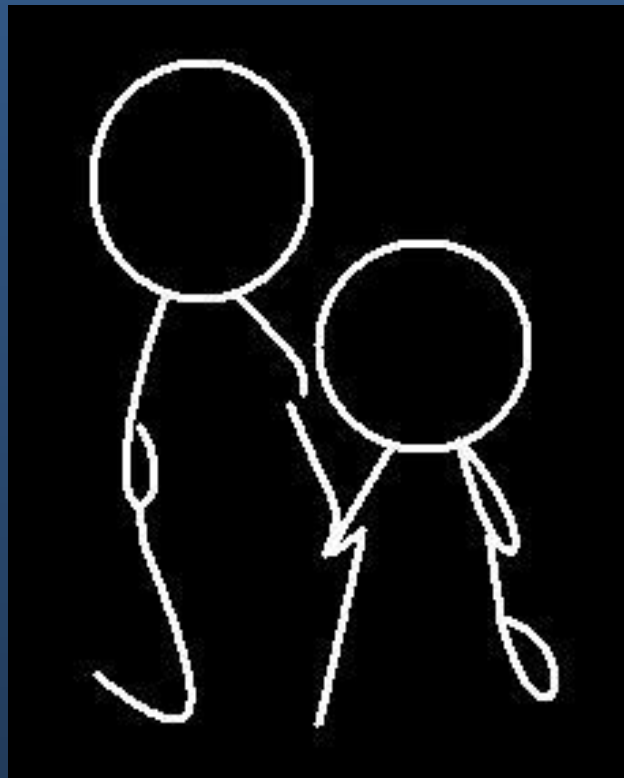


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Foreword

Carlo Magno

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Foreword

I would like to welcome the readers to this issue of the TESOL Journal. This issue focuses on two aspects of TESOL: The teacher and the learner. There are 12 articles that provide insights to better understand the teaching of English focusing on the teacher and the learner.

The articles on teachers include the Lasis Ayaji where Halliday's theory of systemic-functional linguistics was used to examine how two teachers deployed multimodal resources of textbooks for English as a second language (ESL) instruction. Lloyd Barrow and Roy F. Fox counted different aspects of TESOL Faculty positions appearing in the Carnegie Foundation. Julian Cheng Chiang Chen and Jie Cheng looked at nonnative English teachers' self-perceptions, cultural identity, and teaching strategies. Ruiying Niu investigated the commonalities and discrepancies in L2 teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary pedagogy. Rahma Al-Mahrooqi studied literature teaching methodologies at a higher educational institution in Oman. Ariane Macalinga Borlongan described classroom practice on academic writing involving World Englishes.

The articles on ESL learners include Dele Olufemi Akindele where communication skills were enhanced through teamwork in Botswana. Chen, Hsueh Chu looked at an online tutoring programme on ESL learners' acquisition of English stress. Li-szu Agnes Huang investigated the effectiveness of a corpus-based instruction in deepening EFL learners' knowledge of periphrastic causatives. Dare Owolabi used ESP EFL/ESL for adult learners. Grazyna Kilianska-Przybylo looked at students' narratives about intercultural encounters. Glenn Toh described how to encourage critique in Japanese English for academic purpose classes. Carlo Magno investigated the effect of picture superiority effect and word associations on recall of foreign words.

The articles in this volume provides insights that better explains the mechanism of teaching English by looking at teachers and learner factors.

Enhancing Teamwork and Communication Skills Among First Year Students at the University of Botswana

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Abstract

This study explores how first year students studying Communication skills in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Botswana manage team work and resolve conflict that emerges from group activities. The overall aim is to attempt to foster in the first year students communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, research and writing skills and conflict management through teamwork, which involved group mini-research project carried out during the second semester of the academic year. A class of 70 students was divided into 10 working groups to carry out a mini-research project on a topic in communication. The findings from the study indicated that the teamwork helped the students build self-esteem, confidence, and interpersonal and conflict management skills, as well as leadership skills.

Keywords: *teamwork, communication skills, leadership, conflict management, interpersonal skills, research and writing skills.*

Introduction

Researchers and instructors in colleges and universities have observed that teamwork has become ubiquitous, not only in the business communication classroom but in the workplace as well (Dyrud, 2001, p.105). In addition to excellent oral and written communication skills, experience working in a team/group environment consistently rank among the top ten criteria by which business evaluates potential candidates for employment (Dyrud, 2001, p.105). It is therefore desirable that students are acquainted with these skills while at the university so that they can practice effectively in the world of work. This is particularly so when the ability to work effectively and collaboratively on a group project is often one of the criteria required for successful job performance (Cox & Friedman, 2009, p.231). Such assignments have therefore become common. It has however been observed that what is not so common is adequate preparation—in the design of assignments, in classroom instruction for students, and in the management of the inevitable problems that arise with any cooperative effort (Cox & Friedman, 2009, p.232). This study took care of some of these problems by giving students a series of instructions regarding the preparation of the team project work and how they could manage any problem(s) that arose during the course of the team work exercise. In addition, I ensured that I held tutorial sessions where I showed them what to do next especially when they encounter some difficulties.

In my several years of teaching communication to first year students at the University of Botswana experience has shown that this set of students tends to shy away from group work. This is despite the fact that the University has emphasized the significance of “communication skills, organizational and teamwork skills, social responsibility and leadership skills, interpersonal skills, cross cultural fluency” (University of Botswana Teaching and Learning Policy, 2008, p.3). Some of the reasons

given were that in their secondary education, their teachers used to dictate notes to them and individuals were also given assignments which they carried out.

Therefore, the concept of group work was foreign to them. In addition, the students over the years were not sure about the significant of the roles individuals were expected to play, who is to lead the group, how they would manage individual differences and conflict that may arise, what benefits that individual will derive when the group will carry out a research; and whether the assessment will be fair to all members of the groups. It was therefore very difficult to encourage the past first year students of communication skills students that I taught to be involved in teamwork. The above reasons motivated the current study with the hope that the insights gained will help me to deal with subsequent group work in future. It is hoped that by finding out answers to the following questions will help in encouraging future students in carrying out their group work.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to attempt to find out how students manage communication in their teamwork, deal with leadership issues, conflicts that occurred, and how they were resolved. This is with a view to foster life-long skills such as teamwork skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills and conflict resolution skills, as well as research and writing skills which they will utilize in the society later after university education.

Research Questions

The study set out to provide answers to the following pertinent questions:

1. What type of roles did members play in groupwork?
2. What is the nature of conflict experienced in groupwork and how was it resolved?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of team/group work?
4. What is the nature of leadership style and functions in group work?
5. How do group members work together?

Rationale for the Study

The University of Botswana pays special attention to the quality of the graduates that it produces hence the institution emphasizes the attributes of its potential products in its teaching and learning policy document. It states among others, that University's academic programmes will encompass the following graduate attributes: "communication skills, organizational and teamwork skills, social responsibility and leadership skills, interpersonal skills, cross cultural fluency (University of Botswana Teaching and Learning Policy, 2008, p.3). It is in an attempt to fulfill certain crucial elements of this policy that motivates group communication activities introduced to first year students in the university. In addition in group communication, teams are presumed to make better decisions than individuals (Hollenbeck et al., 1995), and team decision making has long been lauded as a vehicle for increasing participation, perceptions of fairness, and acceptance of decision outcomes (Akindele & Tremepohl, 2008; Brodbeck et al., 2007).

Not surprisingly, educators often have students work in teams—a strategy that positively influences students' overall grade point average, especially when students perceive these teams as valuable and fair (Freeman, 1996). Groups often work on a

superordinate goal, a task so complex that cannot be accomplished by an individual or individuals working alone. To accomplish a super-ordinate goal, group members must work together to create synergy. Synergy is present when the performance or outcomes of a group go beyond the capacities of the group members (Schweiger & Sandberg, 1989).

Methodology

Participants

At the beginning of the second semester in an undergraduate communication and study skills class at the University of Botswana in the academic year 2009/2010, ten (10) groups were formed from a class of sixty-five (65) students. Nine of the groups were made up of six (6) students, while one group was made up of 5 students. The students were not allowed to make their choice of groups to belong. The reason is that some of them may prefer to choose their friends or students from their ethnic groups or those from their previous schools. This choice may not promote intercultural communication which this study partly aimed to promote. The selection of students into the groups was done randomly and according to how they were registered for the course. I did not appoint any student as the leader of the group. The issue of leadership was left in the hands of individual group, as it is one of the skills that I intended to test in the teamwork exercise. Following group formation, I assigned students a mini research project. The project is a semester long and designed to develop collaborative research skills, team writing, group communication, intercultural communication, team building, leadership and conflict resolution skills.

I provided the students with guided research topics in which to choose from; but they have the choice of working on topics suggested by members of their groups. The course instructor approved such topics before the commencement of the research project. Each group met the course instructor from time to time for guidance as it carries out the research. I instructed the students on the preparation, practice, and performance review stages of the collaborative process. In addition, I asked each group to build a portfolio in which they account for membership roles, communication patterns, tasks assignment, leadership roles, conflict in their group and how it was resolved.

Each group submitted a research project report, which contains a portfolio detailing their timetable for meetings, group members' assignments, conflicts that occurred during the process, and how they were resolved. Students received a team grade for the research report, the portfolio and the oral presentation of the report, although that grade was increased or reduced due to favorable or unfavorable individual student's participation in the project. The aim of the project was to teach students about teamwork with a view to provide them with the tools they need to perform well in collaborative assignments in the work place.

The group project assignment seemed to be a perfect choice for collaborative work. Because of its extra length and complexity, the report enabled several students to contribute meaningful research, writing, and document design decisions to one product or a related set of products. If the project goes well, each student will learn important lessons both about report writing and about teamwork (Dyrud, 2001, p.110). This observation is in line with the fact that teams have become the fundamental unit of organizational structure because of their flexibility (Beersma et al., 2003). In addition, teams make better decisions more than individual group members (Hollenbeck et al.,

1995), and team decision-making is a vehicle for increasing participation, perceptions of fairness, and acceptance of decision outcomes.

Data Collection Procedure

The study used quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry. I collected data from the students' portfolio which shows minutes of their meetings and individual's participation, as well as how conflicts were resolved. I administered the questionnaires to members of all the ten teamwork groups in class after the completion, submission, of their group projects. Each member of the team completed the questionnaires. I collected them immediately for analysis. I followed this with an interview of selected representatives of each of the ten groups, comprising the chairperson, secretary, and leader.

Literature Review

In order to deal with the above problems, it is necessary to discuss very briefly some characteristics of team/group work as recorded in group communication literature. The following section takes a cursory look at some important features of the group. These include group formation, its communication dynamics, leadership types, decision-making process, and conflict management.

On Group Formation

Three central processes regarding team dynamics and team effectiveness prevail in the management and communication literature. These processes are leadership, decision-making, and conflict management. Keyton (2006) defines groups and teams by group size, group goal, group member interdependence, group structure, and group identity. Often larger groups have logistical problems. For instance, larger groups tend to foster social loafers (Vik, 2001).

Interdependence is the degree to which group members' influence, and are influenced by other group members (Brewer, 1995). Any member has the potential to influence any other group member. Group members also engage in a variety of interdependent activities, such as working with shared task inputs, processes, goals, and reward distributions (Wageman, 1995). An important factor in group structure is the roles individuals take upon themselves. Often these roles are assigned, as the students in this study have done with their project tasks; but interaction determines which roles are recognized. For example, an individual may be assigned the role of leader of the group (Snyder, 2008). But if another member starts facilitating meetings, making decisions, and dominating group conversation, this person will informally be considered the leader. It will be interesting to see how group members in this study handle such situations when they occurred during their project meetings.

Individuals assert authority in groups/teams when they make claims about how a project should be completed; advocate that particular decisions should be made, actively support or oppose suggestions of others, and/or engage in consensus building and compromise (Fredrick, 2008, p.249). Often, this generates conflicts arising from differing interests. Effective group work relies on students' ability to negotiate authority in small peer groups and manage conflicts that arise. This study will find answer to this question, among others.

Another important aspect of teamwork is group Identity. Group members have a group identity when they behave as a group, believe they belong to the group, and like being in the group (Henry et al. 1999). When group members identify with the group, they want to abide by the norms and rules the group follows. But some could be deviant, refusing to follow rules, to obey the leader, etc. Many individuals use group membership to satisfy their need to feel included, to demonstrate psychological closeness, or to control others (Snyder, 2008).

Conflict Management

Conflict is described as a process involving two or more individuals or groups in opposition (Pruitt & Rubin, 1996). Its place in conflict studies is well established with a focus on social conflict (Schellenberg, 1996; Pruitt & Kim, 2004). It is an integral part of group formation. Conflict is the process that begins when an individual or group feels negatively affected by another person or group (Burton, 1990; Anstey, 2006). Conflict is associated with positive and negative consequences (Coser, 1956).

In team/group work, conflicts usually occur and there are strategies put in place to manage them otherwise the success of the group project may not be attained. Personal attacks, coalitions, isolation, and chaos can ultimately lead a group to underperform. The management of power and disagreement can determine if a group benefits from conflict. If members believe group processes are unfair, they tend to perceive more group conflict and to be less satisfied (Wall & Nolan, 1987). Kilmann and Thomas (1975) distinguish between a concern for the group member (self) and everyone else (other). From this distinction, the researchers developed five different approaches to managing conflict: collaborating, competing, avoiding, compromising, and accommodating as exemplified as follows according to Pearson, et al (2010).

- **Competitive:** high in assertiveness, low in cooperativeness. Competitive people want to win the conflict.
- **Accommodative:** low in assertiveness and high in cooperativeness. These group members are easy going and willing to follow the group.
- **Avoiding:** low in assertiveness, low in cooperativeness. Avoiding people are detached and indifferent to conflict.
- **Collaborative:** high assertiveness, high in cooperativeness. These group members are active and productive problem solvers.
- **Compromising:** moderate in assertiveness, moderate in cooperativeness. Compromisers are willing to "give and take" to resolve conflict (p.240).

It will be interesting to see how the students working in groups in this study employ some of these strategies in managing conflicts that occurred during the process of interaction.

Sources of Group Conflict

Many researchers have noted that often instructors/professors are unaware of group problems until the conflict reaches a flashpoint: disgruntled students besiege the instructor with complaints, typically occurring when a major deadline looms (Schultz, 1998). These conflicts may make students develop a phobia about group work, which is not the attitude instructors want the students to take into the workplace (Dyrud, 2001, p.107).

It has been observed that effective teamwork relies on students' ability to negotiate authority in small peer groups and manage the conflicts that arise. For most

students, however—even those with previous teamwork experience— negotiating peer authority and managing conflict are more difficult than teachers may realize (Fredrick, 2008, p.442).

Fredrick (2008) further observes that for students engaged in teamwork, however, negotiating authority with peers and managing conflict are not simple; nor are the issues the same as those issues that workplace teams face. First, the classroom hierarchy, which places teachers in power over students, leaves students on a horizontal plane where their relative authority in relation to one another is undefined. In addition, institutions of higher education define students primarily as cohabiters and social peers; and in teamwork settings, many students feel pressure to maintain that socially based, nonhierarchical relationship. The second important observation is that unlike most workplaces where teamwork is essential to the company's success, Western systems of education continue to define the student as an individual trying to succeed alongside of, or in competition with, other students, but rarely in collaboration with them (p. 452). These two institutional structures create distinct challenges for students working in team settings (Gueldenzoph & May, 2002, p. 14).

It is common knowledge that students complain that group meetings are unproductive, that some members do not participate, and that they end up rushing to complete the project by the deadline (Synder, 2009, p.76). One person may refuse to contribute equally or slack off altogether (Dyrud, 2001, p.108). Conflict emerges in group work due to the following factors according to Cowan (1995): ill-defined goals, role conflicts (leader-follower), poor communications, personality clashes, cultural differences, and poor management. Ill-defined goals stems from disagreements over the goals of the group - over what it seeks to accomplish, and how different individuals understand those.

Cowan (1995) further asserts that poor communications occur when ideas are not communicated effectively throughout the group, turn-taking is poorly handled, and one speaker may dominate the group talk, leading to unnecessary conflict behavior. Another possible source of conflict is personality clashes, which can form the basis for conflict within the group. There is poor management, which can result from allocating turn and tasks on a basis that are unfair. These can contribute greatly to conflict within a group.

Dynamics of Group Communication

Work groups function to complete a particular task. In a work group, the task dimension is emphasized. The group members pool their expertise to accomplish the task. There are several types of work groups according to Pearson, et al. (2010, pp.224-6). These include Additive Work Group where all group members perform the same activity and pool their results at the end. An example of this would be gathering signatures for a petition drive. Another type is Conjunctive Work Group: Here group members perform different, but related, tasks that allow for the completion of a goal. Every group member must complete its task in order for the group task to be completed. An example of this would be an assembly line, in which each worker performs tasks that together build a completed car. Students in this study working groups fall into this category in the sense that every member was assigned a component of the research project such as literature review, data collection, problem statement, which they carried out and then came together as a team to synergize all the components into a composite whole - a research report.

