse, they are necessarily constructed in stories (Abell, Stokoe, & Billig, 2000). Drawing on the idea of self-identity, narrative researchers ascribe a particular ontological character to people, as ‘storied selves’. Benwell and Stokoe (2005) claim that, in fact, “this notion provides the basis for understanding people’s lives and [identity]” (p.138).

This has lead to assumptions by narrative researchers that “the nature of [D]iscourse is supplemented with the specifics of narration as a particular practice through which identity is performed, articulated and struggled” (ibid, p.140). For the purpose of this paper, the emphasis is on identity as performed, and dynamic rather than fixed. Thus teacher identity is explored as “culturally and historically located as constructed in interactions with other people and institution structures [which is also of importance in this paper]”, and viewed as “continuously remade, and as contradictory and situational” (May V, 2004; cited in Benwell & Stokoe, 2005, p. 138). But it is through these contradictions, and situational narratives, that we gain insight into teacher identity, as Mishler (1999) stated, “we speak our identity” (p.19).

One particular distinguishing feature of narrative identity theories is the notion that the “local stories we tell about ourselves are connected in some way to wider cultural stories (or ‘Master Narrative(s)’) [as will be illustrated in the teachers’ narratives below], cultural plotlines, discourses, interpretative repertoires)” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2005, p. 139). Schiffrin (1996) claimed that these local story narrations provide “a backdrop of cultural expectations about a typical course of action; our identities as social beings emerge as we construct our own individual experiences as a way to position ourselves in relation to social and cultural expectations,” (p.170). In this study, the local stories of Saudi English teachers give insight into their co-constructed professional and personal identities, and unpacking of these identities, in turn, elucidates the cultural and social expectations they face from both their institutions and their society.

Teacher identity and power

Drawing on the above discussed literature on teacher identity and narrative identity, and the possibility of cultural expectations and struggle (within Saudi Arabia in particular), the need to discuss power and knowledge in teacher identity is imperative. The links between knowledge and power are captured succinctly in Foucault’s statement that “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor at the same time any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (Foucault, 1977, p.46) and the interaction of knowledge and power, according to Foucault results in a “productive network” (Foucault, 1980, p.23).

As Foucault (1980) suggests, within every productive network, there is always the possibility for resistance from both students and teachers (as illustrated in Figure 2 below). Since the “productive network” within which teachers in KSA colleges operate, contains contradictory influences, it is likely that the teacher identities produced within this network are likewise inherently contradictory.

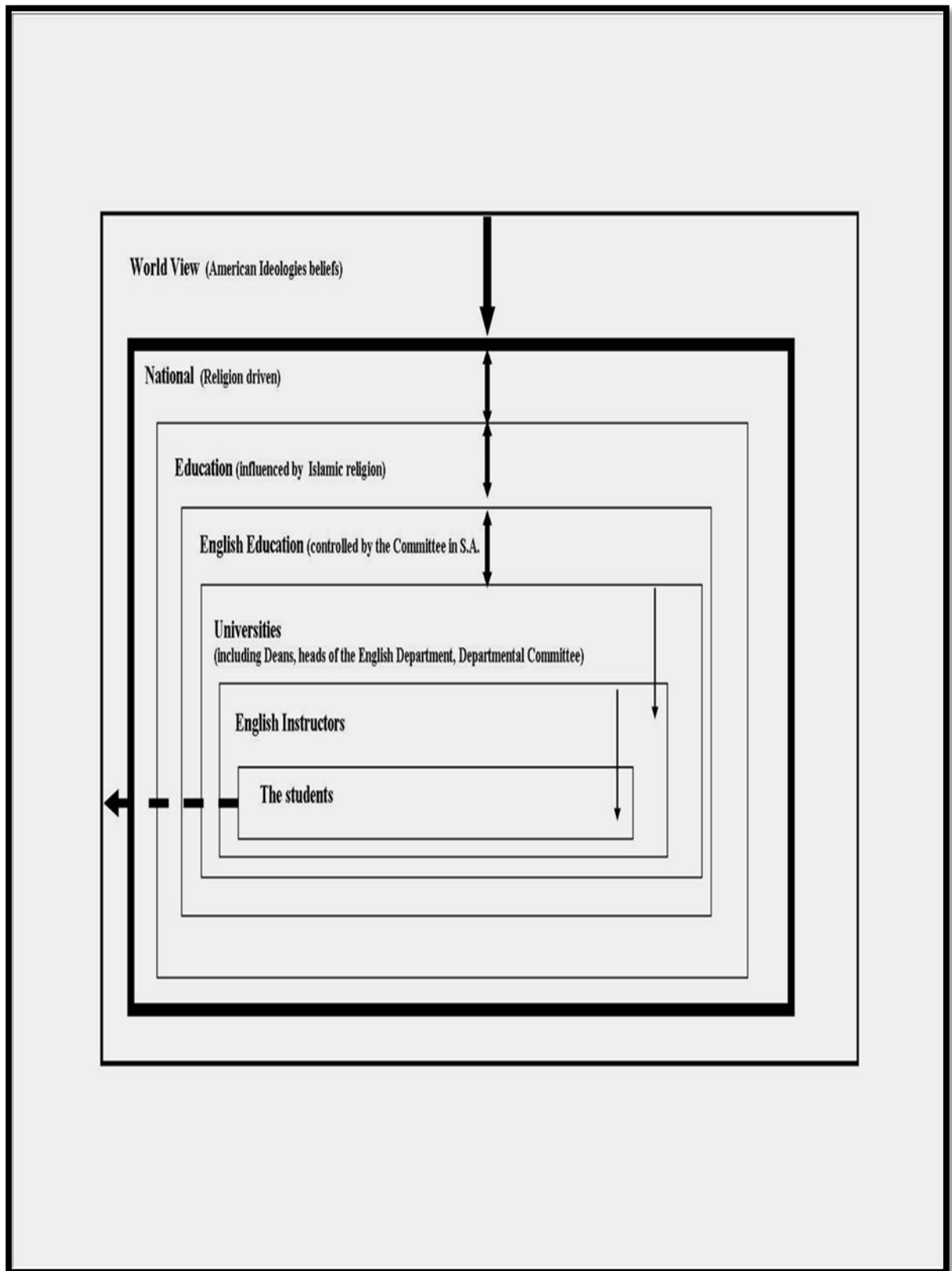


Figure 2. An interpretation of Foucault's concepts of power/knowledge within a Saudi context, adapted from Elyas, 2011.

This diagram illustrates Foucault's concepts of power/ knowledge within a Saudi educational institutional hierarchy in terms of the notion of the flow of knowledge, power, and the concepts of foreign knowledge, and who may control it. Also it shows that, although the flow of information the English language and culture is situated and controlled by the Saudi English teachers and their superiors, students have the potential to accept or oppose the views promulgated. Teachers, on the other hand, are constrained by their professional identities which typically operate within rigid hierarchies (Elyas, 2008). The possibility of tension, which is created by the different ideologies (traditional Islamic and Western) within the Saudi educational paradigm and how they affect teacher identity, are explored in this paper. The students' reactions to these ideologies, and the power structures within which they operate are also examined.

Exploring teacher identity, power and the enactment of identity

This paper explores the interplay between the influences of traditional Islamic pedagogies and the pedagogies of 'global English', as manifested in what the two teachers in this study define their professional identity to be, and the way they enact the curriculum in an English classroom. The respondents are both male Saudi national teachers teaching at a university level in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In the thesis on which this paper is based, this data is later correlated with data from the students' narratives and focus group, reflecting their experiences of the knowledge created and the "productive network" within which this knowledge is constructed, as well as their reflections on the curriculum and pedagogy employed by the teachers, and the textbook used in the classroom.

Exploring the teachers' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions in relation to teaching, and how these relate to power structures, is the main focus of the data. First the teachers' situational narratives are explored, and their 'local stories', which are connected to wider 'global stories', are unpacked. Using Meyer's (2001) framework for Critical Discourse Analysis, teacher identity and the possible conflict between traditional Islamic and Western ideologies within this identity were identified as an area of

interest. A teacher adhering to one or other of these ideologies may serve as a potential “obstacle” to the forming of a positive professional identity in the KSA context. Both professional (training, curriculum, policies) and cultural/ religious (the Qur’an, *Hadith* traditional beliefs about the role of the teacher) constitute the “network of practices” (Fairclough, 2001) within which these teachers operate. Also “structural analysis” and the “order of discourse” as outlined by Meyer (2001, p.125), are related in this study to narrative structure, and the Master discourses that this structure reveals. The data are subsequently analysed using a framework adapted from Foucault’s force axes of ethical self-formation (May, 2006; O’Leary, 2002). The data in this paper was obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with both teachers. Prior to the interviews a “start list” of constructs (Miles & Huberman, 1984) was developed in accordance with Foucault’s force axes of ethical self-formation. The theory underlying this “list” was Foucault’s four axes of ethics. Prior to the interviews a “start list” of constructs Miles & Huberman (1984) was developed and formulated into open-ended questions. The theory underlying this “list” was Foucault’s four axes of ethics: 1. the ethical substance (the part of the self pertaining to ethics); 2. the mode of ethical subjection (the authority sources of ethics); 3. ethical self-practices and; 4. the telos, or endpoint, of ethics (May T, 2006, O’Leary, 2002). In Foucauldian terms the researcher aims to unpack the genealogy of Discourses, thus he/she “seeks to explain present-day cultural phenomena and problems by looking at the past and analysing how it was derived and constituted historically. It not only looks at who we are at present but also opens up possibilities of what might be and from where we might start to be different in the present. It forms a critical ontology of ourselves” (Besley, 2002, p. 14).