Another option for decision-making is brainstorming. When brainstorming, group members in this study were encouraged to generate as many ideas about a particular topic as they can. Group members were encouraged to say anything that comes to mind when brainstorming. Every idea was written down and judgments about ideas were saved until later, when the group returned to all of the ideas and selected those that were most useful.

Within the working group, there is the issue of leadership, a facilitator or coordinator. Leadership is concerned with control and power in a group. According to Cowan (1995), leadership can be aimed at either maintaining the interpersonal relationships in the group or prodding the group to achieve its task. Groups sometimes have two leaders: one for the social dimension and one for the task dimension.

Leadership with task-oriented roles according to Cowan, (1995) relate to the completion of the group's task: initiator-contributor. The roles include asking for information about the task; asking for the input from the group about its values; offering facts or generalization to the group; stating his or her beliefs about a group issue; and explaining ideas within the group, offering examples to clarify ideas. Others involve showing the relationships between ideas; shifting the direction of the group's discussion; measuring group's actions against some objective standard; stimulating the group to a higher level of activity; performing logistical functions for the group; and recording, as well as keeping a record of group actions.

Results and Discussion

In analyzing the data, I then categorize responses to the open-ended questions thematically group by group. I labeled the groups A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, for ease of reference. The following findings were derived from a summary of the 10 groups.

I took into consideration the research questions stated earlier. I focused on the four central questions that seek to address the main problem that motivated this research. For ease of reference, the questions are re-stated as follows: What type of roles did members play? What is the nature of leadership style and functions in your groups? What is the nature of conflict experienced in your groups and how was it resolved? What do you consider as the advantages and disadvantages of team/group work? The responses to these questions are derived from the sub-questions posed in the questionnaire and interview.

Individual Roles

All the ten (10) groups summarized the type of roles individual played throughout the period of the project. Typical remarks were derived from the questionnaires and interviews.

"We set up a committee made up of the following officers: Secretary, Chairperson, and Leader".

"All members were involved in the choice of topic of research. Each member was requested to search for a topic and provide justification for any chosen topic. The topics were discussed and vote was cast for all the topics. The topic with the highest vote was selected for research".

"Every team member was requested to do literature search on the chosen topic. Members suggested items to be reviewed for the study".

"Members agreed to review the items and to be compiled by all the group members".

“Members of the group were also assigned questionnaire drafting, data collection and writing up of the research. The same was done for the typing, proof reading and oral presentation of the project”.

“The secretary was charged with the responsibility of taking minutes of the meetings while the leader was mandated to summarize the decisions made during meetings. The chairperson took charge of chairing and overseeing the smooth running of the team meetings”.

In this case, virtually all members of the groups were deeply involved in the group project.

“Members reviewed the drafts stage by stage and the final version. We jointly rehearsed and criticized oral presentation of the project before it was presented to the class”.

Group A and F indicated that during *“the sharing phase, members voluntarily share their feelings, ideas, and insights concerning the topic. Each person is given an uninterrupted turn while everyone else listens. Only after all members have shared does the leader open up the team circle to the give and take of general discussion”*. The two groups pointed out that *“this is particularly helpful when the group has been working on a research topic and problem statement. In such cases, a member took written notes; and a quick summary of those notes helped assure everyone’s commitment to the group’s outcomes”*.

The results indicate that right from the beginning of the group work, all members of the ten groups formed demonstrated the spirit of democracy. Despite their cultural, religious and political diversity, members of the groups unanimously appointed the key officers to coordinate, manage the activities of the group. Members of all the groups participated fully in the assignment of tasks such as choice of topic, literature review, data collection and analysis, writing up the report and finalizing the report. The implication of the roles played by individual members of the groups is that such skills can be transferred to real class situation where students are allocated into groups and assigned activities. It facilitates independent learning and cross cultural communication.

On Leadership

On leadership, virtually all (95%) of the students were of the view that having a leader is very important for the success of the group hence they chose a leader who was unanimously elected by members to ensure the smooth execution of the task assigned to them. Only a few (5%) of them felt that leadership in their groups should be rotational. They argued that it is more democratic than having one person ‘holding on to power’ at all times. Typical comments were:

“We elected the person we felt was mature and democratic in orientation from our group. We have worked with our leader in some other assignments; therefore, we knew him/her to exude good quality leadership skills”.

All the groups also observed that the leadership style employed was participatory whereby every member of the team was given the opportunity to contribute his/her own quota to the implementation of the task assigned. The groups added that the leadership is group-centred and democratic. They reported that there are many advantages to having a group leader. *“These include allocation of tasks, speaking turns during discussions, summarizing decisions taken at meetings; and resolving conflicts that emerged”*. Group F members remarked that *“it is the leader’s responsibility to introduce the topic, and to ensure that the group adheres to the group work procedure and follows the rules”*.

Furthermore, all the group members seem to conclude that leaders in their teamwork made sure the ground rules were understood by all members; introduced the topic or stated the objectives of their tasks; elaborated if the topic needed clarification; allowed time for members to share their thoughts; and discussed and summarized conclusions and insights.

As indicated above, in one of the ten groups, leadership was rotational. Group K remarked that, *“one member at a time acted as the leader or facilitator, but the person taking that role voluntarily changes from one to the next. The group did not pressure any one to lead in the beginning. However, shared leadership became one of the natural developments of our group process”*.

The results suggest that the students valued the significance of leadership in teamwork. They elected the person they knew very well; who can guide them in the allocation of tasks and turn-taking and managing group meetings. Leadership skills acquired through teamwork will not only be helpful in students' future group activities but also in their work place.

On Conflict Within the Groups

On conflict within the groups, virtually all members (90%) of the ten groups agreed that there was conflict in their teamwork and it was triggered by such factors as conflict of Interest, behavior regulations, need for consensus, and communication barriers. From the responses of the interviews conducted with members of the group, the following was quoted as typical sources of conflict among the groups.

“Some members were fond of late coming”.

“Time for group meeting is another source of conflict”.

“Members often disagreed on times of meeting”.

“There is the problem of loafers/uncooperative members”.

“There was also the problem of allocation of tasks; that is, who gets what and why”.

One of the things that contributed to the successful implementation of the group task was a well-developed willingness and ability among group members to collaborate in resolving conflict. The groups explained that individuals were able to define clearly the problems that underlie the conflicts that emerged, and selected or developed strategies for bringing about their resolution. For example, they battled for several hours before they could agree on such issues as times for group meetings, lateness, research topic and methodology at the onset of the project.

Conflict Resolution Within the Groups

On how the conflicts were resolved, the ten groups indicated that they typically used the following strategies, among others:

“In terms of tasks, we asked members to voluntarily make their choice, which they complied. Failure to complete the tasks attracted a fine, which members agreed to pay. The fine compelled members to cooperate throughout the project period. With regard to disagreement on choice of research topic, group members debated on many topics and at the end voted on the suggested ones; and we accepted the topic that got the highest vote”.

Four (4) (G, H, I, J) of the ten groups remarked that presentation of the research report to the class was a problem. They noted that:

“Some members argued that they were given large components of the project to present while others were given smaller components. After a lengthy debate, the team leader

was mandated to present the report while two other members were asked to volunteer to support the leader”.

Group E members said they adopted majority vote particularly when most members would not agree with others' views. *Truly, “we based most of our decisions on the opinion of the majority of group members after voting”.* Yet Group H members said they entrusted their decisions to the group who made the final decision on controversial issues.

Group B for instance *“said there were many ways that our group made a final decision and came to agreement on many issues such as the research topic, allocation of tasks. Some of the ways we took decisions include consensus; that is my group members all agree on the final decision through discussion and debate”.* On the other hand, Group C members, while responding to the questionnaire said *“we used compromise at times especially when we were at a deadlock. In other words, through discussion and readjustment of the final plan, group members came to agreement by giving up some of their demands and accepted some members' proposals”.*

All the members of the ten groups seemed to suggest that resolution of their team conflicts promotes significant individual personal growth in that members see themselves as capable of dealing effectively with conflict and interacting positively with others in the process. Groups E & G commented that consequently, *“self-esteem is enhanced; the need to belong is satisfied, and group members experience a kind of bonding that produces unity and cohesiveness”.* The teamwork is seen as creative and the group is seen as something people want to be a part of.

The groups admitted there were conflicts even though most of the time group members either voluntarily took up tasks or agreed to take up tasks allocated to them. Failure to complete tasks assigned or lateness always constituted sources of conflict. They dealt with them by imposing fines, among other strategies, which members complied with.

Benefits of Group-Work

On the advantages of the teamwork, a large number of the students (85%) were of the view that group work was highly beneficial to their academic and professional development. In an interview, Group B & C members said: *“ It was an exercise preparing us for the real world of work because at one point we are going to be working in large organizations with people of diverse backgrounds”.* Others made the following comments: *“We get to understand better and discover our strengths and weaknesses and know how we can tackle them. This made us to open up to other students and learn to communicate with them”.*

The students also claimed that teamwork opened avenues of communication; building trust; developing awareness of self and others. In addition, they said that teamwork developed positive interaction skills; and encouraged quality listening and the use of other communication skills such as intercultural communication skills. The following summarizes the views of all the ten student teams. All the Group members said *“they were involved in defining the research problem, to brainstorm alternative solutions, or to reach a decision through consensus; discussing and resolving a conflict in the group, or to move through successive stages of strategic planning typical of workplace group tasks.”*

Group K members stressed that when *“we engaged in self-observation and contemplation, and then share our thoughts and feelings, we develop self-awareness. We come to understand ourselves by looking inward and recognizing how we feel,*

think, and behave in response to other members and the issue at stake. When we listen to others do the same we expand our understanding of other group members". Yet Group J members were of the view that "the process of the teamwork provides us with frequent opportunities to observe ourselves and others in action, and to begin seeing how we contribute to the success of our group task". In fact someone with whom we thought we had nothing in common surprised the group by exposing an underlying human nature that leads to mutual respect", Team C added.

Another significant benefit of the teamwork that the students identified is that it promotes group interaction. For example Group E members explained that group work brings out and affirms the positive qualities inherent in everyone of us, and allows participants to practice effective modes of communication. They further indicated that it gently forces each member of the group to interact; and as they interacted, they learnt about each other and realized what it takes to relate effectively to other members of the group. In the process, *"we developed positive interaction skills through observing how others feel, think, and behave and comparing these observations to our own feelings, thoughts, and behaviours".* Members of Group B team explained that *"we begin to recognize what is effective - what works and do not work. We identify what others want and need from us in order for the entire group to achieve its goals".*

The power of effective listening has often been stressed as a very significant tool in group communication and conflict management (Cowan, 1995). In the students' teamwork analyzed in this study, students remarked that *"the teamwork provides us with many opportunities to talk while others actively listen".* They pointed out that listening is perhaps the most powerful interaction skill they developed; and through the consistent process of sharing, they developed the ability to clarify their thoughts. A member of Group E clearly summarized this view when he said *"we were encouraged to go deeper, become more creative, find new directions, and face and solve difficult problems that may at other times be hidden obstacles to progress".*

Disadvantages

On the disadvantages of group work, only a small percentage (15%) of the students did not approve of the approach. For example, members of Group C, D, and I in response to the questionnaire said those who did not approve of the approach gave the following reasons:

"We are really interested in things that are done individually and later the teacher assesses them. We only concentrate better when we work on our own. Group work sometimes is stressful; some members do not participate and are rewarded equally with the hardworking ones".

Those that responded negatively in Groups F, H, and J argued that: *"It is a waste of time or that it could be subjective. We prefer working on our own, then any mistake that we make is our own and not everyone else's".*

"Individual work gives each person the opportunity to study at their pace".

"It seems to favour some students at the expense of others".

In order to minimize the negative attitude and prejudice expressed by this group of students, I stressed the significance of teamwork in their future careers, and in the future workplace. I pointed out that I made efforts to be objective and fair in the assessment of the project by paying attention to the groups' records of meetings and portfolio, and reward individuals according to their contributions. The students cooperated with members of their groups after my explanation and persuasion.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to attempt to foster in the first year students of the University of Botswana, communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, research and writing skills and conflict management through teamwork, which involved a mini-research project. From the findings, the students highlighted the skills they derived from teamwork. Typical comments made include:

“We get to understand better and discover our weaknesses and strengths and improve. We knew little about other cultures, and how to communicate with our mates; but now we are interested interacting with students from other cultures because they want one to understand ours too”.

The students that believed that the teamwork exercise enabled their group participation added comments such as:

“Some of us never participated in class but due to teamwork we were forced to talk and interact with our mates, and our confidence was boosted”.

“It helps improve our communication skills and we can learn a lot of what is happening out there in real life situation”.

“We learnt a lot on how to resolve conflicts thereby facilitating the group’s task and peaceful co-existence”.

It is obvious that most of the students embraced the idea of using group work approach. They said that teamwork was an enlightening exercise that kept one aware of what is expected in the workplace. The students added that if team work is done often in class it would help prepare them for how to interact with the people in the world of work

The study has indicated clearly a pedagogical approach to the teaching and learning of lifelong skills required of the work place. It fosters conflict resolution skills, leadership skills, interpersonal/intercultural communication, research, writing, and presentation skills, among others. Team work has proved a useful instrument for making learning student-centred and highly enjoyable. Nevertheless, the study is limited to a course at the University of Botswana. Hence future research should focus on the practice and effectiveness in other disciplines.

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How Teachers Deploy Multimodal Textbooks to Enhance English Language Learning

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Abstract

This study draws on semiotics to argue that multimodal textbooks encode specific knowledge that offers teachers and learners new possibilities for the design of teaching and learning of English language. Drawing on Halliday's theory of systemic-functional linguistics, this paper examines how two teachers deployed multimodal resources of textbooks for English as a second language (ESL) instruction. Data were collected through classroom observations, field notes, interviews, and textbook analysis. The tentative findings suggest that the ESL teachers in this study were faced with problems on teaching English language learners how complex multimodal resources combine and integrate to design meaning in the textbooks they teach.

Keywords: critical literacy, multimodality, multiliteracies, social semiotic theory

Introduction

In the last two decades, a confluence of events has brought about the need for English teachers to teach a wide range of materials such as textbooks, diagrams, photographs and drawings to facilitate students' learning. First, in response to Gardner's (1991) groundbreaking theory of multiple intelligences, English teachers have grappled with how to integrate different learning modalities into classrooms, particularly, the visual intelligence, to appeal to students' learning styles. Gardner (1991) argues "students possess different kinds of minds and therefore learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways" (p. 11).

Second, advancements in multimedia technology have created possibilities for integrating different modes into textbooks. Emphasizing the integration of images, words, colors and audio for communication, Kress (2000) contended it "is now impossible to make sense of texts, even of their linguistic parts alone, without having a clear idea of what these other features might be contributing to meaning of a text" (p. 337). Concerned with how to support students' learning and make materials appealing, publishers are integrating diverse modes into textbooks. Designs of multiple modes into texts suggest a change in social and pedagogical relations between producers of textbooks and learners. This shift signifies horizontal, more open and more participatory relations in knowledge production among textbook producers, teachers, and students (Bezemer & Kress, 2010). Because of the multimodal nature of English language learning (ELL) textbooks, students enjoy more leeway in establishing reading paths according to their interests, backgrounds, and needs.

Indeed, visual representations have become a pervasive and visible feature of ELL textbooks in the U.S. and around the world. In many ELL textbooks, producers integrate language and multimodal resources (e.g., image, color, layout, typography, and font) to communicate messages. However, sometimes, textbook producers relay messages through the image across textbooks and such ideas may not be carried by the linguistic text

(Bezemer & Kress, 2010; Giaschi, 2000; Petrie, 2003). For example, Astorga (1999) analyzed one ELL textbook and concluded that while some messages were expressed through images, others were communicated only through the linguistic text. In essence, teaching ELL textbooks in modern times requires teachers to understand how images are increasingly interwoven with the construction of content. This point is important because English language learners who do not have the skills to interpret images in textbooks may not understand how social, political, and ideological messages are conveyed to them and how they are positioned as both English language learners and as social subjects (Giaschi, 2000).

Furthermore, ELL textbooks are sold to schools accompanied with videos, VHS, CD-ROM, and audio cassettes. The multimodal nature of such textbooks affords English language teachers the opportunity to be resourceful in analyzing such texts. For example, teachers can generate questions around a textbook that reflects a social issue and supplement the text with students' everyday multimedia materials such as video clips, CD-ROMs and the Internet to address student learning about the social issue (Sanders & Albers, 2010). The multimodal resources of ELL textbooks suggest that teachers and students need new kinds of textual understanding: how multimodal resources of text-books are a crucial aspect of knowledge construction in classrooms. Such new understandings can help teachers make connection between their students' social and economic change, the materials conditions of learners' lives, ELL textbooks, and pedagogy (Hull & Schultz, 2001). Equally importantly, multimodal textbooks brought by multimedia technologies have given rise to new textual experiences, social practices, and accompany literacies that potentially expand opportunities for ELL (Kern, 2006).