When conceived in this way, the four dimensions of the “genealogy of power” become four axes for critical work focused on the genealogy of the subject’s identity. These axes can be transposed into four ‘axes of teacher identity’: the substance of teacher identity, the authority sources of teacher identity, the self-practices of teacher identity, and the endpoint of teacher identity (Clarke, 2009). This adaption of Foucault’s axes to the context of teacher identity is represented in the diagram in Figure 3 below. Thus teachers were asked questions relating to how they viewed their identity (substance), what they saw as the authority or power structure underlying

their identity, the ways they saw themselves enacting their identity and what they conceived as the results of their enactment of their identities. Initial interview questions (see appendix 1) were devised according to the four axes presented below.

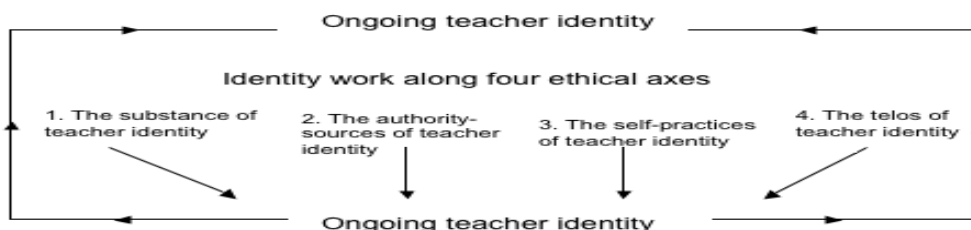


Figure 3. A diagram for doing ethical ‘identity work’ in teacher education adopted from Clarke’s (2009) view of Foucault’s axis of power.

Follow-up questions were asked based on the teacher’s responses in order to clarify and obtain more detail on specific issues.

Exploring Khalid’s professional identity, professional background and resultant pedagogy

Khalid is a 24 year old Saudi national English teacher who studied abroad. He had additional exposure to Western culture as he spent all his summer holidays as a child abroad. He also works as an English lecturer at KAU. He was interviewed in his office. The narrative structure is unpacked in the context of a potential conflict between ideologies and identities, and the four axes of teacher identity are used as an analytic framework.

The narrative structure of Khalid’s teaching story

Khalid’s teaching story starts with a description of travel. He described his experiences as a student in summer schools in the USA, and his later experiences

studying English abroad. This part of the story relates to a very common Master Narrative of the traveller as an agent of change and development, bringing new ideas, knowledge and culture back to his home society. This Master Narrative has also been reflected in early Arabic literature with the diaries of the famous traveller *Ibn Battuta*, who explored the globe and came back equipped with knowledge, which he shared with his contemporaries. The more modern Master Narrative of the “global scholar” (Thieman, 2008) is also reflected in Khalid’s narrative. This person is not limited to one country or culture, but rather collaborates and spreads knowledge across borders (Thieman, 2008).

In the middle of his narratives, Khalid talked about his success story in the classroom. Once again, a generation Master Narrative develops, but in Khalid’s case it is a narrative of identification and collegiality with his students, rather than any “gap”. Khalid also related his identification with, and understanding of, the material and ‘culture’ promulgated in the materials to his experiences abroad, and his understanding of the students’ youth culture (Karam, 2010). Khalid evidenced a Master Narrative of the teacher as a colleague and ‘fellow learner’ in his discourse.

At the end of the story, Khalid continued the Master Narrative of the traveller and his responsibility to share knowledge and experience, and described how he attempts to discuss and share his insights into teaching with his fellow teachers. He did indicate though that there is some resistance from his colleagues, and even his Department, which links with the Master Narrative of the teacher as agent of change (Price & Valli, 2005).

The ‘substance’ of Khalid’s identity

I have experienced that the method of reflection in my teaching, somehow, made me a better person (Khalid, 2007).

The 'substance' of Khalid's identity as an English teacher relates to his view of himself as a 'reflective' practitioner (Brookfield, 1995), who uses his own learning experiences to attempt to understand the position of the students, conducts an audit of his practices, holds critical discussions with colleagues, and explores the literature all with the aim of improving his teaching practice.

Rather than attempting to fix his professional teaching identity to national or religious customs and mores, Khalid saw his personal identity as affected by his evolving professional identity, as reflected in the following:

Teaching has made me a better person... I love teaching. It makes me feel I am doing something good for the students and also my society. It gives me sense of identity, a sense of purpose (Khalid, 2007).

Another characteristic of Khalid's identity is his perception of himself as a communicator. He related his growing professionalism to his developing interpersonal communication skills, and his ability to cope with his differences of opinion and beliefs with other KSA English teachers in a constructive manner. Khalid ascribed his reflective and communicative abilities to his training in the USA. As reflected below:

Before I left to study English in Colorado, USA, for a few months after graduation, I would have avoided interacting with people whose opinions and ideas were different to mine... However, after my trip to the US, I have begun to discuss different issues and ideas with other English teachers, my own students in the class, and sometimes my own family. I see myself open to new ideas and new understanding of the world. Now, after my trip to the US, I found myself sharing my ideas in the classroom or with my family which they may not completely agree with. It could be the age thing (Khalid, 2007).

And

Also, having a somehow good understanding of the teaching methodologies after being an English student in English Intensive program in the US, enhanced my understanding of different methods of teaching. I found myself trying my best to adopt these methods in my classroom and see if they work in a Saudi context. The students are happy with me and that is very important for me. It makes me feel I am doing a good job (Khalid, 2007).

Here, there is an apparent inter-cultural competence that Khalid possesses. He has developed a “‘third place’ [identity] between the learners’ native culture and the target culture, i.e. between self and other (Liddicoat, Crozet, & Lo Bianco, 1999, p. 181). His cultural and linguistic competence is very clear as in “trying my best to adopt these methods in my classroom” [Khalid, 2007] and in “it makes me feel I am doing a good job” [Khalid]. He showcased his satisfaction when he succeeded in achieving this ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 2004). He is very comfortable, and it doesn’t frustrate him, to juggle two distinct worlds (East and the West). Pennington (2002) notes that “teachers of English to speakers of other languages must develop a type of identity that aligns them with their profession and with the specific contexts in which they teach” (p.1)

Khalid also highlighted his developing creative skills, which he felt enable him to develop more effective teaching resources, his critical thinking and reflective skills, which he said, “strengthen my understanding of my identity as an English teacher and make me a stronger teacher, more competent and more aware of the culture” [Khalid, 2007]. He stated the following:

After my trip to the US, I became very motivated to utilize my learning skills and also my teaching skills. In fact, I became very creative if I may say. I started using the net and other resources to strengthen my understanding of my identity as an English teacher and make me a stronger teacher, more competent and more aware of the

culture. Also, I have been exposed to reflective learning which made me reflect on my teaching. This method which I only been introduced to in the US made me a stronger person (Khalid, 2007).

Khalid's personal experiences with the 'other' target cultures in his youth appeared to have developed his professional identity. Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) argue that "image provides us with an indicator of teachers' knowledge, and enables us to examine the knowledge growth attribute of different training experiences, and relationship between knowledge and observed practice" (p.3). Here Khalid is projecting his image to his students as an agent of change and the so-called 'bright future'.

Another aspect of Khalid's identity is his generational identification with the students. He described himself as understanding their perspective as in the following:

I am only 23 years after all, I can relate to what the students are feeling and their anxiety about the language (Khalid, 2007).

Khalid also detailed how his sense of responsibility towards his students has evolved along with the other aspects of his professional identity, as evidenced in the following:

Moreover, I believe that teaching reinforced my sense of responsibility... I try as much as I can to respond to the students' needs or weakness in my office hours which they greatly appreciate. I know they won't like me to address their differences and weakness in the classroom. Luckily, I can understand my own culture and work with it (Khalid, 2007).

The ‘substance’ of Khalid’s teaching identity is thus a reflection, change and confidence in his ability to negotiate between the Western/ American and Saudi/ Muslim contexts. He could easily juxtapose the two entities, and ideological representations, without fear of losing his own personal or Islamic identity. Khalid’s confidence made him feel that he is not in a subordinate position (Pennycook, 1989) in his professional identity. He appeared to be a confident and strong individual capable of making his own local as well as global contribution in the classroom.

The ‘authority sources’ of Khalid’s teaching identity

Khalid called upon the authority of his training, both at the University and in English schools in the US, and also to the teaching theories that he has been able to put into practice, to underpin his identity as a teaching professional. He stated that these sources of authority have increased his confidence as a teacher, and in discussions with other Saudi English teachers. Again we see dynamism at work here as he interweaved theory and practice in a way that “let my students and my colleagues understand that my teaching strategies are based on actual theory and practices” [Khalid, 2007]. Here, Khalid has established a wider set of resources that he is able to draw on in shaping his emerging teaching self. This helped him to reconcile his national/ religious identity, and his developing identity as an English teacher, as reflected below:

However, I try to let my students and particularly my colleagues understand that my teaching strategies which are based on actual theory and practices (which might be controversial or even modern in the sense of the word) might be different to theirs but that does not mean that they are anti-Islamic or not as effective as theirs (Khalid, 2007).

The ‘self-practices’ used to shape Khalid’s teaching

Khalid’s reference to his practice of discussing different issues with his more experienced older teachers, is clearly a self-practice that has had an educative effect. He stated:

I have learned through many attempts that discussing things with other teachers open the door to debates that they themselves were hesitant to talk about it is an eye-opening tool... (Khalid, 2007).

Ali found himself as in the ‘middle way’ between his students’ actual learning needs, and his professional identity among his colleagues, as in “talk about it’ and “discussing things with other teachers” [Khalid, 2007]. Here, Khalid appeared to have a firm stand on what he thought was right without losing his professional identity in the institution. Pennington (2002), on the issue of ‘middle way’, argues that “the identity of teacher-as-professional can be seen as a ‘middle way’ - tension or a balance point- between an entirely idiosyncratic teacher identity, and an entirely generic one, or, from a different perspective, between a performance-based view and a competence view of teacher identity” (p.5).

Another self-practice Khalid referred to was to “strengthen my understanding of my identity as an English teacher” [Khalid, 2007] which, as we have seen, he felt had helped him develop a more effective learning environment for his students. Finally, Khalid referred to the self-practice of critical thinking and reflection. He described himself as “as a better person” [Khalid, line, 1] and believed that “reflection” on his teaching of English “somehow, makes me a better person”[Khalid, line, 23].

Khalid's 'ultimate goal or purpose' in teaching

Khalid stated that “I try as much as I can to respond to the students’ needs or weakness in my office hours which they greatly appreciate” [Khalid, 2007] and student learning was clearly one guiding purpose for him as a teacher.

He also talked about the value of fostering his creativity in terms of developing “I try to let my students, and particularly my colleagues, understand that my teaching strategies are based on actual theory and practices” [Khalid, 2007] Implicit in the importance he attached to critical thinking and reflection, as sources of deepening understanding, strengthened beliefs, and becoming “a better person”, was the ultimate value he placed on his own ongoing self-development as a teacher, both personally and professionally. He said “I have learned ... discussing things with other teachers open the door ... is an eye-opening tool” [Khalid, 2007].

When Khalid’s words are considered in terms of all four axes of teacher identity, his foregrounding of reflection, and subsequent change in practice, suggests that Khalid viewed his identity as dynamic and changeable Khalid ascribed his reflective and communicative abilities to his training in the USA. In addition, Khalid established a wider set of resources that he was able to draw on in shaping his emerging teaching self.

Not only was there a strong sense of ‘care for the self’ in his explicit concern for his evolving teacher identity, but, at the same time, this care of the self is closely connected with a sense of care for others, including his students and the other teachers working around him. He was clearly at peace with his identity as an English teacher without neglecting his Arabic/Islamic identity. Moreover he seemed to be aware that his engagement in practices of ‘care of the self’ is itself contributing to nurturing a critical, engaged and ethical responsiveness to others – “I try to let my

students, and particularly my colleagues, understand that my teaching strategies, which are based on actual theory and practices (which might be controversial or even modern in the sense of the word), might be different to theirs but that does not mean that they are anti-Islamic or not as effective as theirs ” [Khalid, 2007].

In relation to Khalid’s engagement with others, it is worth noting one of the criticisms made of Foucault’s ethics, namely that it is too private an affair, involving a disengagement with public issues in order to focus on the self (Best and Kellner, 1991). Whilst a number of Foucauldian scholars have challenged such an interpretation as understating the extent to which the ethical self is socially and politically situated (Infinito, 2003, Olsen, 2006), it may seem that Khalid’s inter-subjective engagement was somewhat narcissistic, in that it is ultimately focused on his own development as a teacher, rather than reflecting broader concern for others. However, it can be argued that his concern for his own development, far from reflecting some sort of solipsistic self-absorption, was intimately connected to, and provided a source of, his responsiveness to others. As Olssen notes, “the care of the self, then, is always at the same time concerned with care for others” (2006, p.22).

In relation to his attitude towards Islam, and how it relates to English teaching, it appeared that Khalid follows a ‘weaker’ form of Islamization as advocated by Ratnawati (2005) and Mahboob (2009) where it is acknowledged that culture cannot be divorced from the teaching of language. Although he acknowledged the anxiety his students may have felt towards the language, he believed that his practices, although “modern”, were not “anti-Islamic” [Khalid, 2007].

Towards a KSA English teaching identity: A Summary

It is apparent that Khalid has grappled with issues of reconciling his national, religious, and general teaching identities, with the professional identity of the English teacher. From the data it appears that the contrast between the policies and requirements of the stated curriculum and the teaching materials, which influence the enacted curriculum, cause some difficulties. Additionally, Khalid was influenced by,

and struggled with, the contrast between what he has learnt about English teaching in his studies in the USA and his experiences in the KSA context. However, from Meyer's (2007) perspective the social network within which teaching in KSA operates in a sense "needs" this "problem" (Meyer, 2001, p.125) since policy is influenced both by traditional cultural/ religious pressures within the country, and by forces of 'globalisation' outside the country.

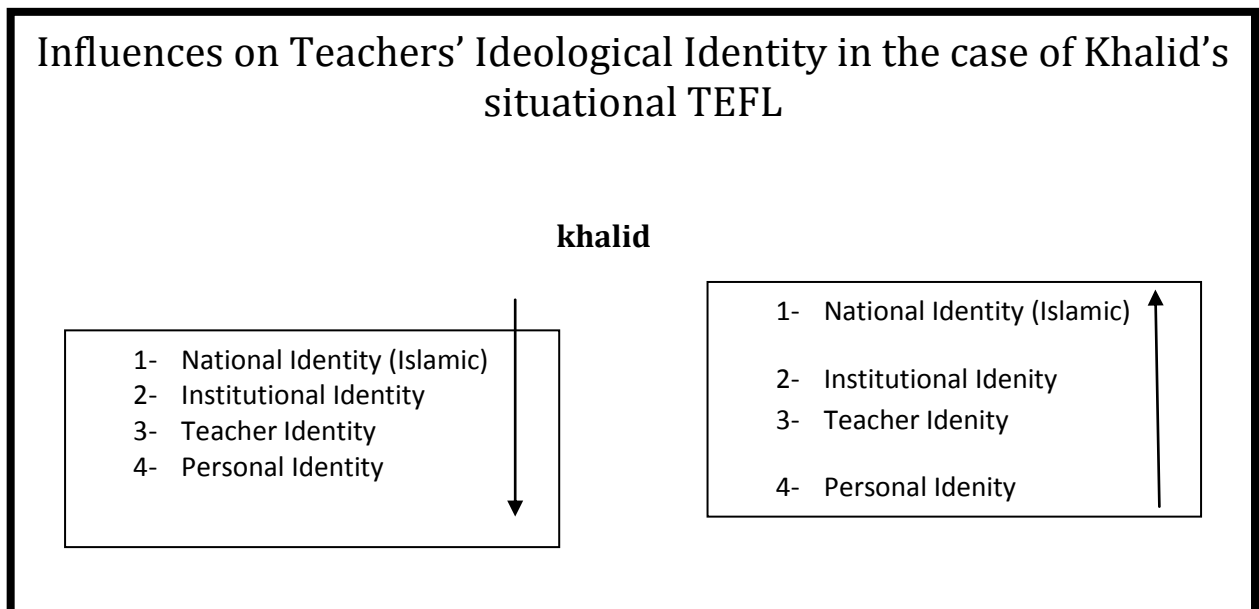
Khalid struggled with his complex identity as a Saudi/Arabic teacher, and an English teacher, within a well-structured paradigm of educational hierarchy with the educational system in KSA. He was influenced by an 'upward ideological' teacher identity where he reacted to his personal experience as a person (studying English in the US during his summer holidays), and then as a teacher who could negotiate his role with the institutional identity (as represented in Figure 4). He developed an identity that fitted with his role as a Saudi English teacher.