Contemporary texts place new demands on English teachers on how they deploy multimodal resources across lessons (Meskill, Mossop, & Bates, 1999; Walker, Bean, & Dillard, 2010). Despite increasing multiplicity and integration of different modes into ELL textbooks, how teachers help English language learners make connections between visual forms of knowledge and learning is seldom explored in research (Jewitt, 2008b). Available literature tends to focus on how ELL teachers use visual images for illustration and motivation of learners. For example, visual images in textbooks are rarely used to engage learners on critical analysis of texts in order to provide an understanding of how minority students are positioned and stereotyped (Ajayi, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012).

In fact, while visual messages are integral to texts, "they are still often ignored or treated superficially in the classroom" (Hobbs & Frost, 2003, p. 330). In many classrooms today, "the visual and multimodal survive at the margins of the curriculum" (Jewitt, 2008b, p. 15). The disconnection between highly visual and multimodal textbooks and teachers' practices is hardly surprising. Walker et al. (2010) noted: "When teachers are required to use these texts, their sense of agency is undermined and many fall into undynamic, textbook-driven routines" (p. vii).

There is a need to rethink how teachers teach multimodal texts because in many schools across the U.S and the world approved textbooks probably form the main source of ELL instruction. More importantly, multimodal textbooks offer new possibilities for ELL instruction as such texts provide "flexible conceptual frames that support more efficient interaction than with more rigid, linear print" (Meskill et al., 1999, p. 236). Multimodal practices in ELL classrooms often foster greater student participation, freedom to communicate, collaboration and negotiation of meanings. In addition, multimodal texts

afford English learners the opportunity to draw on different modes and gain access to a wider range of semiotic possibilities for meaning making.

Furthermore, the ways knowledge is designed into multimodal textbooks is crucial for meaning making. Multimodal texts are highly visual because they integrate diverse modes of representation. As such, such texts can provoke different interpretations from English language learners. Indeed, the multi-layered and multifaceted nature of multimodal textbooks requires learners to engage in multimodal thinking and cognitive flexibility that are crucially important for language learning in multilingual contexts. Walker et al. (2010) aptly argued that multimodal texts facilitate “a different, expanded form of classroom discourse that spans intertextuality and critical connections” (Walker et al., 2010, p. ix) that were usually not made available in traditional print-based materials. In addition, images in textbooks offer English language learners the possibility of multidirectional entry points into textual analyses and interpretations. Students can start interpretations of texts from captions, images, colors, layouts, or words. Because multimodality involves understanding how students interpret, understand and produce texts, the role of teachers is to teach English language learners the “interpretation of the diverse combinatory ways of representing meaning that new technology tools are making possible” (Kern, 2008, p. 7).

The above paragraphs suggest that reading contemporary textbooks require more than just abilities to decode language-based materials to entail the knowledge of how different modes form one dynamic, systemic whole for meaning making (Hubbard & Siskin, 2004; Meskill et al., 1999; Nelson, 2006). Hence, English language learners need more than the conventional linguistic ability; they require multimodal skills to interpret the structure of representations and information in textbooks in ways that best support their understanding of such materials. In addition, as a teacher educator-researcher in a small rural university, I face the challenge of preparing teachers to make connections between multimodal textbooks and English language learners’ cultural practices in ways that are significant for learning. My goal is to prepare teachers who understand that ELL instruction goes beyond a decontextualized, skill-based process to entail new blends of skills, knowledge, practices and dispositions associated with multimodal textbooks. I believe that if English language teachers link multimodal textbooks to students’ experiences, such educators have the potential to redefine ELL for Hispanic students, reinvent their own pedagogy and make teaching/learning truly transformative for themselves and students.

The purpose of this study is to explore how two teachers help their students use multimodal textbooks to enhance English language learning. Three research questions guided the study:

- In what ways do the teachers teach English language learners how multimodal resources structure meanings in textbooks?
- How do the teachers integrate audio materials into teaching ELL instruction?
- How do the teachers promote critical readings of multimodal textbooks in ELL classrooms?

This study makes significant contributions to ELL-related research on multimodality. It bridges the disconnection between English teaching/learning and multimodal textbooks used in classrooms. Even though *High Point Level C: Success in Language, Literature* (Schifini, Short, & Tinajero, 1998a) and *Content and High Point - The Basics: Success in Language, Literature, and Content* (Schifini, et al., 1998b) are widely used across the U.S. for ELL instruction from elementary to high schools, there is hardly any substantive literature on how teachers and students negotiate their multimodality

as evident from dearth of literature on this important topic. This study also contributes to an understanding of how Hispanic English learners negotiate multimodal textbooks. For one, Hispanic students account for 3,598,451 (79.05%) of the approximately 5.1 million students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in ELL programs in the U.S. Too many of the students underperform in English learning. An important factor in the students' poor achievement is the use of "tightly structured hierarchical print forms used in schools" (Meskill, et al., 2009, p. 236) for teaching ELL. An exploration of Hispanic students' (and teachers') understandings of the complex ways in which diverse modes are integrated for meaning-making in multimodal textbooks potentially represents a significant shift in the direction of ELL instruction.

An Evolving Notion of Textbook

The notion of textbook is shifting and evolving. A textbook traditionally means print materials - usually made primarily out of words. However, designs of contemporary textbooks use a mixture of multimodal resources, including language, image, font, layout, color and spatiality. Textbooks are accompanied by cassettes, CD-ROMs, videos and digital texts. Digital texts are often hypertextual, hypermultimodal (integrating images, language, audio, etc.), and hyperlinked to other websites. Such intertextual links allow students to connect their textbooks to other texts such as the Internet and Websites. Equally important, computer technology has brought about differing textual forms where their production involves a complex combination of different modes and media (New London Group, 2000). Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) defined multimodal texts as "any text whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic code" (p. 183). The term is used in this study to refer to the composition of texts using varied forms of expression, including images, symbols, and multimedia texts associated with the Internet.

The shift in the definition of texts implies a need for change in ways English language teachers negotiate textbooks - from reading and writing print-bound materials - to developing skills and knowledge to teach how meanings are designed into textbooks through multimodal resources. In this way, English language teachers can connect textbooks to Hispanic students' multiple identities and cultural forms of communication in order to "engage with, and gain access to, student agency, cultural memory, and home and school learning, within local contexts" (Jewitt, 2008b, p. 50).

Multimodal Texts and Critical Literacy

How knowledge is presented in textbooks is "integral to meaning, creativity and learning" (Jewitt, 2008b, p. 34). Indeed, the ensemble of different images in textbooks makes different demands on students and has differential potential impacts for shaping identities and dispositions to learning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Gee, 2003; Lemke, 2005). This view suggests that a crucial aspect of English language teachers' work is to teach students explicit analyses of semiotics of textbooks as such knowledge can provide learners "the tools for their own social, cultural, and linguistic exploration" (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000, p. 308). Using a multimodal pedagogy, English language teachers have a greater chance of preparing their students to read textbooks from different identities based on ethnicity, race, gender or class, and redesign texts in ways that transform knowledge (Behrman, 2006; Walker & Bean, 2005).

Textbooks, Teachers' Practices, and ESL Students' Learning

Textbooks remain a significant source of teaching ELL students in many classrooms in the U.S and around the world. However, multimodal textbooks pose a significant challenge for many teachers. First, the assumption behind the design of many ELL textbooks is that students passively receive knowledge from teachers and mechanically decode words from materials (Hsu & Yang, 2007; Lee, 2010). Second, many textbooks limit English language learners' learning opportunities as such texts are designed to meet the rigid requirements of state-mandated standards, which "often create a mismatch between students interests and content requirements" (Walker et al., 2010, p. ix). Third, in many cases, images are not properly integrated into textbooks to facilitate effectively ELL. In many texts, images express biases and are unrepresentative of the broad and varied learners' cultural experiences.

Therefore, there is a need for teachers who understand that multimodal resources are central to ELL textbook design and students' learning in the contemporary times. Such teachers will screen textbooks for cultural representation, relevance and accuracy. More importantly, teachers also have to theorize on how textbook multimodal resources structure knowledge for students' learning in ELL classrooms.

A Theoretical Framework for Multimodal Text Analysis

Halliday's (1976) systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) described language as a system with meaning potential. Halliday (1976) defined language as "a set of options in a stated environment . . ." (p. 26) that were shaped by how people use them to make meaning. He identified a tri-functional framework of meaning: *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*. The *ideational meanings* relate to what is going on in the world, that is, how people use language to articulate their experiences. They relate to how words are used to express actions, objects, places, events, people, things, qualities and ideas. They deal with how people represent their experiences through the types of processes and participants they use. The *interpersonal meanings* are concerned with the ways language is used to position people, the kind of speaker-listener interaction and how such is negotiated. van Lier (2004) argued that the term relates to "roles, and identities of participants, sociocultural issues, relationships, power and control" (p. 74). The *textual meanings* deal with how textual elements are composed into a coherent message that is relevant to the context of the situation. For example, elements in the left are presented as *Given* while those on the right are *New*.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) applied SFL to the analysis of multimodal texts. Central to their theory of social semiotics is the notion the visual, the written, the auditory and the haptic (sense of touch) are all interrelated and contribute to meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) theorized that multimodal resources of visual images can be constituted into "grammatical systems" to realize specific metafunctions such as *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual meanings*. They contended that social semiotics affords means of analyzing how different people in visual images were represented and relate to each other (ideational), the kinds of participant-viewer social relation (interpersonal), and the different compositional configurations that afford the realization of different meanings (textual).

Cope and Kalantzis (2009), Kern (2006), and Lemke (2005) extended the social semiotic theory of communication to explain how diverse modes serve as resources for critical interpretations of texts and build on individuals' multifarious subjectivities. For example, Nelson (2006) argued that multimodal practices allow English learners the opportunities to negotiate and communicate meanings in different media than English language. Jewitt (2008) suggested that teachers may use multimodal texts as "the basis for critical engagement, redesign, or the explicit teaching of how modes construct meaning in specific genres" (p. 262). This view suggests that English teachers need to link textual features of textbooks to social contexts and politics that inform them. For example, teachers need to teach students how textbooks' structures and visual resources interact and integrate to convey biases and prejudices and how such features can be interpreted within particular socio-cultural contexts and through specific social practices.

Method

This is a qualitative case study. Yin (1984) defined the case study research method as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (p. 23). Case studies are used "to give an emically oriented description of the cultural practices of individuals" (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999, cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 167). Qualitative case study method using field notes, interviews and videotape recordings is appropriate for this research as it allows the researcher to provide detailed descriptions of pedagogical practices and viewpoints of particular English teachers in specific contexts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The School Site

The study was conducted in a border county in California. The county's *records* show 16,154 (46.0%) students of the total school enrollment of 35,115 were classified as English language learners. The document also indicated that while 84.6% of student population was Latino origin, white and African American ethnic groups accounted for 10.7% and 1.7% respectively. The data showed that 81.0% of the students came from economically disadvantaged homes as compared to the statewide average of 53%.

The broader context of teaching at the site of this study suggests that Hispanic English language learners might be highly literate in multimodal texts. In public spaces such as billboards and advertisements, multimodal resources of images, colors, and languages are used to convey messages. As such Hispanic English learners may have gained considerable multimodal literacy skills through reading diverse texts made available in their social environment and, therefore, bring a wide range of experiences in multimodal texts to classrooms that teacher should tap into (Ajayi, 2008, 2011, 2012).

The Participants

Eight ELL teachers were initially invited to participate in the study. While four decline, the remaining four met the criteria for the study: they were full-time teachers, had taught for 10 years, were willing to participate in follow-up interviews, and did not expect to be compensated for their time. However, Ana Guzman and Mario Reyes (pseudonyms) were finally selected based on the need to draw participants from broader range of

backgrounds: gender, years of teaching, and excellent record of teaching. Both teachers were described by their respective school principals as “effective teachers.” Guzman had once been recognized as “Teacher of the Year.” Similarly, Reyes was elected by his colleagues as a grade-level coordinator. Guzman and Reyes had taught for 18 and 10 years respectively, in the same school. Guzman had a Master’s degree and a California teaching credential in Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD). She was teaching the Basic level – beginning class. Similarly, Reyes had a Bachelor’s degree in Education and a certification in BCLAD. He was assigned to teach Advanced class. The selection of the teachers was deliberately motivated to provide examples of varied experiences they bring to English language teaching. This kind of sampling is described as *theoretical sampling* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The teachers were particularly suitable for addressing the research questions in this study. They seemed to have an expanded view of literacy – a view that embraced multimodal texts. They were interested in providing English learners with varied forms of texts that connect instruction to learners’ experiences and culture. This researcher had earlier observed Reyes using video clips from a social network site to connect his teaching to students’ out-of-school experiences.

Guzman’s class roster showed that the number of students in her class fluctuated between 20 and 23 throughout the semester. All the students were Hispanic. There were 14 female and nine male students. According to the teachers, majority of the students came from Mexico. The students were classified as Beginning L1 based on their scores in the state-mandated California English Language Development Test (CELDT). They were in Basic Bilingual, which meant they had instructions in the school subjects in Spanish. Reyes had 18 students in Advanced class – a Structured English Immersion class. They learned core subjects in English and were supported with minimal instruction in Spanish.

Guzman used *Content and High Point – The Basics* to teach the Basic level. The textbook was introduced the students to English vocabulary, language functions, patterns and structures, and high frequency words. Reyes also used *High Point Level C* for teaching Advanced class. The textbook focuses on literature, using a variety of themes, particular themes dealing with how English learners could successfully integrate into the fabric of their new society. This theme was articulated through a complex integration of a multiplicity of semiotic modes. This was why the theme, which ran through the two textbooks, was chosen for exploration in this study.

Each teacher had *The Teacher’s Edition* of textbook s/he was teaching. The teacher’s edition stated that it “outlines the structure of different kinds of text and the corresponding reading strategies . . . [and also] tells the teacher how to model the strategies and conduct practice” (Schifini, et al., 1998c, p. 26). The editions do not make specific recommendations for teachers on how to use the multimodal features of the textbooks.

Data Collection

Data for the study were collected over 16 weeks. During the first two weeks, the researcher visited the two classrooms daily for one hour to acclimatize the teachers and their students to the presence of the researcher and videotape equipment. There were three sources of data collection:

Classroom Observation. From third to 16th week, the researcher observed each teacher once a week for 110 minutes. Each teacher prepared 14 lesson plans for observation. The lessons were video recorded to preserve the data for analysis. The observations were sufficient to provide a descriptive/interpretative analysis of how the teachers negotiated multimodality in their lessons. The researcher developed observation records to complement the videotape recordings (see Figure 1). The observation records focused on specific issues: (a) how the teachers exploited the multimodal features of the textbooks to teach ELL; (b) how they used additional meaning making resources such as students' cultural experiences; and (c) how the teachers helped English language learners make intertextual connections to other sources. As the teachers taught, the researcher checked appropriate column that related to multimodal resources they were using for teaching. For example, the auditory column was checked when a teacher used CD-ROM. Then, the researcher wrote commentaries on the field note on how it was used.

| | Interpret pictorial images | Discuss language, colors, | Use auditory - music, recorded excerpts of textbook | Link discussion to students' resources, perspectives, experiences | Link discussion to websites, blog sites, online activities, web logs, the Internet | Discuss page layout, font, bold, italics, captions | Use electronics: videos, cassettes, CD-Rom. | Use dialogue, social interaction |
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Figure 1. Weekly Lesson Chart and Checklist

Interviews. The teachers participated in tape-recorded interviews after school. Kern (2006), Meskill et al (1999) and Walker et al. (2010) provided a theoretical framework for the interview questions: (a) multimodal textbooks textually position learners; hence, ELL teachers need to teach students how to access meanings from texts, (b) multimodal resources of textbooks give ELL teachers new possibilities for the design of teaching, and (c) new shapes and routes into learning made possible by multimodality suggest that ELL teachers need new skills, abilities and dispositions for teaching.

The teachers responded to the following interview questions: Are you familiar with the notion of semiotic analysis of multimodal textbooks? Do you think your literacy education at the university prepared you to analyze semiotic modes of multimodal textbooks? To what extent do you use additional sources of meaning making such as the Internet and websites? What do you perceive as the effects of scripted textbook and curriculum on teaching multimodally? Do you think that teaching explicit analysis of multimodal textbooks can help your students develop into more critical aware learners and

citizens? Do you have appropriate audio materials that effectively model pronunciation of the different varieties of English? For content validity and usability, two English as second language (ESL) professors and twelve ESL teachers were asked to comment on it. Their comments were used to improve the survey.