According to Pennington (2002), "teachers of English to speakers of other languages must develop a type of identity that aligns them with their profession, and with the specific context in which they teach," (p.1), and this is exactly what Khalid did in his classroom. Khalid felt that the issue of language teaching, and language learning, was of great importance sociolinguistically and politically in KSA. As Benwell and Stokoe (2005) succinctly put it, "language both constructs social and political reality and is also constituted or conditioned by it" (p.107), a clear example of how Khalid re-constructed his social and political professional identity in the classroom setting to project his values and mores as he saw them.

Foucault's notions of ethical self-formation, and "care of self", offer rich potential for addressing these concerns by encouraging teachers to focus on critical reflection within a context of inter-subjective engagement with other educators. This theoretical perspective presented by a teacher in the KSA context "challenges that assumption that there is a singular 'teacher-self' or an essential 'teacher identity' hidden beneath the surface of teacher's experience, an assumption evident in popular myths about

teaching” (Zembylas, 2003, p.108).

Finally, Khalid’s ability to reconcile his conflicting identities appeared to arise out of such an attempt, and provided one way of addressing professional identity as an English teacher in the KSA context, and of finding a way “past the obstacles” (Meyer, 2001, p.125) he faced. This data, whilst not inclusive of other teachers, offer a glimpse of teachers’ identities, and the conflict they may face.



Finally, it appears that for a better learning situation in a KSA context, Saudi English teachers “must be sufficiently socialized to L2 practices, so that they can comfortably draw on those practices as part of their communication and cultural repertoire, and so that their meta-pragmatic awareness enable them to support students’ learning of L2” (Kasper, 2001, p. 522). Khalid’s professional identity as a teacher were used here to showcase a distinct style of teaching according to the Discourses the teachers may follow. These Discourses are presented in this paper to shed some light on the social, cultural, and political, and ideological/religious paradigms that some teachers may choose to follow, and how this consequently may impact their role in the classroom.

Although this paper only showcases one teacher as case studies at a university level in KSA. It provides a new understanding of some of the tension that some teachers may face in their professional identity because of 'globalisation', and the demands of reconciling Western and Islamic influences in the learning situation, which should be explored further.

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Appendix 1

The initial list of questions used in the interviews is as follows:

- 1- How do you see yourself and/or reflect yourself as a teacher in the classroom?
- 2- What are your sources of authority/ power in the classroom?
- 3- To what extent do you think that teaching the 'target' culture and language in the classroom affects or is affected by your identity as an Arabic/Islamic person?
- 4- How do you think your behaviour in classroom affects the students' perception of you as a teacher and their learning of English?

Collaborative play making using ill-structured problems: Effect on pre-service language teachers' beliefs

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Abstract

Much previous research has shown beliefs to be resistant to change. Furthermore, when exposed to conflicting information, studies have also shown that people are likely to use it selectively to reinforce existing beliefs, the so-called biased assimilation effect. This paper describes a classroom procedure built around collaborative play making, and investigates its impact on the beliefs of pre-service teachers in Japan. Themes were based on ill-structured problems, professionally and personally significant dilemmas amenable to no single or simple solution. Participants were first presented with contrasting views by way of readings. This was followed by pair discussions. At the next stage groups generated multiple perspectives on the issues through collaborative play making. A pre and post-test survey measuring beliefs clustered around the central topic showed approximately 25% of responses shifting across the agree/disagree divide. In addition, students did not show biased assimilation: even excluding changes in polarity, beliefs were at least as likely to

moderate as to become more extreme. The results were stable over two cycles of the procedure.

Keywords: Beliefs, Biased Assimilation, Teacher Development, Drama, Affec

Introduction

This paper explores the effects of collaborative play making on pre-service teacher beliefs. It was conducted as part of regular classroom instruction in an English class for pre-service teachers at a Japanese college of education. The researcher was the instructor of the class.

Richards, Gallo and Renendya (2001) stated that current approaches to teacher education are based on the assumptions that: “teachers’ beliefs play a central role in the process of teacher development” and that “changes in teachers’ practices are the result of changes in teachers’ beliefs” (p. 41). Whether teachers of other languages are to work in an ESL setting or in an EFL environment, beliefs about other cultures and religions will exert an influence over behavior in the classroom. Deeply engaging pre-service teachers about such issues of diversity is, therefore, an important aspect of preparing them for practice.

Previous research on belief change has shown that information tends to be selected to conform to pre-existing beliefs, the so-called biased assimilation effect (Lord, Ross and Lepper, 1979; Kardash and Scholes, 1996; Pomerantz, Chaiken and Tordesillas, 1995; Miller, McHoskey, Bane and Dowd, 1993; Munro and Ditto, 1997; Munro, Ditto, Lockhart, Fagerlin, Gready, and Peterson, 2002). In addition, Boysen (2007) found that beliefs are likely to become further polarized when exposed to ambiguous information. In short many studies have demonstrated, not only that beliefs are “unaffected by persuasion” (Rokeach 1968, cited in Pajares 1992) but that they may, on the contrary be intensified. Other researchers, however, have noted that beliefs do

indeed change, but not by rational persuasion, but rather by a “gestalt shift” (Nespor 1985), by engaging the unconscious or experiential system (Epstein 1994) or by engaging both rational and unconscious processes in combination (Whelton 2004).

Engaging the whole person; conscious and unconscious, rational and affective may be key to the deep reflection and belief change teachers need to make in response to experiencing diverse students and teaching contexts. This paper investigates the effects of a procedure designed to engage the whole person while still in the pre-service stage. It invokes the rational system through readings and pair discussions, and the experiential system through collaborating to create a drama centered on an ill-structured problem

Literature review

This section begins by looking at some of the literature on what people do when their beliefs are confronted with new data. Belief change will then be addressed from the traditional educational perspective of reflection then it will address change from a psychoanalytic viewpoint. Finally, research on using drama as a method to influence beliefs will be dealt with.

Intransigence and change

Belief change is often thought to begin with exposure to contradictions between new data and one’s own beliefs. Such anomalous data creates a situation of cognitive dissonance. Horwitz (1985), for example, used surveys of language learning beliefs in methodology classes for pre-service language teachers for exploring areas of controversy through discussion, thereby destabilizing established, and as yet unchallenged, beliefs.

Chinn and Brewer (1993) explored the literature on belief change in science given exposure to anomalous data. They posit that responses to anomalous data are essentially limited to these possibilities:

- (a) ignore the anomalous data,
- (b) reject the data,
- (c) exclude the data from the domain of theory A
- (d) hold the data in abeyance,
- (e) reinterpret the data while retaining theory A,
- (f) reinterpret the data and make peripheral changes to theory A, and
- (g) accept the data and change theory A, possibly in favor of theory B. (p. 4)

Other researchers have shown that new data may well be used selectively to bolster existing beliefs while contrary data is ignored or is not subject to recall. Kardash and Scholes (1996) presented subjects with a factual text offering tentative views on the relationship between HIV and AIDS 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 concluded:

[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)

Likewise Lord, Ross and Lepper (1979) demonstrated biased assimilation and attitude polarization when subjects were presented with information regarding the efficacy of capital punishment. The findings have been bolstered by subsequent research (Pomerantz, Chaiken and Tordesillas, 1995; Miller, McHoskey, Bane and, and Dowd, 1993; Munro and Ditto, 1997: Munro, Ditto, Lockhart, Fagerlin, Gready, and Peterson, 2002). More recently, Boysen (2007) found attitude polarization in undergraduate university students when offered a biological explanation of homosexuality. He concluded that groups on both sides: “reported more certainty in their original attitudes after reviewing the same ambiguous, non-persuasive information” (p. 761). Specifically, the tendency to become more polarized was seen in 45% of responses while those becoming more moderate, or depolarized, accounted for just 4%.

But beliefs do change and Chinn and Brewer (1993) recommend that processing information more deeply makes this more likely. They recommend two strategies to promote deep processing: that of choosing issues of personal significance, and being required to justify one’s views to others.

Reflection

This rational approach to belief change originates with Dewey (1998 who defined reflection as the: “*Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further*

conclusions to which it tends“ (p. 9). He later wrote that, “Thinking begins in what may fairly be called a *forked-road* situation, a situation that is ambiguous, that presents a dilemma, that proposes alternatives” (p. 14). He refers elsewhere to these “forked road situations” as ill-structured problems. Dewey also makes the qualification that reflective thought requires that the issue have personal, real world consequences.

White (2000) elicited the reflective processes of pre-service teachers in an effort to elucidate their epistemological beliefs. She asked them 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. While belief change was not central to this study, some changes were noted in the process of interaction with the researcher. She stated:

As I analyzed the data in this study, I became aware that the 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 be revising their beliefs as they explained to me. (p. 282)

In discussing her results, White (2000) makes a number of suggestions, in addition to the observation above, for helping pre-service teachers move from a simple to a more complex thought process. These include activities based on: seeing things from the point of view of other stakeholders, and looking at the situation from other perspectives (such as motivation and social development), engaging in field studies, and creating arguments both for and against a particular position.