Field Notes. There were field notes which provided commentaries of how the teachers navigated multimodal resources of the textbooks. It also included record of dialogues among the teachers, students, and researcher. Using multiple sources for data collection allowed the researcher to triangulate the findings.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected through the weekly charts and field notes were tabulated on a large chart to examine how the teachers and students manipulated multimodal resources of the textbooks. The video recordings also were analyzed using a two-step analytic induction: analyzing the videotape to identify (a) the participants' explanations and discussions of visual images in the textbooks, and (b) their ideas were coded and developed into a categorization scheme. In the weekly charts, field notes and videotape recordings, attention was paid to how the teachers used particular images to contextualize teaching, teach students to make intertextual connections or provide alternative interpretations of texts. Specific images that Guzman and Reyes spent more time analyzing with the students were selected for analysis. Image analysis was based on the metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings. Furthermore, interviews with the participants were transcribed. The transcripts were emailed to the participants for vetting - to ensure the transcripts reflected their responses. The process allowed the researcher to check the validity of the transcripts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

A theoretical framework of transformative pedagogy that suggested multimodal texts offer English teachers the opportunity to reshape and transform knowledge developed by Cope & Kalantzis (2009) and Jewitt (2008a, 2005) guided data analysis. The theory suggested that multimodal texts offer teachers: (a) new possibilities for the design of teaching; (b) the opportunity to use multimodal resources to promote new routes into knowledge; and (c) a chance to engage students' experiences and cultural forms of representation and agency.

Using a qualitative, interpretative research approach, the researcher engaged in a line-by-line analysis of the transcripts of the data. Using micro-analytic method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) allowed the researcher to carefully read the data several times to identify phrases, sentences and themes that were pertinent to the research objectives. The researcher analyzed and interpreted the data to decide what arguments, ideas and concepts to include and emphasize. Similarly, the pictures in the textbooks were "read," analyzed and interpreted to provide an understanding of how the publishers juxtaposed words and images to convey specific ideological messages.

The next stage involved coding and categorizing the data. The data were re-read to compare ideas from data-sources. The data were broken into discrete portions, compared for differences and similarities. Ideas, concepts and comments that were similar were categorized. Concepts such as "lack of training in multimodal analysis," "I don't know how to analyze pictures," were grouped together. Ideas such as "use images to provide contexts for topics," and "use pictures to explain story to my students" were grouped under the

same category. Using comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), the data were sorted into recurring patterns and themes: using CD-ROM to model pronunciation, providing context for reading, linking instruction to students' backgrounds, and presenting conflicting message of racial harmony. Finally, quotations from the participants were used to support these themes.

Results

The purpose of this study was to explore how two teachers used multimodal resources of two textbooks to enhance ELL for students. English textbooks are organized by structures in which images become integral to meaning making and learning in classrooms. Teachers' role is crucially important in teaching English learners how knowledge is presented and communicated through multimodal textbooks. The results are discussed under the research questions raised at the beginning of this study.

In What Ways Do the Teachers Teach English Language Learners How Multimodal Resources Structure Meanings in Textbooks?

The process of interpretation and learning in ESL textbooks requires teachers to teach students skills to make sense of how different modes integrate for meaning making. However, the teachers in this study seemed to use images in the textbooks to contextualize reading. In Figures 2 and 3, Guzman led her class in a discussion of how sports and objects could bring strangers together. She encouraged the students to link the image to their experiences of how they met new friends through sports or other activities. The students noted that the images in the frames were friends sharing common interest in sports and bracelets. The students also identified play station, music videos and videogames as objects they shared with their friends. With these activities, the teacher seemed to use the images to contextualize teaching to provide a space for the students to use their backgrounds to construct meaning from the textbook.

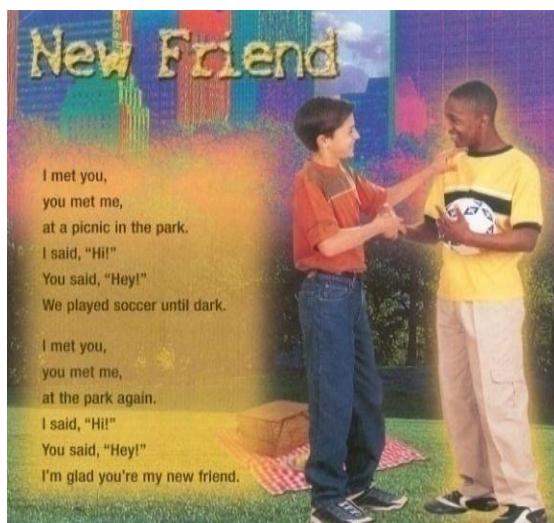


Figure 2. Where to Find a Friend
The Basics (p. 108)

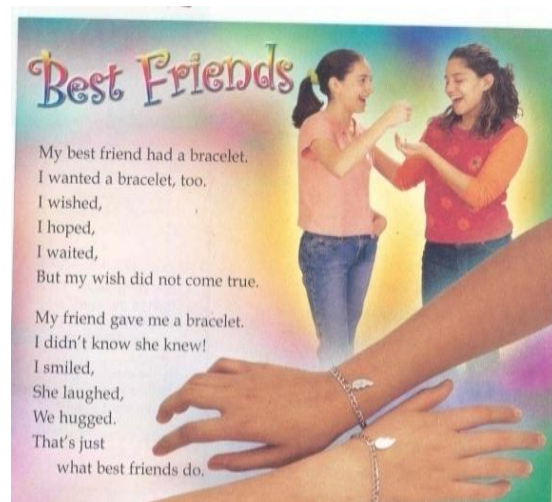


Figure 3. Sharing a Common Interest
Source: *High Point: The Basics* (p. 150)

During the follow-up interview, Guzman was asked if she was familiar with the notion of semiotic analysis of multimodal texts and its potential to offer her students wider and richer interpretations of the textbook they were reading. The participant explained that she understood how to use pictures to contextualize instruction, adding “I am not familiar with the notion of semiotic analysis of texts.” Guzman suggested that her training, expertise, and experiences were in the area of print-based text analysis. She argued that she paid “more attention to the content” (the literature in the textbook) and used audio materials to help students learn.

How Do the Teachers Integrate Audio Materials into Teaching?

Teachers need to explicitly teach English language learners to understand the different possibilities for meaning making made available by multimodal resources and how they integrate for expressing ideas. However, the use of a CD-ROM in this study appeared to confound students’ learning. Guzman played a CD-ROM as a pre-teaching activity before the class read Figure 2. A female voice modeled the verbal text in the standard American English accent. Guzman explained the lesson in Spanish to provide support. The observation records showed that the students had difficulties pronouncing words like “friend,” “picnic,” and “park.” They substituted the short /a/ vowel for r-controlled /a/ vowel in park. The students did not seem to articulate the primary stress on both “friend” and “picnic.” They eventually read the text with a Spanish accent. It is important to note that the students had little prior knowledge of English.

The field notes and observation records indicated that the focus of the lesson was primarily on the verbal text. During the interview, Guzman explained that she wanted to help the students learn simple words they could use during social interactions. She also seemed to use the technology to bridge the gap between her English pronunciation (with Spanish accent) and American English variety the students listened to. When Guzman was asked if she had CD-ROMs that could model the different varieties of English used in California, she explained she had “only the school approved CD-ROMs for teaching.” The teacher argued that the recorded excerpts provided “the students the necessary exposure to the standard American English accent that they might need to interact with the larger society.” According to Guzman, her lessons focus on the best ways to integrate the students into the mainstream American society rather than helping them acquire critical reading skills.

How Do the Teachers Promote Critical Readings of the Multimodal Textbooks?

The role of teachers involves teaching English language learners how images and words in textbooks are integrated to convey cultural and ideological meanings and how to provide alternative interpretations. In essence, English teachers should teach students skills for critical interpretations of the social, economic, cultural, and political influences that shape designs of textbooks. However, Reyes did not appear to encourage the students to critically examine the conflicting message of equitable social opportunities in Figures 4 and 5. For example, Reyes encouraged the students to discuss whether Miss America in Figure 4 was Hispanic. The teachers’ explanation centered round Miss America’s physical appearance. When Reyes asked the class how many of them thought they could become Miss America, no student raised her hand. He then asked why they felt they could not

become Miss America. A student answered: “. . . winners are [usually] tall, slim and blonde and I’m not look like that.”

During the lesson on Figure 5, Reyes led the class in discussion of the challenges that people with disabilities faced. He asked the students to mention the kind of difficulties such people face. Reyes encouraged the students to “read” the picture. They empathized with her and expressed their happiness that she realized her dreams. Reyes asked them to talk about immigrants who have achieved success in America. The students then shared with the class difficulties they were trying to overcome as immigrant English learners.

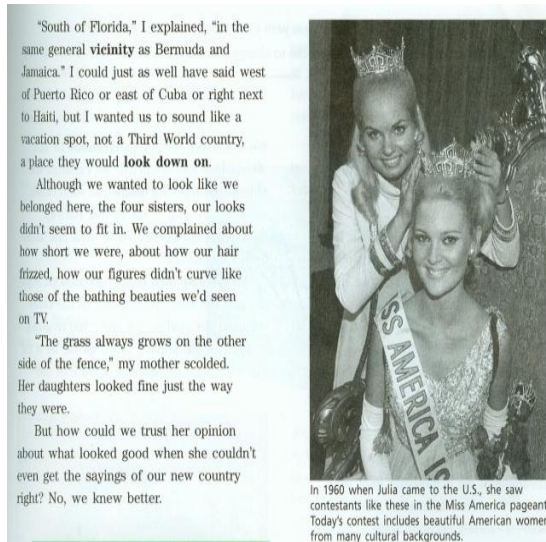


Figure 4. Is She Hispanic?
Source: *High Point: Level C*, (p. 121)

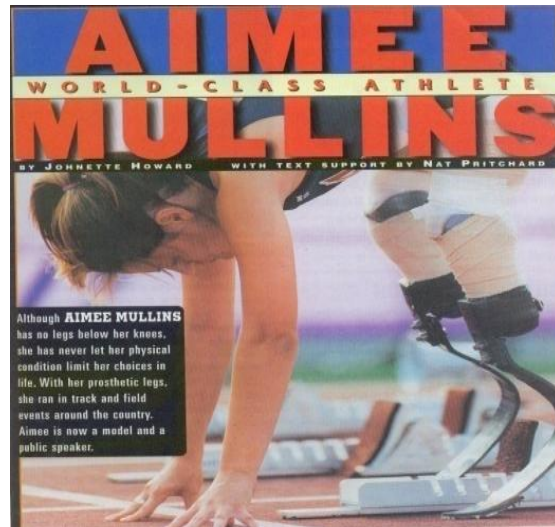


Figure 5. I’m Happy for Her
Source: *High Point: Level C*, (p. 239).

Guzman used Figure 6 to teach reading comprehension. She started the lesson by asking the students to share with the class how they met their friends and why they became friends. She then called the students’ attention to Figure 6. She explained the assignment in Spanish. For vocabulary development, Guzman asked the students to explain the meanings of “friend”, “new”, “go fast”, “cold”, and “time”.



Figure 6. Not Easy Finding Friends
Source: *High Point: The Basics*, (p. 52)

The teacher also played a CD-ROM so that students could listen to, and repeat the words after a female voice that modeled the reading. Guzman asked the students to identify the different ethnic groups depicted in the frames. She further asked them whether they had friends in the school or outside from different race/ethnicity. Only two students answered in the affirmative.

Discussion

In What Ways Do the Teachers Teach English Language Learners How Multimodal Resources Structure Meanings in Textbooks?

The findings in this study suggest that Guzman does not use the pictures in the textbook to teach the students how designs of messages in the Figures rely on textual organization of different modes. The captions: “New Friend” and “Best Friends” are written in 32 points, bold, and stylish fonts to provide visual salience. The bold and stylistic captions call the students’ attention to the headings – as embodying the central message. In addition, the Figures are photographs rather than sketches. Photographs make the story more credible to students.

In Figure 2, the textbook uses elements of visual salience: a “long shot” (full view of the two students with background), directionality of gaze (the two students make eye contact to show engagement), and size (the photographs relatively large while the accompanying words are small). There is also high color saturation as a signifier of an emotional expression of energy and emotion typically associated with young teenage boys. This technique allows the publishers to select the pictures as more important, more valuable, and more worthy of attention. In Figures 2 and 3 the textbook uses interpersonal meaning, including attitude (students smile to suggest gregariousness), closeness (students stand closely to suggest friendship) horizontal angle (to suggest viewers’ high degree of involvement in the message of the text). Furthermore, the Figures are realistic – showing what students do in real-life situations, and therefore, suggesting the images in the frames are real. For example, in Figure 2, the boys wear blue jeans, t-shirts and holding a football.

The goal of the publishers is probably to help students connect with the interpersonal meaning they want to convey to students: the school is a place to meet new friends. Figure 2 depicts students of different ethnic backgrounds – Hispanic and African American – as happy and gregarious individuals with the necessary qualities to form and maintain good friendships with others. The pictures invite readers to emulate the friendly qualities of the two students. Using textual meaning – the textbook depicts image of the two hands, one black and the other brown, at the bottom of Figure 3. The image becomes the Real – the most practical aspect of the message. Figures 2 and 3 thus suggest racial harmony on school campuses.

The data analysis potentially suggest that multimodal representations in textbooks make new demands on teachers in “relations to both how knowledge is represented and communicated and how those representations circulate and mobilized across time and space” (Jewitt, 2008a, p. 256). More importantly, multimodal composition changes the shapes of knowledge in textbooks as diverse modes – images, words, color, captions, font, gaze, closeness, and directionality of gaze – interact and design meaning in textbooks. Hence, helping English language learners understand the combinative potential of

multimodal resources and the “relations of meaning that bind semiotic modes together” (Nelson, 2006, p. 57) is crucially important. Teachers can help English language learners understand the complex ways by which meanings are designed into textbooks and how to interpret such materials.

The modal diversity in textbooks can serve to “increase the possibility of emergent knowledge, which may in turn positively affect intellectual and affective development” (p. Nelson, 2006, p. 70) of English language learners. For example, Figures 2 and 3 suggest that when teachers explicitly teach social semiotic analysis of images, they potentially provide Hispanic students a better opportunity to link interpretations of textbooks with the broader American society that serves as the backdrop against which English is learned and used. The school as a context of learning provides an interface between learning, the students’ multiple cultural backgrounds and multiple identities (as Mexican, English language learners, adolescents, multilingual and multicultural students and Spanish speakers). Through an explicit critical analysis of the Figures, the students could have developed into more critically aware learners by contesting the message that racial harmony and social interaction were easily forged among the different ethnic groups in schools. Such critical skills can be transferred into analysis of different communicative modes, including audio materials in ELL classrooms.

How Do the Teachers Integrate Audio Materials into Teaching?

However, the CD-ROM presents many problems for the students. First, it created a non-interactive situation where the students passively listened to an audiotape. Second, using the standard American English accent to model pronunciation seemed to create confusion for the students. For example, the audiotape had no extra-linguistic clues to contextualize the listening comprehension passage and provide support in form of clues for meaning making. In addition, the audiotape did not repeat, expand and reinforce specific important vocabulary. Third, the students, at the beginning level, lacked skills to discriminate between sounds, recognize words, understand grammatical groupings of vocabulary, categorize sounds into meaningful patterns, and use background knowledge in English to predict what vocabulary may be read next. Lastly, the students’ listening comprehension was probably influenced by Spanish.

In view of these challenges, the rationale for the school’s adoption of such a CD-ROM, which essentially focuses on teaching and evaluating linguistic forms such as pronunciation and fluency, seemed inadequate in the face of multimodal textbooks and diversity of students. Jewitt (2005) argued that “the ‘new’ range and configurations of modes that digital technologies make available present different potentials for reading than print texts” (p. 327). New London Group (2000) suggested that because of increasing local diversity and global interconnectedness, teachers should teach students skills they need to “negotiate regional, ethnic, or class-based dialects” (p. 14). From multimodal literacy perspectives, teachers may need to teach English learners skills to negotiate the standard American English dialect, academic English, Hispanic variety of English, and code switching between English and Spanish that are commonly used across the U.S. (New London Group, 2000). In addition, the data here suggest that teachers need to use CD-ROMs that are pedagogically rich and interactive to meet the specific students’ needs of English language learners (Hubbard & Siskin, 2004). Teachers can provide expanded opportunities for students to use CD-ROMs to enhance their skills in listening,

pronunciation, and oral reading comprehension, and teach them to critically evaluate the effectiveness of such multimodal texts.

How Do the Teachers Promote Critical Readings of the Multimodal Textbooks?

In the data above, the participants used the photographs to enact literacy instruction that helped the students make connections between the textbook and their lives. Reyes uses Figures 4 and 5 to accomplish the goal sanctioned by the textbook and the politico-ideological landscape, which was to introduce the students to the U.S. society and its ideals: all men are created equal. For example, the participant interprets the verbal texts in Figures 4 and 5 to suggest a message of building consensus around the notion that everybody has equal opportunities to achieve his or her goal irrespective of race, gender, ability or situation in America. Similarly, Reyes achieves the objective approved by the textbook and the dominant culture that the U.S. is a melting pot for diverse ethnic and cultural groups.