Belief change as an unconscious process

While the reflective approaches outlined above are based on conscious, rational thought, Freud showed long ago that the springs of behavior are often unconscious and irrational. Furthermore, if beliefs are rooted partly or largely in the unconscious-- a case, which will be made below—they need to be engaged through unconscious thought processes, those being: wish fulfillment, displacement, condensation, symbolic representation, and association (Epstein 1994).

A number of researchers have offered evidence that beliefs inhere in the unconscious. Nespor (1985) stated that “When beliefs change, it is more likely to be a matter of a “conversion” or gestalt shift rather than the result of argumentation or a marshaling of evidence” (p. 17). Moreover, the linkage between beliefs, on the one hand, and situations on the other, is highly individual and unsystematic and “may well be bound up with the personal, episodic, and emotional experience of the believer“ (p. 17). Furthermore, he states that beliefs are not recognized “by those who hold them or by outsiders—as being in dispute or as being in principle disputable” (p. 17). This is consistent with Rokeach (1968, cited in Pajares 1992) who wrote that beliefs are “deeply personal, rather than universal, and unaffected by persuasion. They can be formed by chance, an intense experience, or a succession of events” (p. 309). These findings show no connection to rational thought but show a close connection to the unconscious experiential system of Epstein (1994).

In Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory, Epstein (1994) posits two systems, the “rational” and the “experiential.” The experiential system is rooted in the unconscious and is endowed with characteristics as outlined below

-Holistic

- Affective: Pleasure-pain oriented (what feels good)
- Associationistic connections
- Behavior mediated by “vibes” from past experiences
- Encodes reality in concrete images, metaphors, and narratives
- More rapid processing: Oriented toward immediate action
- Slower to change: Changes with repetitive or intense experience
- More crudely differentiated: Broad generalization gradient; stereotypical thinking
- More crudely integrated: Dissociative, emotional complexes; context-specific processing
- Experienced passively and pre-consciously: We are seized by our emotions
- Self-evidently valid: “Experiencing is believing” (p. 711)

These ways of thinking are deeply bound up, not only with situation, but also with emotion:

People, when they are highly emotional, think in a manner that is categorical, personal, concrete, unreflective, and action-oriented, and the stronger the emotion, the more they think that way and the more their thinking appears to them to be self-evidently valid. (p. 710)

Here, emotion is seen as connected closely to the same mental behaviors as seen in the experiential system. This suggests that arousal of emotion may be important in accessing the experiential system directly and effecting change. This is supported by research on change in psychotherapy showing depth of experiencing emotions to be related to good outcomes (Whelton 2004).

But emotional reaction may also be governed by a pre-determined, “preconscious interpretation of events. People are angry, sad, or frightened, not as a result of what objectively occurs but because of how they interpret what happens” (Epstein 1994, p. 710). This points to a rational route to change which seeks to break rigid connections to a single interpretation by replacing them with a wider field of possibilities through a “cognitive exploration of its meaning” (Whelton 2004, p. 60).

One route to change is emotional and unconscious; the other, conscious and rational. In fact, both aspects, cognitive and emotional, may be necessary for lasting change. Bohart (1977, 1980: cited in Whelton 2004) showed that emotional release of anger increased aggression rather than reducing it and that a rational analysis of the situation provoking the anger did nothing to help either. What helped was emotional arousal combined with a more rational analysis.

Drama aimed at belief change

Many reasons have been advanced for using drama as a method for changing attitudes and beliefs. Fleming (2006) wrote that “what compels pupils’ interest in drama is the extent to which it appears to imitate real life” (p. 60), and its ability to allow one to “de-center” or to look at oneself from the outside, to question what is taken as given in one’s own culture. He also argues that drama provides focus “that allows an exploration of complexity because of its simplification” (p. 60).

Basourakos (1999) advocated watching drama as part of a program for enhancing moral consciousness. The function of drama here was primarily one of contextualizing moral action. The play is of no direct influence but rather “becomes a catalyst which educators can use to provoke students to assess critically and debate the viability and desirability of moral choices that are offered by dramatic characters outside the work itself” (p. 480).

Beale (2001) investigated a program involving drama as part of a scheme to counter bullying. School counselors brought in materials and engaged in discussions with students to raise awareness. The drama teacher then followed up by writing a play based on information from the counselors and incorporating input from the students. The main purpose of the play was to lead into discussions among the audience.

She attributes the method's potential effectiveness to the fact that, "the group can view and respond to issues more freely because they can discuss them in relation to the characters and events depicted by the drama rather than in personal terms" (p. 4). As in Basourakos (1999) the most meaningful part of the process is said to lie in the discussion following the play.

Tromski and Doston (2003) sought to address issues of diversity by counseling students through the use of "interactive drama" in which non-professional actors perform a play, chosen for its content, and where audience members affect the performance by interacting with the characters and with each other.

Bouchard (2002) applied a narrative approach to moral experience by way of dramatic play and writing. The process consisted of four steps: perception, exploration, actualization and retroaction. At the perception stage, the problem is introduced and students get acquainted with their emotions and the sensations related to it. In the exploration stage, students move into character and interact with others comparing images, values and ideals. In the actualization phase, the characters must interact and evolve as they confront a situation requiring them to negotiate the best thing to do. And finally, in the retroaction stage, "Pupils reflect on and assess the action and draw comparisons between the actual experience itself and their 'felt response'" (p. 413). Bouchard utilizes a technique of verbal retroaction followed by written retroaction in a journal dialogue with the teacher. The final stage of retroaction was thought to be the truly transformative part of the process, in which students return to their own identities, generalize what they have experienced and transform their self-image.

Belliveau (2007) researched the impact of a two-part alternative practicum built around a drama project. The first part consisted of researching, writing and preparing to perform a play centered on the content of bullying. They then performed the play at some 40 schools. The plays were supplemented by interactive drama activities both before and after the performance. In the second half of the six-week program, the pre-service teachers led grade 6 students through the process of collaborative play development ending with a performance for other students and their parents.

Unlike the studies above, Belliveau (2007) performed a detailed and systematic assessment of the impact of the project on attitudes and beliefs. Analyzing data from 6th grade student journal entries combined with an open-ended questionnaire, he was able to state that it “helped students to tap into their affective domain, which allowed them to feel what someone may experience in a bullying situation” (p. 55). In addition to developing empathy, he also noted that students were able to create a “team environment.” Pre-service teachers likewise kept a journal, theirs focused on teaching, and answered an open-ended questionnaire. Analysis showed that the pre-service teachers felt the content (bullying) to be intrinsically motivating for students, and thought drama techniques were effective in challenging students’ attitudes and beliefs.

To summarize, drama allows students to dissociate themselves from presently held beliefs and to adopt other positions vicariously as characters, rich in context and affect. This may provide direct experience for the literal minded and exemplar-based experiential system as well as supplying substance for rational reflection as in Bouchard (2002).

Research questions

As shown in the literature, approaches of an exclusively rational nature may fail to change beliefs, as do approaches appealing exclusively to emotions. However, appeal to both the rational and experiential systems has been shown to offer possibilities for change. In this study, the primary appeal to the rational system comes through repeated pair discussions while the primary impetus to change in the experiential system comes through collaborative play making. Since they are assumed here to work together, they are assessed together and no attempt is made to disambiguate one from the other. The first research question is:

RQ1: To what extent will beliefs change in response to a collaborative play-making procedure based on a perplexing situation?

In addition, exposure to anomalous data has been shown to lead, less to new theories and beliefs, but most often to more staunch endorsement of the beliefs initially held. The second research question is therefore:

RQ2: Will a collaborative play making procedure based on an ill-structured problem result in greater polarization of initial beliefs?

Instruments

Identical pre- and post-test surveys were conducted for each unit, the first centered on religion and the second on school dress codes. These consisted of 9 statements, each followed by a six-point scale asking the student to indicate agreement or disagreement. The six-point scale was chosen to force students to make an agree/disagree choice giving a clearer indication of belief change. An effort was made

to write items making it possible to hold a morally, emotionally and rationally credible position whether agreeing or disagreeing.

Belief statements were centered on a topic rather than on an overarching construct. For example, statements were clustered around the topic of religion rather than based on a construct of dogmatism or tolerance. Using a construct, which assumes a continuum of positions, would not be a credible approach in respect to beliefs, if they are indeed based in the experiential system rooted in episodic memory and association rather than being conceptually related by rational connections.

Method

The procedure was implemented three times. The first cycle, used for piloting, took up the issue of censorship. As no major problems were noticed the procedure survived unchanged in the two subsequent cycles. The full procedure was:

1. Pre-unit beliefs questionnaire (filled out and handed in)
 2. Introduction of the area of controversy through reading(s)
 3. Pair discussions of the reading(s) and selected items from the survey
 4. Introduction of the perplexing situation
 5. Conceiving and writing the play
-
1. Performing the play
 2. Post-unit survey and a short paper reflecting on changes in beliefs

The second cycle addressed issues of religion and tolerance. The topic was introduced using an article regarding a real controversy about admitting children of a certain religious group to school. The religious group was the Aum Shinrikyo group, which was responsible for the horrific 1995 Tokyo subway gas attacks. The article was chosen because it included views on both sides of the issue. Since students would have been preschoolers at the time of the original attacks and since they occurred in a

distant part of the country, the issue was thought to be emotive without being overwhelming. The controversy was predicted to provoke considerable moral conflict, especially for future teachers. Students wrote a 150 to 200-word impression of the article as homework. At the next class, they shared their impressions in repeated pair exchanges. Whole class discussion was avoided to protect them from the influence of majority opinions, and from any indications of the instructor's own view.

The perplexing situation was then introduced. This was a fictional controversy designed to evoke some sense of danger and to play on predicted prejudices in dietary and bathing customs. Because it follows on the Aum Shinrikyo example, it was written with some sense of playfulness in the hope that students would not take it so seriously as to be disinclined from pursuing novel ideas in creating their plays. It involved a cult with socially unacceptable habits such as eating pigeons and bathing in fountains. They had moved into public parks and were unable to move on to another town. They were suspected of, but had not been charged with, certain serious crimes. The play was to examine, from a variety of perspectives and viewpoints, the relationship of this group to the townspeople.

The next class period was dedicated to conceiving the plot and scriptwriting, with the performance slated for the following week. After the performance, comments were made regarding the dramatic structure, technique and performances. There was no discussion of moral controversies and solutions revealed in the play. Finally, the script was handed in and the post-unit questionnaire was administered and the final paper was assigned.

The third cycle also centered on diversity and tolerance, this time instantiated in the issue of school dress codes. Students began with the beliefs survey. They were then presented with an article on the school uniforms debate in the United States. The article was lengthy and contained a wide range of issues and opinions. Given the length of the text, a writing assignment was thought to be too onerous, so students

were instructed to highlight those opinions with which they agreed. This was used as the basis for repeated pair discussions in the next class.

The fictional controversy was then presented. It concerned refugees from a small pacific archipelago swamped by rising seas as a result of global warming. They had some unusual customs closely connected to cultural and religious beliefs including, for example, girls having to wear something resembling a safety pin through their lips and children not wearing shoes until the age of twelve. The rest of the procedure followed the pattern of cycle 2.

Results

In the religion unit (Table 1), the questions producing the highest number of polar changes were question 5: A country where people are mostly the same is stronger (8 instances) and question 1: Religion makes a positive contribution to society (6 instances). The median number of polar changes was 5, with three of nine questions (questions 8, 9 and 6) registering this number. Questions showing the lowest number of polar changes were question 7: I feel frightened or annoyed when I hear other languages around me (1 instance) and question 4: When people of different nations live together, they will lose their identity (2 instances). Of 144 items, 39 polar changes were produced for a total of 27%. Those moving from agree to disagree outnumbered those moving from disagree to agree 24 to 15 and 16.6% to 10.4% respectively.

Of those changes showing a shift in intensity (not polarity), diminished intensity or moderation accounted for 28 instances compared with just 13 instances of increased polarity. Changes in the direction of moderation were a little more than double those showing tendency to the extremes, 19.4% to 9%. Items showing no change from the first survey accounted for 44% of all responses.

In the dress code unit (Table 2), the item producing the highest number of polar changes was question 9: Wearing a uniform is good for study (9 changes). In addition, question 1: Junior high school students should have the right to dress as they please, and question 8: A uniform makes all students the same, also showed a high number of changes with 7 each. Students showed the least change in their opinions regarding jewelry and make up (questions 2 and 3) and on question 7: Dressing freely helps one think freely (2 instances each). The median for the 9 questions was 3 changes. Overall, polar changes accounted for 40 of 162 data entries amounting to nearly 25% of the total. Directionality of the changes was more or less neutral with 19 moving from disagree to agree and 21 moving in the opposite direction.

In terms of intensity, little difference can be seen in the directionality of change: 29 opinions increased in extremity while 26 became more moderate. A total of 41 percent of responses showed no change from the first survey.

Results for the two units show consistency in the proportion of polar changes (Table 3) with the religion unit showing 27% of the total and the dress code unit yielding a comparable 25%. In terms of intensity, the dress code unit shows movement towards the extreme (17%) as equally likely as change towards a more moderate position (16%). In the religion unit, however, 12% moved towards a more extreme view while 17% became more moderate. Rates of non-change were comparable for both units: 44% for religion and 41% for dress code.

Table 3: Percentage totals of polar changes and changes in intensity of belief

<u>Questionnaire</u>	<u>Polar changes</u>	<u>Intensity</u>		<u>No change</u>
		<u>Less extreme</u>	<u>More extreme</u>	
Religion	27	17	12	44
School dress	25	16	17	41

Discussion

Research question 1 asked to what extent collaborative play making would produce a change in beliefs. The results were clear. The data showed a quarter of all items changing polarity. In light of the literature showing beliefs to be “relatively static” Nespor (1985, p. 17) and “unaffected by persuasion.” (Rokeach 1968; cited in Pajares 1992, p. 309) the procedure can be regarded as having shown an effect. Furthermore, many of these beliefs are of considerable weight and broad in scope, particularly in the religion unit, including: A country where people are mostly the same is stronger (8 changes), and; Religion makes a positive contribution to society (6 changes).

Although the dress code treatment involved, on the surface, less weighty matters, we still see polar changes in some fundamental questions, including: Wearing a uniform is good for study (9 changes); A uniform makes all students the same (7 changes), and; Junior high school students should have the right to dress as they please (7 changes). While these beliefs have less scope and gravity than the questions about religion, they were more deeply rooted in student experience and in local culture. All students in the class had, in fact, worn uniforms in both junior and senior high school. Therefore, new beliefs may have had to displace repeatedly encoded episodic beliefs in the experiential system.

In terms of the rational system, the procedure involved deep processing, personal engagement and justification of one’s views (pair discussions) as recommended by Chinn and Brewer (1993) and White (2000). Furthermore, reflection was promoted through posing ill-structured problems as recommended in Dewey (1998). In addition, the procedure involved seeing things from other perspectives and taking positions both for and against a position (by way of conceiving and enacting characters representing contrary positions) as in White (2000).

Furthermore, the drama allowed students to de-center, providing the opportunity of seeing one's own life and one's own culture from the outside (Fleming, 2006; Beale, 2001). Psychologically, this de-centering allowed beliefs to be expressed directly without being blocked by the need to appear rational to others as in the ratio-bias phenomenon (Kirkpatrick & Epstein, 1992; cited in Epstein, 1994). Drama also provided a platform to consider moral problems and problems of diversity with full contextualization (Basourakos 1999), rather than as bloodless propositions abstracted from the real world.

In terms of the experiential system, drama has direct access because it is holistic, it appeals to affect and is susceptible to being encoded in episodic memory as metaphors, narratives and images. But ultimately, the changes may come from a synergy between the rational and experiential systems, as their confluence is most effective in creating change (Bohart, 1977, 1980 as cited in Whelton 2004).

Research question 2 asks whether participants will become more extreme in their positions as might be expected given the biased assimilation effect. With about 25% of responses showing polar changes, the answer is unequivocal. But even considering only those responses shifting within the same polarity, the religion unit showed 17% of items moderating while just 12% showed increased polarization, while the dress code treatment showed an even split with 16% versus 17%. Students did not show increased polarization of beliefs. How can we explain the divergence from previous studies?

Some of the changes might be explained by the active generation of credible viewpoints. In biased assimilation studies participants were exposed to information from which they tended to glean facts conforming to their existing beliefs. In contrast, the exercise of drama making involves generation and justification of alternatives. It required creating a dramatically credible cast of characters and having them interact in meaningful ways. Students had to create the emotional background to a character's position, embedding it in a realistic context and enmeshing it in believable

relationships. I will call this empathic generation. The creator/player is required to resolve issues of cognitive dissonance within the character and perhaps vicariously within him/herself.

Moreover, assuming the position of the character in writing and in performance may have acted directly on beliefs. Abelson, Frey and Gregg (2004) referring to the views of Bern (1967) stated:

we come to know our own attitudes in the same way that we come to know the attitudes of other people, namely, by observing behavior. He argued that we do not so much peer inside our own souls to discover how we feel, as watch what we do and then make an informed guess. (p. 71)

In this view, the actors would come to recognize their beliefs; new beliefs perhaps, as they heard themselves speak and watched themselves perform. Research has demonstrated that such effects can be produced by something as simple and direct as writing something down you do not initially believe. Harmon-Jones, Brehm, Greenberg, Simon and Nelson (1996) showed that when participants wrote that they enjoyed an unpleasant-tasting drink, it made them rate the drink more highly afterward. This would suggest that the writing of the play, apart from witnessing themselves in the performance itself, could have exerted its own independent effect.

But more direct evidence of what influenced students comes from their writings. At the end of the course I returned student questionnaires and asked them to write about two questions and how their views changed, and when their views changed. I also told them that views can also change from being held lightly to being held more firmly and that they could write about this situation as well.