However, a critical analysis of Figure 4 could have shown the students that the verbal text (the *Given*) was depicted at the left while a graphically salient picture (the *New*) was shown at the right. The picture, in relation to the bottom text became the *Ideal*. The commentary at the bottom - “. . . today’s contest includes beautiful American women from many cultural backgrounds” - therefore became the *Real*, the factual evidence of the multicultural dimension of beauty pageants in contemporary America. Thus from a practical point of view, the message of the commentary was presented to viewers as the most salient aspect of the discourse. The factual commentary gave greater credence to the promise of many faces in the American beauty pageantry in the picture. Furthermore, the design of Figure 4 relies on interpersonal message to convey meanings. The two contestants are depicted close (to show intimacy) and smiling (to show a positive attitude). In addition, using interactional system of gaze, the women in the frame are depicted as directly gazing at viewers. In this way, the image establishes an imaginary relationship with viewers. The message here is: the beauty queen is just like any other immigrant and that if she can become a beauty queen, any other person can achieve his or her dreams.

A semiotic analysis of the Figure 5 showed that the textbook uses textual design to compose the message of the frame. The frame contains an extra large caption at the top to signify *Given* while the image is depicted below as *New* information - a woman with prosthesis legs on the track field. In the frame, the verbal text at the top is the *Ideal* while the picture at the bottom is the *Real*. The big size of the image adds to its visual salience. In addition, colors - the use of bright red colors against a blue background - express interpersonal meaning. Bright red color is generally associated with winning, achieving, and competing while blue is associated with peace, tranquility and harmony. The bright color in the headline is also dominant in the pictorial image. The dominance of bright color in the headline and picture is suggestive of a promise of a happy ending story. The bright color becomes the glue that visually holds together the different semiotic modes to encode the message of the text: people can achieve their goals in America regardless of disabilities.

A semiotic analysis of Figure 6 shows the image is designed for interpersonal meaning. Figure 6 depicts a “long shot” to provide a full view of three students with different ethnic identities (Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic) and two genders (male and female). The students in the frame dress up in a school jersey. They are also running on the school field. In addition, Figure 6 is a photograph instead of an abstract drawing. These ideas are to signify the realistic nature of the image. The three images in the

frame are close and smiling to suggest intimacy. The frame also provides a horizontal angle to suggest to viewers high degree of involvement with the message of the text: the school is a fun place and a place for meeting friends regardless of individuals' ethnic and gender backgrounds. The verbal text - "Lupe is new at Lakeside school . . . Lupe is glad to have two new friends" - is used to reinforce the central message of the image: friendship is easily forged among people of different racial/ethnic and gender backgrounds in schools.

To understand the visual message made available for critique in Figures 4, 5 and 6, the teachers needed to explicitly engage in semiotic interpretations of the frames and situate meanings of the textbooks in students' lives. This means they needed to teach the students to interpret the images in the light of their subjective and cultural reality in which adolescent Hispanic English learners construct an understanding of themselves and the world. The teachers could ask: What is the message of the pictures? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your position. Why is the message presented to readers this way? Whose social-political interest is the message designed to serve? If the teachers pose these questions, they can potentially help their students to contest the conflicting message (e.g. all men are equal and all men have equal opportunities) against other national political discourse, including anti-immigration rhetoric, English-only policy, and high unemployment/poverty rates in Hispanic communities they experience and see on the TV. The teacher can also encourage the students to critique Figure 5 by asking them whether special education students are treated differently by other students in schools.

The data analysis above seems to suggest that English teachers need to develop more complex and critical views of images in textbooks (Meskill, et al., 1999; Nelson, 2006). English language learners gain "new understandings . . . as a result of transducing semiotic material across modes" (Nelson, 2006, p. 70). More importantly, multimodal textbooks have an inherent critical potential to the extent that teachers learn to teach English language learners how to "deconstruct the viewpoint of the text, and the text to subvert the naturalness of the image" (Lemke, 2005, p. 4). To teach multimodal textbooks is to "learn how to be critical of its messages, and . . . how to use it critically" (Lemke, 2005, p. 5). Such critical textual analyses of images by teachers are vitally important for preparing students to engage in heteroglossic interpretation that "focuses on how English learners and their communities influence and are influenced by social, political, and cultural discourses and practices in historically specific times and locations" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 150).

Summary of Findings

This study provided an important exploration of how two teachers deployed multimodal resources of textbooks to support ELL in their classrooms. The preliminary findings suggest that Guzman and Reyes used visual images to contextualize instruction and CD-ROMs to model pronunciation for students. They also used images to help students make connections between the textbooks and some aspects of their cultural lives. The teachers' expertise in verbal text analysis allowed them to pay more attention to the content (literature) of the textbooks. However, Guzman and Reyes seemed less prepared to analyze how multimodal resources combine and interact to structure knowledge in the textbooks. First, they appeared to lack the necessary preparation for teaching multimodal features of textbooks. Second, the way multimodality was designed into the textbooks actually confounded the students' learning. Sometimes, the confusion happened in directly observable ways - their failure to understand the recorded English excerpts - and at other

times, in more subtle ways – the textbooks sending messages of interracial harmony and equitable social opportunity that conflict with the lived experiences of the students. Third, the scripted nature of the textbooks seemed to have discouraged the teachers from mediating them in light of their own experiences, pedagogies, interpretations, and understandings. Finally, the teachers did not appear to engage in critical analysis in ways that possibly teach students to challenge ideological messages of textbooks. The findings have important implications for ELL teachers.

Implications of this Study

There is a need to rethink ELL instruction given the blends of knowledge made available in multimodal texts and the attendant new possibilities and challenges for the design of teaching. Teachers may need to ask crucial questions about ELL instruction: what new multimodal resources are made available in textbooks for meaning? What are the possibilities and constraints of visual and non-linguistic resources of textbooks? How can teachers exploit the potential of multimodal textbooks for teaching?

Furthermore, there may be a need for additional “training” for some ELL teachers on how to make better use of the affordances of multimodal textbooks. Such training will prepare teachers to teach how multimodal resources inform textbook production and the specific skills, knowledge and dispositions they need to teach students for analysis, interpretation, and critique. Furthermore, school districts need to give teachers a more prominent role in selecting and adopting textbooks for students. To play this role effectively, teachers may need “training” on how to engage in nuanced interpretations of textbooks. This is because textbooks are a patchwork of ideologies, interests and marketing strategies. ELL teachers may need additional training on how to ask questions such as: which publishing house produces them? What are its views on how best to educate ESL students? How does it intend multimodal textbooks to be used?

Such training will help ELL teachers to identify multimodal texts that they consider appropriate for their students, including CD-ROMs or other multimedia technologies. For example, CD-ROMs with images to provide extra-linguistic clues to support the language being taught will potentially facilitate students’ learning. Such materials also need to be interactive, e.g., use slower speech, repetition and allow students to ask for clarification. In addition, CD-ROMs should be interesting and relevant to students’ lives. Furthermore, CD-ROMs should be recorded in different accents as a way to provide students the most important skill to negotiate the different dialects and accents across the U.S.

Limitation of this Study

A major limitation in this study is the small sample. Therefore, there is a need for further studies that collect data that are representative of larger populations of ELL teachers and from diverse rural community contexts. Such studies can help validate some of the main findings of this study and present broader pictures of the complexity of ELL instruction and multimodal textbooks in rural schools.

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An Analysis of TESOL Faculty Positions

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Abstract

The Chronicle of Higher Education (TCHE) is a common source for new faculty positions in higher education. Job announcements for TESOL and related topics (e.g., English as a second language) posted in the *TCHE* were read weekly for one academic year. Specific attributes of the announcement were noted for analysis using a coding sheet compatible with the TESOL discipline. The Carnegie Foundation designations for higher education institutions resulted in eight categories (two each for research, doctoral, Masters, and baccalaureate-granting institutions (Evangelauf, 1994). During the 2006 -2007 academic year, a total of 63 TESOL position announcements appeared with 53.8% offering tenure track positions. Almost 40% of the positions were at Masters comprehensive institutions, according to the Carnegie ranking. More than 35% of these positions, regardless of the type of institution, were entry-level positions (assistant professor). Regarding teaching responsibilities, more than 46% of the advertised positions requested the candidate to teach graduate courses and 33% requested undergraduate courses. For non-teaching responsibilities, more than 52% of the positions expected scholarly activities, while 30% expected the candidate to supervise student teachers.

Keywords: TESOL, Jobs, Positions, Demand, Education

Introduction

The Chronicle of Higher Education (TCHE) is a common source for new faculty members to identify potential positions for which to apply. This national listing includes faculty and administrative positions which are available in electronic and hard copy. The listings are organized alphabetically, as well as by the discipline and state where the institution exists (until August, 2009). The field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) is sometimes referred to as “English Language Learners” (ELLs) or “Limited English Proficiency” (LEP). Searching for a faculty position at an institution of higher education is one of the most stressful activities for men and women embarking on their careers... The “job search” is both time-consuming and expensive (Adams, 2002). The purpose of this study was to describe and document all TESOL faculty positions that were advertised in *TCHE* during the 2006-2007 academic years.

Theoretical Framework

TESOL

For several years, the U.S. has experienced increasing demands in TESOL, from K-12 to post-secondary education (Crawford, 1997). The enrollment of ELLs has increased faster than schools and teacher education programs have been able to prepare teachers to serve them. According to Crawford, K-12 schools are experiencing a severe shortage of certified TESOL teachers, thereby contributing to the greatest single barrier of effective instructional programs for ELL students. These changing demographics, including immigration, were noted by Bulter-Pascoe in 1997, and this same pattern continues today. According to Batalova, Fix, and Murray (2006), from 1996 to 2006, the K-12 ELL population “rose by over 60%.” They reported that this growth is occurring in regions with little or no experience with ELL students. Recently, the U.S. Department of Education expanded its funding programs for TESOL. Some programs include a TESOL endorsement to a teacher’s existing certificate, a national certification, or an online master’s degree program. According to the “Working Group on ELL Policy” (August & Kenji, 2009), America’s ELL students’ needs are not being addressed effectively:

The challenges ELL students face are many. They are most likely to attend schools with the sparsest of resources, staffed by ill-prepared teachers who are overwhelmed by high concentrations of low-achieving students. Even in schools with access to Title I resources, the attention paid to ELL students may not be appropriately tailored to their unique needs in learning the English language and in gaining academic skills and subject matter knowledge.

A number of states with high ELL student populations, such as California, face severe budget deficits (Reed, 2008). August and Kenji (2009) summarize several studies that bode ill for states similar to California—those with high ELL populations:

Several recent studies have predicted a steep decline in per capita income as a direct result of failing to educate the state’s youth to levels that will sustain economic growth (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2005a; 2005b; National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2005). The least educated portion of the school-age population is English language learners.

If state governments sometimes engage in public language that is marked by “the fear of others” (Fox, 2007-2008), then educators can continue to expect a difficult road ahead, regardless of rational arguments that well-educated ELL students will help our economy, not to mention enrich our other cultures. Florez (1997) noted that conditions such as these are very challenging for TESOL teachers, which results in high turnover and burnout rates.

According to Janzen (2007), the complexities and importance of reading present special problems for TESOL teachers. Her study, based upon classroom observations, identified six issues in teaching ELL students: 1) addressing the wide range of ELLs proficiencies; 2) finding a variety of ways to use different reading materials (e.g. textbooks, newspapers, etc.); 3) teaching decoding skills, writing, and vocabulary; 4) encouraging the “love of reading”; 5) addressing school demands on mainstreaming classes; and 6) helping

students who have limitations in their native language regarding reading. Blumenthal and Machado (2006) reported similar problems that exist for community college students whose instructors have limited experiences with ELL teaching approaches. The influx of immigrants has put additional stress on instructors, administrators, and the public who are forced to re-define the roles of community colleges. Earlier, the TESOL professional organization (2003) expressed concern that the demand for TESOL trained faculty had been fulfilled with part-time and/or adjunct faculty, who had little or no preparation in TESOL. This situation exacerbates the larger issue of the two-tiered faculty structure, where non-full-time faculty receive lower salaries, greater teaching loads, and less job security.

Castle and Arends (2003) surveyed the American Association of College of Teacher Education institutions about faculty positions from 1997 -1999. They questioned 752 members and found no significant differences for institution size, type, or sponsor. They concluded that demand exceeded supply of new faculty, with shortages critical in early childhood, elementary, library, mathematics, reading, and special education. For this two-year period, there were a total of 54 TESOL/bilingual positions that averaged 20.5 applications each, while 35.8% of these positions ended as failed searches. Cunningham and Bradley (2007) analyzed a 2004 survey by the American Association for Employment in Education (AAEE) regarding the preparation of K-12 teachers nationally. These researchers reported that the TESOL programs had increased since 2001; however, there are only a limited number of preparation programs. Currently, AAEE (2009) noted that TESOL positions are classified as having critical shortages in the number of applicants.

TCHE Research

Several other discipline areas have tracked faculty positions and availability for the last decade. For example, Reys (2008) reported that there were more mathematics education positions available at higher education institutions than doctoral graduates. He also noted that most mathematics education doctoral programs are producing a small number of graduates yearly. The current “graying of faculty” has resulted in more positions in mathematics education being available than their current new doctoral graduates. Barrow and Bennett (2007a) used the *THCE* listing to survey the field of social studies education. The majority of these positions for social studies educators focused upon teaching undergraduate classes, supervision of student teachers, writing grants, and submitting publications. Barrow (2007b) reported 153 science education positions listed in the *TCHE* for the 2006-2007 academic year. The positions with the highest need for future science education faculty were undergraduate elementary science methods and graduate courses. Regardless of level of Carnegie rank, there was expectation that faculty would be submitting scholarly work. Barrow and Sims (2009) found that music education positions have a broad range of responsibilities. Generally, these positions had a K-12 school preparation in their orientation. However, some had an instrumental focus, vocal focus, band director focus, or combinations of these. The typical announcement requested an assistant professor at a public institution who is expected to supervise student teachers

and exhibit scholarly activity in either research or performance. A review of the literature found no previously reported analysis of TESOL faculty positions.

Methodology

Job announcements for TESOL and related topics (i.e. English as a second language) that were posted in the *TCHE* were read weekly for one academic year. *TCHE* was selected for study due to its national distribution and tradition as a source of vacant positions at all types of institutions of higher education. A typical academic calendar year, August through July, supplied listings for positions starting in fall, 2006. These announcements contained the following specific attributes: Displayed or non-displayed (alphabetical listing) posting, state, tenure-track or not, teaching responsibilities, home department (education, arts and humanities, other), non-teaching responsibilities, whether doctoral completion is required, applicant's prior teaching experience, rank of the position, and whether an Internet address was included.

The Carnegie Foundation (Evangelauf, 1994) classifies all higher education institutions into eight categories which results in two each for research, doctoral, Master's comprehensive, and baccalaureate categories. These categories are based upon the number of doctoral degrees awarded, external grant funds, etc. This system was used rather than the current ranking to compare TESOL with other *TCHE* faculty research. An existing coding sheet (Barrow and Fox, 2007) was modified to match the TESOL discipline. The coding was checked by a second researcher and all disagreements were resolved.

Results

Of the 63 TESOL positions listed during this period, 53.8% were tenure-track lines and 52.3% required the doctorate to be completed. Regarding teaching responsibilities, 46.2% included graduate course instruction responsibilities, while 33.8% included undergraduate teaching. Many of the job listings did not identify what student level the faculty member would be teaching. For non-teaching responsibilities, 30.8% included supervising student teachers, 18.5% interacting with K-12 schools, 13.8% grant proposal writing, 52.3% engaging in scholarly activities, and 20% using technology. Regarding prior teaching experience, 32.3% expected some prior college teaching, 35.4% expected secondary experience, 33.8% expected elementary level experience, and 30.8% expected teaching experience at the middle school level. The placement of the ads within *TCHE* was diverse, with 55.4% using a display ad, and 65.9% including Internet addresses (sometimes used for application) (Table 1).

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Position Listing and Responsibilities (N=65)

| | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Tenure | 35 | 53.8 |
| Teaching | | |
| Undergraduate | 22 | 33.8 |
| Elementary | 3 | 4.6 |
| Middle | 1 | 1.5 |
| Secondary | 5 | 7.7 |
| Graduate | 30 | 46.2 |
| Focus | | |
| Reading | 5 | 7.7 |
| Writing | 5 | 7.7 |
| Grammar | 4 | 6.2 |
| Non- teaching Responsibilities | | |
| Supervise student teaching | 20 | 30.8 |
| K- 12 schools | 12 | 18.5 |
| Grant writing | 9 | 13.8 |
| Scholarly activities | 34 | 52.3 |
| Technology use | 13 | 20.0 |
| Prior teaching experience | | |
| Elementary | 22 | 33.8 |
| Middle | 20 | 30.8 |
| Secondary | 23 | 35.4 |
| College | 21 | 32.3 |
| Doctorate required | 34 | 52.3 |
| Display ad | 36 | 55.4 |
| World Wide Web included | 37 | 56.9 |

Almost 40% of the positions advertised were at Masters comprehensive institutions. The second most frequent type of institution was classified as research institutions. These two types combined accounted for more than 60% of all of the positions listed. More than 35% of these positions, regardless of the type of institution, were entry-level (assistant professor). It should be noted that more than 30% of the positions did not indicate rank (Table 2).