In these writings, it was revealed that individuals were influenced by different parts of the procedure. One student changed his view on whether he would be anxious if a person of another religion moved in next door. The language, including errors, is retained to preserve the student's voice.

The exact reason why this change happen is not clear, but I guess our group role play caused this. In the role play, I played a person who had negative feeling

toward religion. He couldn't accept the fact Blueys eating pigeons at first, because he had assumed that pigeons are holy animals. But he saw the medicine effected for hernia and changed his mind. So, through this character, I changed my thinking more flexible to other religions. (Taiki)

On the same topic of being anxious if someone of another religion or culture moved in next door, Saori went in the other direction. She wrote that she was inclined to avoid discrimination and to accept everyone since she was taught such values since childhood and since she had always lived in a safe environment under the protection of her parents. However:

My thinking changed quite a bit. When I read the article about Aum Shinrikyo, I was shocked and remembered the terrorism of the Tokyo subway attacks. In fact, some religion collect money from believers or some people occasionally do harm to another people. I know religion is very important for some people, and almost all of them don't cause trouble for another people. However . . . (Saori)

In this case, the student was influenced, primarily, by the reading. She retains her original values of respect and non-discrimination but has added a proviso that not all

religions are the same and that attention must be paid to the nature of the particular religion or religious group.

Another student considering whether religion makes a positive contribution to society recalled her impression of attending a Christian mass in Germany in which she felt the strength of Christian unity. However, she changed her mind after reading the Aum article saying that she had failed to consider another side of religion and that this new opinion was confirmed in her play making experience.

On the same question, a fourth student, Mayumi, talked about being influenced by the peer discussions:

When I go to America, I should speak English, have meals with a knife and a fork . . . but through the discussion in this class, I noticed a new idea. When my friend and I discussed No. 8 question, he said, “My opinion is “5” because we should not forget our own language, culture, and customs even if we obey new language, culture, and customs.” When I listen to this opinion, I agreed with that and was so surprised and impressed. We sometimes have to remember our own language and culture, or we will lose our identity.
(Mayumi)

Jun also changed his view on this question. He writes:

I thought we should keep our identity even we live in different nation. However, my opinion changed a little after we read the article of Shoko Asahara [Aum sect leader]. Because I thought the situation: If I was persecuted for my religion by everyone, I couldn't persist my custom or thoughts, and I would somewhat change my thoughts to live together with them. And when we make the script of the role play Light of Day, we thought

the both feelings of Big Light who is the head of the sect and the citizens who are suffering from the strange customs of the Light of Day. (Jun)

Jun seemed to be most influenced by writing the script together with his group. This is confirmed when he writes later about his changed opinion on another item.

We can say that different students were affected by different aspects of the program, from readings to peer discussions to the writing and the performance of the play. One student also mentions the writing of the final report itself as part of the learning/reflecting process.

Finally, it should be noted that several students mentioned that they had not considered such issues before. This may be due to the relative homogeneity of the population in this out of the way region of Japan and the reluctance in Japanese culture to raise controversies. The rational processes engaged in the play making and discussions may, therefore, have had more influence than they might in a population where such issues are debated more openly and where students may well come to the lesson with a firm and considered opinion. This would seem to increase the importance of dealing with such issues in pre-service teacher education where the professor may assign such topics by virtue of his/her position and where future teachers may reflect on them in a safe and supportive environment.

Conclusion

Appealing to the rational and experiential systems through a procedure of collaborative play- making appears to have produced a considerable amount of belief change and may be the result of reflection involving the whole person: conscious and unconscious, rational and affective, and social. As such it may be an appropriate

procedure for engaging pre-service teachers in deep processing of the complex cross-cultural issues inherent in all other-language teaching contexts.

Finally, if we propose to engage students in deep reflection, we should not presume the outcomes. If students are thinking deeply, both rationally and affectively, they may arrive at many different conclusions, as have educators, scientists and philosophers down the ages. When it comes to reflection, as in creativity, varied outcomes should be regarded as the measure of success. It is this aspect, which reveals personal engagement and which distinguishes a program from advertising or propaganda, in which beliefs would be expected to move consistently in one direction towards a pre-determined outcome.

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Appendices

Table 1: Polar changes and changes in intensity of belief in pre-test post-test results (Religion)

Question	Polar changes		Total	Change in intensity			n=16
	A—D*	D—A		+**	-	0	
1. Religion makes a positive contribution to society.	4	2	6 (38%)	0	0	10	
2. I would be anxious if a person of another religion or race moved in next door.	1	3	4 (25%)	1	3	8	
3. It is best for people of different religions or other countries to live in their own mostly separate communities.	1	2	3 (19%)	1	8	4	
4. When people of different nations live together they will lose their identity.	1	1	2 (13%)	3	5	5	
5. A country where people are mostly the same is stronger.	2	6	8 (50%)	3	0	5	
6. A country which is multi-ethnic is stronger.	3	2	5 (31%)	2	4	6	
7. I feel frightened or annoyed when I hear other languages around me.	0	0	0 (0%)	2	5	9	
8. When people come to a new country or community they should blend in and adopt the language, culture and customs of their new home.	1	4	5 (31%)	2	0	9	
9. Some peoples and religions are just too strange to accept.	2	3	5 (31%)	3	0	8	
	15(10%)	23(16%)	38(26%)	17(12%)	25(17%)	64(44%)	

*A—D signifies moving from agree to disagree while D—A means the opposite.

** “+” signifies polarization while “-“ indicates moderation towards the center. “0” indicates no change from the first questionnaire.

Table 2: Polar changes and changes in intensity of belief in pre-test post-test results (Dress code)

Question	Polar changes			Change in intensity			n=18
	A—D*	D—A	Total	+**	-	0	
1. JHS students should have the right to dress as they please.	5	2	7(39%)	4	2	5	
2. Make up and fingernail decoration should be allowed at JHS.	1	1	2(11%)	2	3	11	
3. Jewellery (necklaces, bracelets, rings) should be allowed.	1	1	2(11%)	1	4	11	
4. Different hairstyles and hair colors should be allowed at JHS.	2	1	3(17%)	4	2	9	
5. A uniform is good for school spirit.	3	0	3(17%)	3	6	6	
6. A uniform makes all students equal.	2	3	5(28%)	3	5	5	
7. Dressing freely helps one to think freely.	1	1	2(11%)	6	1	9	
8. A uniform makes all students the same.	4	3	7(39%)	2	2	7	
9. Wearing a uniform is good for study.	2	7	9(50%)	4	1	4	
Totals	21(13%)	19(12%)	40(25%)	29(18%)	26(16%)	67(41%)	

*A—D signifies moving from agree to disagree while D—A signifies the opposite.

** “+” means moving closer to the poles of the scale while “-“ means moving towards the center. “0” indicates no change from the first questionnaire.



Postcolonial English. Varieties around the world

(first edition)

Edgar W. Schneider. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (reprinted 2009).

Pp. xvi + 367.

Reviewed by Silvia Bruti

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This monograph offers a complete and up-to-date account of postcolonial varieties of English, providing the socio-historical background for their development. Although the topic of language spread and evolution is thoroughly tackled, the book is not necessarily destined for an audience of specialists, as it also provides extensive information and definitions of basic sociolinguistic concepts.

The book is organized in seven chapters which describe Postcolonial Englishes (PCEs) in sixteen different countries (plus American English that is treated separately) and include tables and maps to help readers better visualize and summarize the overall picture.

In the Introduction (chapter 1), the author lays out the rationale for the book and proposes a unified evolutionary model (called the “Dynamic Model”) that can be applied to any of the varieties under consideration, irrespective of their different socio-historical contexts.

The most influential methodologies and the most illuminating approaches to the study of PCEs are detailed and commented upon in chapter 2.

In chapter 3, the author reviews different types of contact situations and colonization modes and then illustrates the PCE model’s five stages (i.e. foundation, exonormative

stabilization, nativization, endonormative stabilization and differentiation) and two distinct yet complementary communicative perspectives, i.e. that of the settlers and indigenous language users.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the linguistic aspects of nativization with the aim of pinpointing the regular features shared by PCEs on different language levels as well as their most outstanding qualities. The junction between lexis, usually the most innovative and permeable level, and grammar, typically more stable and resistant to change, is the place where most changes occur in PCEs.

In chapter 5 the Dynamic Model is applied to sixteen postcolonial countries from all continents. For each case study, an evolutionary profile is traced which pays attention to both the typical features of the nativization process and to the specific developing paths it followed in each country.

American English is considered a PCE that has concluded its evolutionary trajectory and is therefore treated separately in chapter 6, where equal importance is attached to both its peculiar colonial history and its worldwide spread and influence nowadays.

The approach proposed in the book is quite innovative and necessarily general in order to account for the discrepancies among the varieties. The description of PCEs is particularly rich in linguistic features, a quality that is not always to be observed in similar accounts of postcolonial varieties. Yet, as Wong (2008) notices when evaluating the applicability of the model to Singapore English, Schneider gives little recognition to cultural aspects in comparison with formal ones, however elusive they might be to investigate. Finally, the conspicuous space granted to describing the single PCEs slightly diverts the reader's attention from the general features that are shared by all varieties.