Table 2
Rank of Positions at Carnegie Institutions (N=63)

| | Full Professor | | Assoc Prof | | Asst Prof | | Full/Assoc | | Assoc/Asst | | Less than Asst | | Not specified | | TOTAL | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|----------|------------|-----------|----------------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
| Research 1 | - | - | 1 | 50 | 4 | 17.4 | - | - | 2 | 40.0 | 4 | 50.0 | 3 | 13.6 | 14 | |
| Research 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 8.7 | 1 | 33.3 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 13.6 | 6 | |
| Doctoral 1 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 17.9 | 1 | 33.3 | - | - | 1 | 12.5 | - | - | 6 | |
| Doctoral 2 | - | - | 1 | 50 | 1 | 4.3 | - | - | 2 | 40.0 | - | - | 1 | 4.5 | 5 | |
| Master 1 | - | - | - | - | 11 | 47.3 | 1 | 33.3 | 1 | 20.0 | 2 | 25.0 | 10 | 45.5 | 25 | |
| Master 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4.3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4.5 | 2 | |
| Baccalaureate 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12.5 | 1 | 4.5 | 2 | |
| Baccalaureate 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 13.6 | 3 | |
| TOTAL | 5 | 8 | | | 22 | | | | 2 | | 23 | | 3 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | 63 | | | | | | |

Scholarly activities (publications, presentations, etc.) were expected at 54% of the institutions. This expectation is not just at research and doctoral level institutions. All of the positions being searched expected all new faculty members to be active scholars (Table 3).

Table 3
Non-Teaching Responsibilities for Carnegie Institution (n=63)

| | Research I | | Research II | | Doctoral I | | Doctoral II | | Master I | | Master II | | Baccalaureate I | | Baccalaureate II | |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
| Supervise student teachers | 3 | 4.8 | 4 | 6.3 | - | - | 2 | 3.2 | 9 | 14.3 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | 1 | 1.6 |
| K-12 Schools | 1 | 1.6 | 2 | 3.2 | 2 | 3.2 | 2 | 3.2 | 2 | 3.2 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | 2 | 3.2 |
| Grant writing | 3 | 4.8 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | - | - | 4 | 6.3 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | - | - |
| Scholarly activities | 7 | 11.1 | 6 | 9.5 | 5 | 7.9 | 1 | 1.6 | 13 | 20.6 | 1 | 1.6 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 |
| Using technology | 3 | 4.8 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | - | - | 7 | 11.1 | - | - | 1 | 1.6 | 1 | 1.6 |

The home department/college identified in the ads was also analyzed. None of the positions were joint appointments, such as education and English. Forty percent of TESOL positions were based in Arts and Science, while 33% were based in education. However, 26.2% failed to identify a home department or college.

Discussion

The typical TESOL position in 2007-2008 requested an assistant professor at a masters comprehensive (I and II) institution, teaching a variety of undergraduate and graduate TESOL offerings, and maintaining an active scholarly record. Compared to other *TCHÉ* studies (Barrow, et al., 2007a; 2007b; 2009), TESOL faculty positions included fewer tenure track positions. As well, fewer of these TESOL positions required candidates to have completed a doctoral degree. Overall, the TESOL job announcements contained less specific information (e.g. level of instruction) than in social studies education, science education, and music education.

Regarding the non-teaching responsibilities identified in the position announcements, scholarly activities were the most common. Regardless of rank of Carnegie institution, future TESOL faculty members are expected to participate in scholarly activities (e. g. presentations, publications). That is, faculty members can assist their graduate students in obtaining experiences in submitting a conference paper, preparing the presentation, and submitting it for publication, thereby promoting a valuable experience in this aspect of a higher education faculty member's role in the profession. If potential faculty members do not have experience with a student teacher, either as a cooperating teacher or university supervisor, it is deemed beneficial to have related experience. This could involve participating in a student teaching seminar and/or supervising of a limited number of TESOL placements in K-12 settings.

This study about the supply and demand of TESOL positions will help future TESOL faculty to better understand the job market, to set realistic expectations, and to consider their options for making themselves more marketable. Graduate faculty members can use this information of prospective employer's expectations as they mentor their graduate students. Administrators can consider their institutional needs in relation to other similar Carnegie institutions as they develop vacancy announcement about what useful components to include in their description. TESOL teacher preparation programs should prepare teachers (either preservice or graduate) for appropriate instructional approaches that focus upon the needs of the ELL students. Future TESOL studies could analyze various programs for how they prepare future ELL teachers in interacting with students and their special needs. Barrow and Germann (2006) reported on the structure and operation of search committees for science education positions. A similar study could be conducted for TESOL positions, which could investigate whether explicit job responsibilities and expectations influence applications and successful searches.

The number of positions available during this academic year illustrates the increased demand for the TESOL faculty at various levels of higher education. During the 2006-2007 academic year, there were 63 different positions. Earlier, Castle and Arends (2003) reported that there were 54 positions for a two-year period in the late 1990s, or an average of 27 positions per year. The 63 found in this study is nearly 2 ½ times the annual number reported by Castle and Arends. Castle and Arends did not ascertain the number of positions that were tenure track. This study found only 53.8% of the positions were tenure track, which underscores concerns about the employment of a large numbers of part-time, adjunct, and contingent faculty hired to address the growing numbers of TESOL

students. Earlier, Egbert (2003) stressed the use of computer assisted language learning (CALL) to facilitate TESOL instruction. However, this study found only 20% specified technology in the position announcements.

Reys (2008) has indicated there is a shortage of qualified new mathematics education faculty. In addition, many of the doctoral granting institutions graduate only a few Ph.D.'s yearly. A future study could be conducted to determine the major institutions which produce new TESOL faculty and their current capacity. However, the recent economic downturn and its impact could reduce the number of TESOL applicants, which could make the employment situation even more critical. TESOL positions have a lower percentage that are tenure track; consequently, non-tenure positions, including adjunct and part-time, are more vulnerable during these limited economic times. Institutions have had to terminate non-tenured faculty to "balance their budgets."

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Hong Kong ESL Learners' Acquisition of English Stress and Assessment of an Online Tutoring Programme

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Abstract

This study investigates the acquisition of English word stress by ESL learners in Hong Kong, and assesses the efficacy of unlimited access to an online pronunciation tutoring programme. Twenty learners in foundation English language classes at the university level were recruited to participate in this study. Ten students were given an online programme as a supplement to a 30-hour English course, and were requested to practice on their home computers. Their development in spoken English was compared with a control group of ten students who did not use the online resource. The online programme *My ET* was evaluated according to Chapelle's (2001) six criteria for CALL assessment. The learners were pre- and post-tested by two experienced raters of pronunciation. A questionnaire was then distributed to inquire into the pronunciation learning experiences and attitudes towards the online learning. Results indicate that the online pronunciation tutoring was fairly effective in improving the ESL learners' ability to produce and perceive correctly different stress patterns in words, phrases, and sentences, and that students also had a positive attitude towards online pronunciation instruction and activities. The findings also reveal that practice with the programme was beneficial to those students who began the course with a strong foreign accent, but it was of limited value to students who began the course with better pronunciation.

Keywords: self-direct learning, speech production, supra-segmental awareness

Introduction

In recent years, computer-assisted pronunciation training has been intriguing to many English as a second language (ESL) teachers, and implemented in the classroom curriculum or self-accessed blending learning. Online learning is seen as an autonomous process, to be regulated by the learners' expectations, goals, existing schemata, and intentions. By using search engines and clicking on hyperlinks, learners can obtain immediate access to the information that interests them. However, Seferoglu (2005) asserts, 'there have been very few studies so far which test the effectiveness of

computer-assisted pronunciation training' (p. 306). Some studies are interested in the training effect on the development of students' abilities in pronunciation in general. For instance, Machovikov et al. (2002) designed a computer-based pronunciation system for detecting word pronunciation errors. They evaluated the system through finding the conformity between experts' and the system's estimations. Hardison (2004) found that there are significant effects of computer-assisted training in the acquisition of L2 prosody and generalisation to segmental accuracy and novel sentences. Hardison (2005) further suggested that meaningful contextualised input is valuable in prosody training when the measurement is at the level of extended, connected speech that is typical of natural discourse. However, very few studies have put emphasis on computer-assisted pronunciation training on English word stress.

Avery and Erlich (1992) and Kenworthy (1987) agreed that all second language learners will need practice in English word stress. This is unlike many other languages that indicate the prominence of a syllable through pitch only. Stress in English is marked by length, greater loudness, a rise in pitch, and usually vowel clarity. Bai (1994) proposed four different functions of English stress: distinctive function; highlight function; rhythmic function; and communicative functions. Stress must be considered from the perspective of both the speaker and the listener (Taylor, 1996). If the speaker does not use stress in an appropriate way, the native speakers might find it difficult to understand words. It also would make the listener misunderstand what the speaker is trying to say. The listener will not get cues about what words are important and when the speaker's thought is finished. The situation could result in either the speaker or the listener feeling frustrated or embarrassed when the misunderstanding is cleared up, or the speaker might just express the opposite meaning and unconsciously offend the listener. Therefore, stress is not an optional extra, but rather a core part of the language. However, it is easy for some English teachers to neglect or forget this aspect of teaching. Some teachers might lack proper training in stress teaching and confidence in providing correct models.

Much of the research indicates that native speakers organize English by stress patterns in their brains; they process the sounds and listen for the stress patterns rather than individual sounds (Brown, 1991; Celce-Murcia, Briton, & Goodwin, 1996; Kenworthy, 1987). Yan (1987) also pointed out that the mastery of stress could help students to enhance their listening comprehension. If non-native speakers make a stress mistake within a word or sentence, native speakers might not be able to understand the word or sentence. Therefore, manipulating the stress patterns of English improves not only pronunciation, but also the comprehension of spoken English.

Although stress in both English and Chinese have similar features - raising the

pitch, speaking in a louder voice, and lasting for a longer time – stress functions differently in English and Chinese. Basically, English is a stress-timed language, in which the stressed syllables recur at equal intervals of time while each word has different syllables. Chinese is a syllable-timed language, in which every syllable is pronounced at equal intervals and with almost the same amount of stress as in English. Yet, almost every word has only one syllable (Kelly, 2000).

At the word level, stress in English is phonemic since the location of the stress could differentiate the meaning of words. For instance, English uses stress on different syllables to distinguish the verb ‘re‘cord’ and the noun ‘‘record’. In Chinese, stress is not phonemic and it cannot discriminate the meaning of a word; it is tone that can contrast meaning of words. The differences between these two languages may cause problems for Chinese learners in learning English stress. Chinese learners will tend to have problems in English reduction and blending in English everyday speech. They find it difficult to reduce unstressed syllables and blend words in the same thought group. Thus, their English might have a staccato rhythm or sound distracting. Moreover, Chinese learners will probably fail to indicate focus, which should be expressed by stress because of the different ways to manifest information focus (Bai, 1994). Furthermore, Chinese learners might use different tones to indicate different lexical meanings. Stress does not play an important role in Chinese communicative speech and is easily neglected by Chinese learners (Cheng, 2002).

The teaching of different aspects of pronunciation, including word stress and sentence stress, has fallen far behind that of the four basic skills in English. A teacher of pronunciation needs to be able to help students with both the perception and production of the target sounds. For decades, teachers have supported their instruction by using audio, video, signal analysis software, and online resources. Hardison (2002) has shown that audio-visually trained learners of French not only improved their prosody, but also their segmental accuracy. Coniam (2002) explored EFL learners’ attitudes towards supra-segmental features such as stress. He reported that the use of audio software gave them a perspective that they had not been able to appreciate before. However, these studies were conducted on a limited number of participants over a limited period of time and had serious methodology deficits that threaten their reliability (e.g. conducting research on only one experimental group, limiting evaluating computer-assisted pronunciation programmes to the investigation of participants’ opinions about the programmes, and using unreliable scales to evaluate student performance).

In summary, as Chinese is one of the tone languages that does not distinguish stress; English stress contains a great degree of difficulty for most Chinese students. Due to its important role in English language learning, the stress differences must be

learned and practiced. Therefore, it is urgent and essential to examine closely the current online tutoring and learning of stress acquisition in Hong Kong and to supply reliable strategies to improve both.

The main purposes of the study are to measure the accuracy of Hong Kong ESL learners' perception and production of English word stress and to assess the efficacy of an online tutoring programme for stress acquisition. To investigate the topic more completely, this study also examines students' learning experiences and difficulties with English word stress by task measures and self reports. The research questions raised are as follows:

1. What are the Hong Kong ESL learners' error patterns in English stress?
2. How effective is the online tutoring programme in improving their ability to produce and perceive different stresses?
3. What are their attitudes towards the online tutoring programme?

Method

This section is to describe the participants and procedures in this investigation on word stress acquisition. The measures of experimental tasks and the criteria of the online tutoring programme are then described.

Participants

Twenty university students participated in this study: eight males and twelve females, with ages ranging from 18 to 20 years old. All of them were local Hong Kong students without overseas learning experiences, and are now first year students at a local Hong Kong university.

Procedures

Twenty students were randomly divided into two groups. For the experimental group, ten students were given an online pronunciation programme as a supplement to a 30-hour English course (ten weeks), and were requested to practise on their home computers. Their development in spoken English was compared with a control group of another ten students who did not use the online resource. They were asked to practice reading strategies online instead. One requirement of the course was at least six hours of individualized computer-assisted learning. In the spring term of 2009, students followed the normal course plan and were pre- and post-tested for the purposes of future comparison.

Two experienced raters of pronunciation administered the students' pre- and

post-tests. One perception task, one paragraph reading task, and one control talk task were administered both at the beginning and end of the course. A questionnaire was then given in order to evaluate the three online resources and elicit such information as age, native language, English learning experiences, contact time with native speakers, attitude, and motivation.

Task Measures

Among the stress assignment rules, stress shifting from one syllable to another was commonly observed as the most difficult task for language learners. Our task measures were thus confined to the following six derivational suffixes: -ion, -ic-, -ical, -al, -ity, and -ate. The suffix word stress can cause the stress patterns in the root to shift from one syllable to another. The following examples could cause the stress to shift to the syllable immediately preceding the suffixes (e.g. -ion/relation; -ity/BREvity). The stress placement in words containing suffixes such as -ate occurs two syllables before the suffix (e.g. -ate/Duplicate). The procedure and instruments in this study were simplified and revised forms of those used by Park (2000) and Kuo (2004).

Tasks consisted of three major parts:

- (1) Part 1: multiple choice perception task
- (2) Part 2: paragraph reading
- (3) Part 3: control talk

Unlike the testing instruments used in many other studies, the testing instrument for the perception test included word stress contextualised in sentences rather than at the word level. It has been argued that results from experimental studies, which artificially isolate target language words and sounds, do not indicate the true perception skills of subjects because words rarely occur in isolation in real speech (Tarone, 1987). The perception task contained underlined key words contextualised in sentences, and the student had to choose which syllable contained the main stress in each word. Key words refer to words chosen by the researchers that contain common word stress rules found in several pronunciation textbooks (Beisbier, 1995; Dauer, 1993; Lane, 1993). All key words are used in the both perception and production tasks.

The production tasks used in this study included a paragraph reading task and a control talk. The paragraph reading task was to read a short paragraph consisting of ten sentences that contained the same ten key words in the first perception task. To constrain the avoidance, the control talk with key words was used whereby the subjects were asked to talk about their hobbies. These types of tasks were chosen for two reasons. First, students should be tested on their ability to communicate meaning in more realistic situations. In order to engage in authentic communication, participants

must engage in spontaneous discourse in stretches above the sentence level. Second, in a testing situation, participants should be allowed the freedom to use language creatively. However, because students might avoid using the target features in free speech, the tasks in this study included the requirement of using key words containing the target features. The advantage of using these two control tasks is that they allowed the inclusion of both key words and student-produced language.

Criteria for CALL Assessment

The selected online pronunciation programme with English stress component was selected My ET <http://www.myet.com/MyETWeb/PersonalizedPage.aspx>.

The ten students in the experimental group were requested to evaluate the online resource at the end of the course. They followed the guidelines according to Chapelle's (2001) six criteria for CALL assessment, which includes: language learning potential; learner fit; meaning focus; impact; authenticity; and practicality. Chapelle defined a set of criteria, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Criteria for CALL Evaluation

| <i>Criteria</i> | <i>Explanations</i> |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Language learning potential | The degree of opportunity present for beneficial focus on form. |
| 2. Meaning focus | The extent to which learners' attention is directed towards the meaning of the language. |
| 3. Learner fit | The amount of opportunity for engagement with language under appropriate conditions given learner characteristics. |
| 4. Authenticity | The degree of correspondence between the learning activity and target language activities of interest to learners out of the classroom. |
| 5. Positive impact | The positive effects of the CALL activity on those who participate in it. |
| 6. Practicality | The adequacy of resources to support the use of the CALL activity. |

Results

In this section, students' background information is summarized. The overall performance across three tasks produced between two groups of students are reported.