To conclude, despite these minor drawbacks, the book is a precious read for the completeness of the picture that is offered, the clarity with which complex historical, ideological and linguistic events across the world are described, and the richness of data that is presented.

Reference

Wong, J. (2008). Review of E.W. Schneider, *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. *Language in Society*, 37(5), 756-759.

Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-Native Speakers

Andrea DeCapua. New York, N.Y.: Springer, 2008. Pp. xviii + 444.

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DeCapua's *Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-Native Speakers* is a comprehensive grammar book intended for active and prospective teachers of American English grammar. The book is also of interest to users whose exposure to English grammar has been primarily limited to prescriptive rules of spoken and written English with no focus on the concerns and problems of ESL/EFL learners in learning and using English. That is, one of the main aims of DeCapua's text is to encourage users to develop an understanding of the use and function of the grammar of American English in order to better appreciate the difficulties faced by ESL/EFL learners.

This informative text begins with an introduction that defines grammar, discusses the notion of grammar from the linguist's point of view, and points out the differences between prescriptive and descriptive grammars. This is followed by eleven chapters, each of which are devoted to a dimension of grammar specific to their titles: (2) Morphology, (3) The Noun Phrase, (4) Adjectives and Adverbs, (5) Introduction to Verbs and Verb Phrases, (6) Time, Tense, and Aspect of Verbs, (7) Modal Auxiliary Verbs and Related Structures, (8) Basic Sentence Patterns and Major Variations, (9) Compound Sentences and Introduction to Complex Sentences: Adverbial Clauses, (10) Complex Sentences Continued Relative Clauses, (11) Complex Sentences Continued: Noun Clauses, and (12) Verbal Constructions.

Each chapter is similarly organized. A dimension of American English grammar is presented in context using authentic sources such as magazines, newspapers, children's books, works of literature, and academic prose. Within each grammar dimension, different subjects are presented with the help of discovery activities which encourage the user to explore different elements of grammar and how those elements form meaningful grammatical units. Also, at the end of each chapter there are practice activities which present samples of relevant learner errors and error analysis exercises.

Working through each well-organized chapter, readers will indeed be pleased by DeCapua's jargon-free descriptive coverage of essential American English grammar structures as well as his authentic examples and carefully prepared discovery and practice activities, all of which come together in a reader friendly text that is not only rich in content but also successful in design. They may, however, expect more of an appendix than is offered--a simple coverage of only some basic points such as irregular English verbs and essential spelling rules. Irrespective of this possible shortcoming, *Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-Native Speakers* is sure to be a valuable and significant addition to the field of teaching and learning English as a second or foreign language.

Spelling and society: The culture and politics of orthography around the world

Mark Sebba. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xix + 189.

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Spelling and Society by Mark Sebba provides a systematic and coherent socio-cultural conceptual framework within which research on spelling can be conducted. The purpose of the book is to introduce “new ways of looking at and thinking about orthography” (p. 9). Researchers and graduate students interested in studying writing systems from a socio-cultural and historical perspective will find this pioneering work a helpful resource.

Spelling and Society contains descriptions of multiple issues involved in orthography development and a plethora of cases concerning establishing and reforming orthographic conventions. The book has seven chapters alongside an introduction. In the introduction, Sebba identifies a lack of research in socio-cultural aspects of spelling and calls for viewing “orthography as social practice” (p. 9).

In chapter 1, Sebba defines and distinguishes key terms such as writing systems, orthography, scripts and spelling. Also in the first chapter, Sebba establishes the theoretical foundation of the book by contrasting two opposing models, the socio-cultural model and the autonomous model. The socio-cultural model, the author explains, is based on Gee’s (1990) framework of New Literacy Studies which supports the notion that orthographies are situated in social contexts. The autonomous model, on the other hand, is detached from the socio-cultural context, and it considers phonemic orthography as more scientific than logographic orthographies.

In chapter 2, Sebba emphasizes the practice approach of literacy. He clarifies how different regimes of orthography (e.g., published texts, personal emails, SMS text messaging and graffiti) serve as symbols for social meaning. He concludes the chapter with two case studies of orthography as a social practice: the Spanish K and the language of Ali G website.

Sebba explains in chapter 3 the role bilinguals have in shaping orthographies. In the case of writing systems such as Manx, Sranan Tongo and modern English, for example, he explains that literate bilinguals bring new writing conventions from their first language, which influence how they write their second language.

Chapter 4 illustrates how post-colonial changes experienced by many language communities are associated with national identity and language ideology and how orthographic changes can be a “symbolic rejection of colonial mastery” (p. 90). Sebba also addresses attitudes toward “borrowing” of words in this chapter inasmuch as the “acceptance of loan vocabulary is arguably at the heart of colonial relationships between powerful and less powerful languages” (p. 96).

Chapter 5 introduces five problems for the orthography of unstandardized languages: (1) representing the voices of vernacular users, (2) transcribing colloquial languages, (3) keeping orthographic rules invariant while allowing optionality, (4) presenting dialect differences, and (5) symbolizing distance and the distinction between standardized and unstandardized forms. According to Sebba, while unstandardized forms may be deviant from the standard forms, they can also be systematic on their own.

Chapter 6 discusses issues and challenges related to the reform of an already established orthography. Sebba argues that it is uncommon to replace or even modify an established orthography because of certain social, economic, and linguist reasons. The chapter also illustrates different fields of discourses that are usually part of the orthographic reform, such as modernization, cultural heritage, conformity, and pedagogy.

The concluding chapter, chapter 7, reiterates the message that spelling is not merely a skill users of a certain script need to master. Instead, it can also be a signifier of social identity, a marker of language ideology, and even a symbol of political or religious power.

In this book, Sebba summarizes an impressive number of cases and examples of orthographic development and reforms. One shortcoming that arises as a result is the overuse of block citations; though useful, they interrupt the flow of the otherwise elegantly written text. Readers who lack technical knowledge of worldwide orthographies may also miss the details contained in the many examples Sebba provides. Nevertheless, *Spelling and Society* makes a significant contribution to sociolinguistics and literacy studies as one of the most comprehensive works on social perspectives of spelling and orthography, a largely neglected research area. Therefore, the book deserves serious attention from researchers and graduate students who might be interested in writing systems' research from a socio-cultural orientation.

Reference:

Gee, J. P. (1990). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. New York: Routledge.

Listening in the Language Classroom

John Field. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. X + 366.

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Listening in the language classroom by John Field proposes a principled process-based strategy instruction approach informed by both theory and empirical study for intensive small-scale practice in various aspects of L2 listening pedagogy, an approach that makes his text an indispensable resource book for L2 teachers, listening instructors in particular.

Field begins his five-part text with an introduction which delineates the dual aims of the book: the first is to challenge the orthodox comprehension approach by focusing upon the product of listening, and the second is to provide the reader with a clear understanding of what second language listening entails.

Part I (Background) and Part II (Rethinking the Comprehension Approach) review the background of the orthodox comprehension approach in listening, elaborate on its advantages and disadvantages, and attempt to provide solutions to its failings.

Part III Process (Not Product) and Part IV (A Process View of Listening) present alternatives to current methodology which focus on the process of listening. Here Field argues that a step-by-step building up of the listening processes is crucial for effective listening. As such, a great variety of listening exercises are provided in these parts that might be conducted with learners to help them improve. Furthermore, the author places a firm emphasis on developing learners' decoding skills "on the grounds that efficiency in the fundamental process of matching strings of phonemes to words

and phrases allows the listener greater opportunity to focus on wider issues of meaning” (p. 140).

Part V, *The Challenge of the Real World*, is devoted to listening strategies and strategy instruction to help learners with limited linguistic knowledge meet the challenges of real-life listening tasks. Field acknowledges that the boundaries between listening strategies and the normal processes of listening are often blurred. As such, many learners succeed in incorporating them into their listening behavior in the long run, while strategies may start out as “short-term expedients” (p. 287). He also recognizes that strategies are a necessary part of listening until learners reach a fairly advanced level in second language listening. Therefore, listening teachers are advised to incorporate them into listening classes. While discussing listening strategies in this part, Field additionally puts forward the categories of avoidance, achievement, repair, and pro-active strategies, departing from the usual cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective trichotomy widely used in the strategies’ literature.

Part VI, *Conclusion*, provides the book with an overall finish by bringing together the various themes discussed and summarizing the proposals that have been made in previous chapters.

Written in an engaging and easy-to-read style, the book stands out for the way it critically examines the practices and assumptions associated with the orthodox comprehension approach and for the concrete examples related to the process-based activities it provides that teachers can use in listening classes to enable their learners to become better listeners. In both respects, the book is a valuable addition to both the Cambridge Language Teaching Library series and L2 listening literature as a whole.