The error rates and error types from the perception and production tasks are discussed in detail. Finally, students' attitudes towards word stress learning and online tutoring are analyzed.

The 13 female and 7 male students ranged in age from 18 to 23 years old (average of 20.74 years). In general, subjects had considerable English instruction in terms of years (average of 12 years). Most subjects had never been to an English speaking country. Only four subjects had been to Australia and the UK, ranging from one week to two years. In general, 72 percent of the subjects had spent less than one hour per week talking with native speakers of English. Of all their English teachers that had taught them so far, only 23 percent were native speakers of English. The above statistical descriptions show that the subjects had not been given sufficient natural exposure to English in their daily life.

Overall Scores

The average scores for the three tasks for the two groups are displayed in Table 2. The mean overall scores for the three tasks for the control group increased slightly from the pre-test to the post-test, from 68 percent to 70 percent. The mean overall performance for the experimental group increased from 70 percent to 78 percent.

Table 2

Comparison of Overall Performance among Three Tasks (Pre- and Post-Tests)

| | Perception Task | Paragraph Reading | Control Talk | Average |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|---------|
| Pre-test | | | | |
| Control | 77 % | 68% | 60% | 68% |
| Experimental | 79% | 67% | 63% | 70% |
| Post-test | | | | |
| Control | 80% | 68% | 61% | 70% |
| Experimental | 87% | 76% | 71% | 78% |

Individual Scores

Figure 1 shows the pre- and post-test results by the individuals in the control group, and Figure 2 shows the same for the experimental group. The rightmost column in both figures represents the mean score for the groups.

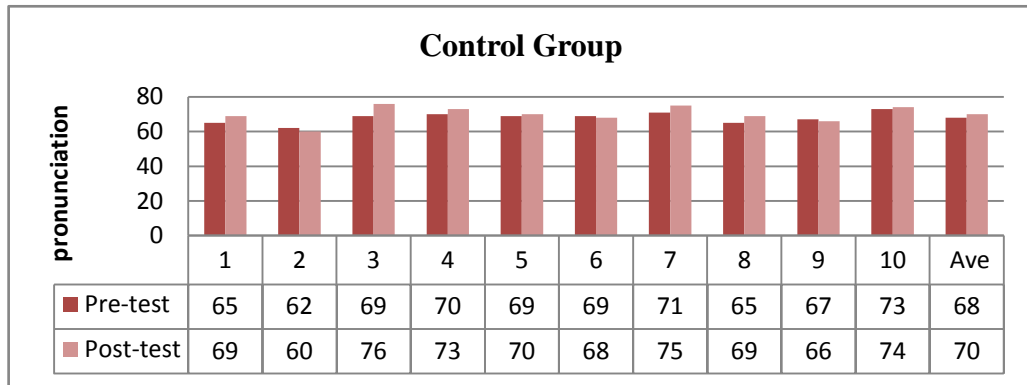


Figure 1. Control group: Pre- and post-test scores in pronunciation.

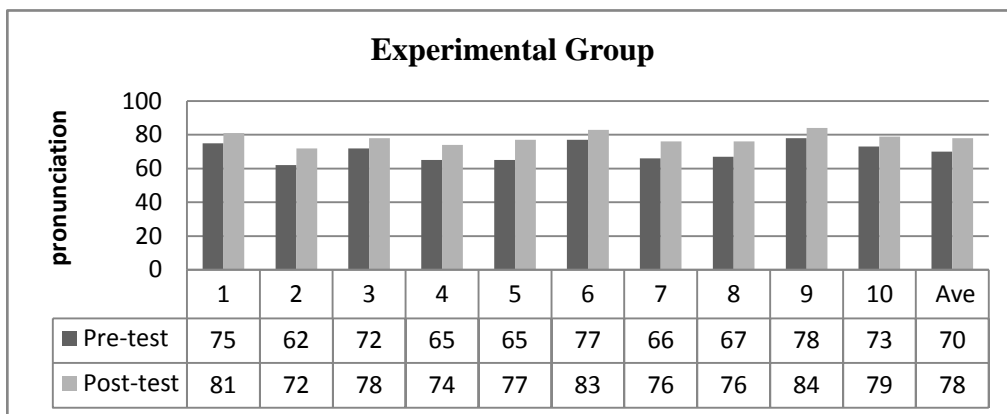


Figure 2. Experimental group: Pre- and post-test scores in pronunciation

Looking at the individuals, an important division emerges when students are grouped according to their proficiency level. Students with poor pronunciation to begin with (i.e. those with a score of less than 70 percent (below average scores)) showed measurable improvement in the experimental group, as illustrated in Figure 1: Subject 2 (62% -> 72%), Subject 4 (65% -> 74%), Subject 5 (65% -> 77%), Subject 7 (66% -> 76%), and Subject 8 (67% -> 76%). Yet, there was little change in the control group. The mean score of the five weakest experimental students showed a significant improvement of 10 percent, whereas the four students in the control group with scores less than 68 percent increased their mean score very slightly (1.2%).

Error Rates and Error Types of Perception Task and Production Task

Table 3 summarizes the error rates and error types of the perception task in the post-test, categorized according to the following six suffixes: -al, -ate, -ion, -ic, -ical, and -ity. Neither group performed well in words such as *-cal/ technological* and *-ity/activity*. Around 60 percent of all subjects (60% for the experimental group and 61% for the control group) did not assign the correct stress on these words. The

difficulty levels for these two suffixes were, thus, ranked in first and second place. In contrast, *-al/international* and *-ate/passionate* were relatively easier to assign stress than other suffixes.

Table 3

Post-test: Comparison of Error Rates and Error Types of Perception Task in Six Suffix Categories

| Error Rate (%) | Perception Task | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| | Experimental | Control |
| -al (e.g. international) | 6 % | 7 % |
| -ate (e.g. passionate) | 6 % | 0 % |
| -ion (e.g. profession) | 13 % | 23 % |
| -ic (e.g. fantastic) | 13 % | 23 % |
| -ical (e.g. technological) | 33 % | 69 % |
| -ity (e.g. activity) | 60 % | 61 % |

Table 4 summarizes the error rates and error types of the production task in the post-test. Similar to the perception task, neither group performed well with words such *technological*. Around 50% of all subjects (49% in the experimental group and 53% in the control group) did not assign the correct stress on these words. However, subjects has better pronunciation of words similar to *activity* in the production task than in the perception task. Some subjects perceived the vowel /ə/ in the first syllable of 'activity' to be stronger than the real accented second syllable/I/.

Table 4

Post-test: Comparison of Error Rates and Error Types of Production Task in Six Suffix Categories

| Error Rate (%) | Production Task | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| | Experimental | Control |
| -al (e.g. international) | 6 % | 8 % |
| -ion (e.g. profession) | 6 % | 15 % |
| -ity (e.g. activity) | 6 % | 15 % |
| -ate (e.g. passionate) | 13 % | 15 % |
| -ic (e.g. realistic) | 33 % | 38 % |
| -ical (e.g. technological) | 49 % | 53 % |

The small size of the experimental group made it difficult to draw statistically significant conclusions. Furthermore, it might have been unrealistic to expect any

great improvement in pronunciation, in word stress in particular, for these students within the time frame of this study. Acton (1984) reported some improvement for only 50 percent of a group of foreign professionals who took a course in English pronunciation that involved 120 hours of only word on speech. Our course taught all aspects of the language, with a specific focus on for an average of only six hours.

Students' Evaluation of Online Programmes

At the end of the course, the students using the online programme filled out a questionnaire about their attitudes toward the resources. They reported that the online programmes were fun to use and they believed that their English pronunciation benefited from it. Most reported that they were unable to use the programme as much as they had hoped, due to lack of time partially caused by the number of assignments for other components of the language course. Table 5 summarizes the students' views of the programme.

Table 5

Summary of Students' Evaluations of the Online Programme, My ET

| | My ET |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Lang. Learning potential | Not always |
| Learner Fit | Not always |
| Meaning focus | YES |
| Impact | YES |
| Authenticity | YES |
| Practicality | YES |

My ET is an online platform that offers 30 free trial lessons for access. This automatic speech analysis system can analyse the English speech for pronunciation, pitch, timing, and emphasis, and can even pinpoint problems with individual sounds, as illustrated in Figure 3.

The screenshot displays the My ET online programme interface. On the left, a 'Pronunciation Diagnosis' window shows a video of a mouth and text: 'You are having trouble pronouncing the vowel [ɜr]'. Below it, 'Pronunciation Method' and 'Tip' sections provide instructions. The main window shows a text passage with a cartoon character and a 'Pronunciation' table. The table lists expressions and their scores:

| Expression | Comparison | Phoneme | Score | Remarks |
|-----------------------------|------------|---------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 13-year-old | | θ | 100 | |
| | | ɜr | 54 | You pronunciation needs improvement. |
| | | l | 100 | |
| | | l | 97 | |
| | | n | 100 | |
| | | j | 89 | |
| | | ɪr | 100 | |
| | | ɔu | 100 | |
| | | l | 100 | |
| Overall Pronunciation Score | | | 88 | |

At the bottom right, an 'Overall Score' section shows: Overall Score 80, Pronunciation 88, Pitch 93, Timing 90, Emphasis 87. A waveform visualization is visible at the bottom of the main window.

Figure 3. A Sample page of the *My ET* online programme

In the following section, we discuss how *My ET* meets the six criteria proposed by Chapelle:

Language learning potential. Chapelle defines language learning potential as the extent to which an activity can be considered to be a language learning activity rather than simply an opportunity for language use. To do so, tasks must provide a focus on form. Unlike some other online resources (i.e. EnglishClub and Sounds of English), *My ET* does not provide learners with sufficient form explanations and exercises. Students would only learn the stress pattern rules implicitly.

Learner fit. The pedagogical tools should be appropriate to a student's level of development in the target language. Based on the findings in this study (see Figure 2), the learner fit of this programme is better for students with a strong foreign accent than for those with an intermediate accent. The failure of the students with better performance to improve their stress patterns is evidence that mimicry does not necessarily improve pronunciation. In fact, the result supports the advice given by Morley (1991) that imitative speaking practice be used only for beginning students of a language.

Meaning focus. Chapelle defines meaning focus as the learner's primary attention is directed toward the meaning of the language that is required to accomplish the task. In the dialogues provided by the *My ET* programme, the user can choose a response. This induces a component of meaningfulness to the exercise.

Impact. A positive impact from a language learning activity helps the learners develop their meta-cognitive strategies so that learning can continue outside the classroom. Our students expressed high satisfaction with the online programme, providing them with the opportunity to continue working on their own at home.

Authenticity. Rather than drills and passive listening exercises, the dialogues that a user has with *My ET* are mostly authentic (e.g. Obama's speech) or are reasonable believable, such as dealing with social or tourist situations.

Practicality. The online programme is freely accessed online without limitations of time and space. Students could continue to work at home without a problem. Different from some online web resources, *My ET* provides acoustically prosodic analyses, such as pitch, timing, and emphasis analyses. Up to 80 percent of the students were satisfied with the (re)play function, such as clicking on certain regions of the waveform or viewing the phonetic symbols for the pronunciation of the target syllable or segment. Seventy percent of the students reported that the display functions worked well, such as the contrast display of intonation with model utterance comment and the displays of the syllable, key, emphasis, and speed.

Table 6 includes five questions and the response percentages for 20 students about their learning experiences and attitudes towards English word stress. When speaking English sentences, 45 percent of the students focussed more on the stress of the key word(s) in every sentence. Fifty-four percent of the students had learned the stress rules for English nouns/verbs. When they read English texts, 65 percent of the students preferred to follow the teacher's recitation than the online resource (35%). If they had difficulty in discriminating English stress, 78 percent of the students believed that the probable reason was that they had not had have enough opportunities to practise their English pronunciation. Finally, for those that did not have too much difficulty in discriminating English stress, 65 percent of the students believed that role models, such as radio and TV programmes in English learning, helped their pronunciation most.

Table 6

Students' Learning Experiences and Attitudes Towards English Word Stress

| No | Questions | % |
|----|---|----|
| 1 | When speaking English sentences, which of the following do you focus more on? | |
| | a. The stress of the key word(s) in every sentence | 45 |
| | b. The connected speech between words | 35 |
| | c. The phonetic symbols of every word | 20 |
| | d. The stressed syllable of every word | 10 |
| | e. The unstressed syllables of every word | 5 |
| 2 | Have you ever learned any rules and techniques in English stress? | |
| | a. Stress rules for English nouns/verbs | 54 |
| | b. Shifting of stress rules for English prefixes and suffixes | 32 |
| | c. Stress rules based on different syllable structures | 13 |
| | d. Stress rules for Latin word roots | 4 |
| 3 | When you read English texts, which of the following ways do you like better? | |
| | a. Follow the teacher's recitation | 65 |
| | b. Follow the online resources | 35 |
| 4 | If you have difficulty in discriminating English stress, the reason(s) probably is(are): | |
| | a. You do not have enough opportunities to practise your English pronunciation | 78 |
| | b. You do not have a role model to imitate correct English pronunciation | 40 |
| | c. You do not study very hard | 38 |
| | d. Your English pronunciation may be influenced by your mother language | 35 |
| 5 | If you do not have too much difficulty in discriminating English stress, the reasons are: | |
| | a. You have a role model to follow: Radio programmes/TV programmes in English learning | 65 |
| | b. You have a role model to follow: the online resources in English learning | 55 |
| | c. You have a role model to follow: Your English teachers | 54 |

Discussion

The purposes of this study are to investigate the acquisition of English word stress of ESL adult learners in Hong Kong, and to assess the efficacy of an online pronunciation tutoring programme, *My ET*, for the learners to perceive and produce correct English stress patterns. The findings show that extra pronunciation training using an online tutoring programme did not significantly, but fairly, improve the stress abilities of a homogeneous group of adult learners. Pronunciation tutoring in general is effective in improving ESL learners' ability to produce and perceive correctly different stress patterns in words, phrases, and sentences. Students also had a positive attitude towards online pronunciation instruction and activities. The findings also revealed that practice with the programmes was beneficial to those students who began the course with a strong foreign accent, but was of limited value to students who began the course with better pronunciation. A comparable set of students did not improve if they were in the control group. Though the small number of students in this study makes it difficult to draw significant conclusions, the results indicate that online tutoring training could be useful for beginning students

The results also showed that the word in context perception task was the easiest task, followed by the paragraph reading task, and the control talk production task. In general, the experimental group performed better than the control group across the three tasks. To some extent, the experimental group raised their prosodic awareness and knowledge of lexical phonology. In the classroom, language instructors can make use of consciousness raising activities that sensitize learners to the differences between L1 and L2 systems, and between the L2 system and their own inter-language (Kenworthy, 1987). More importantly, all learners could benefit from learning general word stress rules based on orthography or grammatical category.

Although both perception and production are considered vital for communication, it is suggested that we incorporate a period of perception training before production. If ESL learners can notice that English native speakers try to say certain words with a higher pitch, representing highlights and turning points in their message, then they would listen for those words and pay more attention to them. Hence, learners can get more information from native speaker's continuous speech without being distracted by unimportant words. Only if the learners realize the importance of perception and production can they have a full and perfect communication with the native speakers.

Conclusion

This study provided English teachers with a brief overview of current situations of English stress teaching: learning in the classroom and self-access online practice outside of classroom. It is hoped that English teachers at all levels can be encouraged to engage more in teaching English stress in their syllabi. With the findings of this study, English teachers can have clearer ideas about students' stress error patterns and know more about the relationship between listening and pronunciation. Furthermore, the results also shed some light on how to use online tutoring programmes properly to facilitate or supplement students' learning.

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Appendix A

Perception Task I

Directions: Listen and mark the choice that shows the receiving the MAIN stress.

Example: Joe is a successful businessman.

a. SUCcessful (b) sucCESSful c. successFUL

1. I have many hobbies and activities.
A. ACtivities B. acTIvities C. activiTIES
2. I enjoy aerobics as well as photography.
A. AErobics B. aeRObics C. aeRoBICS
3. I'm especially passionate about photography.
A. PASsionate B. pasSIONate C. passionATE
4. On my last vacation, I look pictures of children playing on the beach.
A. BAcation B. vaCation C. vacaTION
5. I also like to shoot majestic sites like The Grand Canyon.
A. MAjestic B. maJEStic C. majesTIC
6. The view from above was fantastic.
A. FANtastic B. fanTAStic C. fantasTIC
7. Those pictures were published in a photography magazine called, International.
A. International B. inTERnational C. interNAtional
8. On my next trip, I'd like to go to Europe and take pictures of historical buildings
A. HIStorical B. hisTORical C. historIcal
9. Right now I'm taking photography classes which are technological.
A. TECHnological B. techNOlogical C. technoLOGical
10. Someday I want to take pictures as a profession.
A. PROfession B. proFESsion C. profesSION

Paragraph Reading Task I

Direction: Please read the following paragraph.

I have many hobbies and activities. I enjoy aerobics as well as photography. I'm especially passionate about photography. On my last vacation, I took pictures of children playing on the beach. I also like to shoot majestic sites like The Grand Canyon. The view from above was fantastic. Those pictures were published in a photography magazine called, *International*. On my next trip, I'd like to go to Europe and take pictures of historical buildings. Right now I'm taking photography classes which are technological. Someday I want to take pictures as a profession.

Production Task II

Direction: Please look at the following word list and pick up at least ten words from it.

Take five minutes to study the keywords you choose and ask your teacher any questions you may have. Then I would like you to tell us your hobbies and favourite activities. You may take some notes below.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. remember | 2. vacation | 3. technological | 4. historical | 5. fantastic |
| 6. passionate | 7. activity | 8. immediately | 9. photography | 10. majestic |
| 11. international | 12. increase | 13. aerobics | 14. profession | 15. curiosity |

About the Author

Chen, Hsueh Chu, Rebecca, is an Assistant Professor of English at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Her chief areas of interest are English as a Second Language and experimental phonetics. She is currently carrying out research examining intelligibility in the speech of second language learners. She is also interested in cross-linguistic factors influencing the acquisition of vowels, rhythm, the role of speech rate in intelligibility, and second-dialect learning.

Voices within Nonnative English Teachers: Their Self-Perceptions, Cultural Identity and Teaching Strategies

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Abstract

Despite the fact that there are a number of studies on nonnative English teachers' (NNETs) self-perceptions and identity construction, scarce attention has been paid to the complex role NNETs' amount of teaching experience plays in teaching English in the U.S. This study aims to investigate the influential factors that shape the self-perceptions and teaching styles of novice vs. experienced NNETs in the U.S. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with five NNETs teaching in a major American university. Follow-up email exchanges were employed to clarify information and probe unanswered questions. Interview excerpts of the analyzed patterns were validated through member checking with participants to confirm the emerging features from coding. The results reveal that NNETs of less teaching experience are more likely to conceal their cultural identity and that NNETs' self-perceptions are affected by students' attitudes, disadvantageous positioning in employment, and their perceived language needs. Findings drawn from this study also indicate that future NNETs teaching in the U.S. should capitalize on their cultural and linguistic repertoires by embracing their cultural identity, validating their teaching quality and self-esteem as a competent TESOL professional, and empathizing with their ESL students. For future research, this study suggests that with more NNETs of different races and have different amount of teaching experience involved, a greater understanding could be achieved with more widespread implications.

Keywords: Nonnative English teachers (NNETs), cultural identity, TESOL profession, teaching strategies

Introduction

Despite the “native speaker fallacy”—“the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 185), an obvious but seldom-noticed fact in the TESOL field is that the majority of ESL/EFL professionals all over the world are nonnative speakers of English (NNS) (e.g., Braine, 1999; Liu, D., 1999; Liu, J., 1999a). Among the increased research on issues related to nonnative English teachers (NNETs), a great number of studies debate over native/nonnative speakers dichotomy (e.g., Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1992, 1999; Liu, J., 1999a; Reves, & Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). For example, Medgyes (1992) defines a nonnative speaker as one who cannot acquire a native speaker's language competence. He argues that native English teachers (NETs) and NNETs reveal considerable differences in their teaching behavior and that most of the discrepancies are language-related. He also generalizes some perceived advantages and disadvantages of being a NNET in the profession, such as NNETs' ability to serve as successful English language learner role models for the students but still having

a faulty command of English. Besides seeing the native/nonnative contrast clearly, Medgyes (1999) also pays attention to certain individual variables. He points out that non-language-specific variables such as experience, age, sex, aptitude, charisma, and so on play a decisive role in the teaching process. Unlike Medgyes, Davies (1991) believes that successful second language learners can achieve native-like proficiency. He further argues that the native/nonnative dichotomy, “like all majority-minority power relations, is power-driven, identity-laden, and confidence-related” (cited in Saito, 2003, p.70.). Admitting the complexity of the native/nonnative speaker construct, Liu (1999a) suggests that we go beyond this debate and focus on how to train and prepare qualified NNETs in both ESL and EFL settings.

Given all these debates, how nonnative professionals construct their identities seems to be a central issue. In this vein, there is a small but growing body of literature focusing on the factors that affect NNETs’ self-perceptions and beliefs (e.g., Amin, 1997; Braine, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2000; Liu, J., 1999a; Polio & Duffy, 1998; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Thomas, 1999). For example, Thomas (1999) points out three challenges that NNETs face on the issues of teacher credibility based on her personal experiences. The first challenge is that NNETs are still at a disadvantage in the hiring process. Their credibility as ESL professionals is challenged even by some professionals involved in TESOL who believe that being a native speaker is a necessary condition to teach English. Therefore, according to Liu, J. (1999a), many try to minimize their identity as NNETs, so they will not be overlooked before their qualifications for jobs are considered. The second challenge is NNETs’ lack of voice and visibility in the TESOL organization, which is also mentioned by Kamhi-Stein (2000) as a perceived concern of NNETs. In addition, NNETs’ credibility as ESL professionals is also challenged by their non-native students. It is disturbing to find that the “native speaker fallacy” affects not only institutional practices but also the students and their expectations. However, Amin (2001) indicates that the NNETs in her study feel that they are effective teachers despite the initial nonacceptance by their students and colleagues and despite being constantly judged against the native speaker norm.

Needless to say, such challenges inevitably leave their marks on the NNETs. Besides their lack of voice and visibility mentioned above, Kamhi-Stein (2000) notes three other perceived needs and concerns of NNETs from the extant literature: (a) “low confidence and self-perceived challenges to professional competence”, (b) “self-perceived language needs”, and (c) “self-perceived prejudice based on ethnicity or nonnative status” (p.10). She also suggests several ways to address these concerns, two of them are (a) assign experienced nonnative teachers to serve as mentors and role models, and (b) for NNETs to explore their own beliefs as teachers and learners.

Despite their many challenges and concerns, NNETs are beginning to see themselves and to be viewed by others as equal partners in the ELT profession. Through an international survey conducted by Reves and Medgyes (1994), they conclude that NNETs and NETs have an equal chance of success as English teachers and that the only area in which the NNETs seem to be less qualified— English language proficiency— is also one that helps NNETs develop capacities that NETs “would never be able to acquire” (Medgyes, 1999, p.178). Phillipson (1996) also states that there are many ways in which NNETs are at an advantage in teaching English. For example, compared to NETs who can be good language models, NNETs can be good learner models for imitation (Medgyes, 1992). Also, thanks to their own learning experience, NNETs often have better knowledge of grammar (Arva & Medgyes, 1999). In addition, many NNETs, especially those who share their students’ first language (L1), have developed a keen awareness of the differences between English and the students’ L1. This sensitivity allows

them to anticipate and prevent language difficulties better (ibid). Furthermore, Brain (1999) adds that NNETs can bring multiculturalism and diversity to language classes. When talking about the NNETs working in the U.S., another unique contribution that Auerbach (1993) mentions is that NNETs not only bring to the language classroom their experiences as English language learners but also share with their students their struggles as newcomers to the U.S. culture. Therefore, these shared experiences allow them to make curricular connections that would otherwise not be possible.

By the same token, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) also suggest that NNETs need to develop an identity of their own construction that neither limits their role in the profession nor specifies definite boundaries to their capacities. Amin (2001) echoes this claim by finding that NNETs are more effective in the classroom when they build their pedagogies on their nonnative identity rather than try to follow the native speaker norm. Kamhi-Stein (2002) further argues that in ESL contexts, NNETs' self-identification as teachers, immigrants, and language learners profoundly affects how they construct their classrooms and their instruction.

Drawing from the existing scholarly papers on issues related to NNETs (e.g., the challenges that NNETs face and the attitudes of ESL/EFL students and NETs have toward them) that were reviewed above, the central research questions of this study are framed (see below) in order to address the current issues previous research still leaves unanswered. Next, we will delineate the methods for this study in terms of the rationale for the methodological approach, recruitment of participants, procedures of data collection and analysis. Then we will report on our data and interpret our findings. Finally, we will point out the implications of our study and make suggestions for further research.

Research Questions

Despite the fact that there are a number of studies on NNETs' self-perceptions and identity construction as previously discussed, there is limited information on the complex role NNETs' amount of teaching experience plays in teaching English in a U.S. educational setting. As teacher researchers, we are intrigued by other NNETs' real-life experiences, especially those ESL professionals whose first language is not English, teaching in an English-speaking country. Would they share similar beliefs, reflections and impressions with the ESL/EFL professionals mentioned in the reviewed studies above? Has living and teaching in the ESL context challenged the NNETs professionally and personally? We are especially interested in investigating the "hidden" factors (some of the factors are so subtle that even some NNETs are not aware of them) that influence the self-perceptions and beliefs of NNETs currently teaching in the U.S, because teachers' beliefs and self-perceptions often influence the way they teach (Richard & Lockhart, 1994). In addition, we would also like to compare novice NNETs and experienced NNETs, and further examine how their self-perceptions change the way they teach in their home countries and in the U.S. and see if there are any perceived differences. Therefore, two major research questions in this study are raised:

1. How does amount of teaching experience influence the self-perceptions of NNETs in the U.S.?
2. Do NNETs perceive any changes/differences in their teaching styles in their home countries and the U.S.?

Methods

Since NNETs' amount of teaching experience that shapes their self-image and teaching behaviors are intrinsically complex and idiosyncratic, the observation or survey approach falls short of capturing the full spectrum of individual real-life experiences. As Mackey and Gass (2005) pinpoint, "[i]nterviews can allow researchers to investigate phenomena that are not directly observable, such as learners' self-reported perceptions or attitudes" (p. 173). In order to uncover the nuanced features of NNETs' self-perceptions, we conducted in-depth interviews with the participants in this study. Also, semi-structured interviews were employed to gather the data, which allowed the use of planned questions as guidance but with the flexibility to ask open-ended and spontaneous questions to further "probe for more information" (*ibid.*).

Given the fact that semi-structured interview was the primary instrument to collect data in this study, we pilot-tested the original interview questions with TESOL professionals and colleagues in order to spot any subtle flaws, such as inappropriate phrasing or questions diverging from our research goal. Based on the constructive comments given in the pilot-testing session, interview questions were revised to ensure the usefulness and feasibility of the instrument before conducting it (see Appendix A). After consenting to participate in the interview at their convenience, each individual participant was interviewed and audio-taped in approximately 45-to-60-minute segments by a team of the two researchers. One participant did not feel comfortable with being audio-taped so on-site note-taking was applied to record the data instead.

The interview was initiated by an icebreaker in order to make participants feel more relaxed before they were required to answer more important questions. They were encouraged to elaborate on their thoughts and personal experiences throughout the interview. Drawing on the semi-structured interview approach, we asked open-ended and spontaneous questions in a relaxed fashion so that all interviewees would feel comfortable disclosing more insightful reflections than they would in a more structured interview format. In order to seek more in-depth data, we conducted follow-up email exchanges with the participants after interviews to clarify and elicit further information pertaining to the research questions.

Participants

Five participants¹ were recruited from researchers' personal contact with faculty members, colleagues, and TAs in both the MATESOL program and Intensive English Program (IEP) in a major research university in the U.S. Our participants were five NNETs having different amount of teaching experience. The most experienced NNET among the five was one female from Romania who came to the U.S. for study in her early 20s and got a Master's degree in linguistics. She had teaching experience of approximately 13 years in ESL settings. The next most experienced NNET was one male from Ukraine who received a Master's degree in TESOL. He had teaching experiences of approximately four years in ESL settings.

The novice NNETs were two females from Romania and Slovakia, and one male from Korea. The Romanian and Korean teachers were the graduate students in the MATESOL program. The novice Korean teacher was doing his teaching practicum in the IEP, while the Romanian teacher was an employed ITA in the IEP. The Slovakian teacher earned her Master's degree in TESOL in an American university and was a full-time instructor in the IEP as well. They were either private tutors or student teachers in their home countries and had taught ESL in the IEP for six months to one-and-half

years as of then (also see Table 1).

Table 1
Background Information of the Participants

| | Susan | Jeong | Michelle | Audrey | Symon |
|---|------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Age | Mid 40s | Early 30s | Early 40s | Late 20s | Mid 20s |
| Native language | Slovakian | Korean | Romanian | Romanian | Ukrainian |
| First exposure to English | High school | High school | 4 th grade | 4 th grade | 5 th grade |
| Other foreign languages learned or spoken | Russian German | French Japanese | German | German French Spanish | Russian German French |
| Educational background | MA in German and TESOL | 2 nd year graduate student in MA TESOL program | MA in Linguistics with TESOL Certificate | 2 nd year graduate student in MA TESOL program | MA in TESOL |
| Years of staying in the U.S. | 27 | 4 | 13 | 1.5 | 4.5 |
| Years of EFL teaching in home country | 0 | 2.5 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Years of ESL teaching in the U.S. | 1.5 (novice) | 0.5 (novice) | 13 (most experienced) | 1 (novice) | 4 (experienced) |

Data Analysis

Using a qualitative inductive data analysis approach (Mackey & Gass, p. 179), the present study aimed to unpack significant features naturally emerging from the interview data. Instead of confining the data within a set of preconceived schemes in a survey or questionnaire, we “let the data guide the analysis” (ibid.). Both researchers listened to the audio tapes several times, and the interview data were then transcribed and coded into thematic patterns. The researchers then discussed their impressions of the transcripts to seek common patterns and to reach a consensus on differences between novice and experienced participants. In the follow-up email exchanges, participants were asked to confirm the thematic features from transcript excerpts of the analyzed patterns. To ensure accuracy of interpretations of data, interview transcripts from participants’ insightful perspectives, on-site notes from the interviews and follow-up email exchanges through the lens of member checking were triangulated to categorize salient and meaningful patterns.

Results

The coding that reifies the thematic patterns was consistently cross-examined and discussed by the two researchers. After a systematic analysis of interview data with a

thorough examination and comparisons of transcripts, on-site notes and email exchanges, the following major categories were identified:

1. Teaching styles of NNETs in both home country and the U.S.
2. Advantages and disadvantages/challenges in teaching as a NNET in both settings
3. NNETs' self-image fluctuated with amount of teaching experience
4. NNETs' positionality of cultural identity vis-à-vis students

The sub-themes centering on each thematic category are presented in the following tables to further exemplify the nuanced patterns emerging from each main theme. The subtle differences and common similarities across levels of NNETs' teaching experience will be delineated as well. Also, a model that illustrates how those complex factors shape NNETs' self-perceptions in the U.S. will be presented in the discussion section, which will be highlighted with valuable suggestions from NNETs' insightful perspectives drawn from the interview data.

Comparisons between Teaching in Home Country and the U.S.

Since most NNETs used to learn and teach English in their home countries where English was a foreign language (EFL), they all vividly reflected on how their teaching styles had changed from the EFL to ESL settings and how the transition impacted the ways they taught and interacted with their students in the U.S. The comparisons between their teaching styles in their home countries and the U.S. are shown in Table 2:

Table 2
Teaching Styles in Home Country and the U.S.

| Teaching styles | |
|-----------------|--|
| Home country | Teacher-directed: rote drills, L1 use, formal instruction Exam-oriented: grammar, translation, lecturing Teacher authority |
| U.S.A. | CLT: student-centered, pair/group work Four-skill integration; authentic materials Aware of student needs and emotional aspects Appreciate student diverse cultural backgrounds |

Apparently, the teacher-centered and examination-oriented instruction underpinned by L1 translation and grammar drills had predominated English language teaching and learning in EFL context, especially in most Asian countries. Even though there was only one Asian NNET (i.e., Jeong, the Korean teacher) in our study, the other European NNETs also addressed the same phenomenon. For example, Symon recalled how he used to teach English in Ukraine:

There were a lot of lecturing, explaining grammar and a lot of teacher talks. I didn't do group work as much as I do here. Students were alone or in pairs...student levels were too low and it's hard to make them speak English in a group. Also, they had English class an hour a day, three times a week. Time

was really limited and you wanted to make sure that students know the grammar in order to pass the exam. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

The use of L1 to translate English into their native languages in order to help students grasp the meaning of vocabulary or sentences was also commonly used as a “fast and convenient” tool for teaching in their home countries. For example, Audrey mentioned, “It’s easier to teach in my country because of the [native] language...it’s easy to explain some hard words in Romanian than in English” (Audrey, 02/12/2007). Symon also echoed the same reason why L1 use was necessary, “I used more Ukrainian than English. If I used English only, they couldn't get it. I translated English in Ukrainian, say, probably 60% of the time in my teaching” (Symon, 02/15/2007).

Interestingly, teachers seemed to benefit from the homogenous context and possessed their teacher authority in their home countries. For example, Jeong gave credit to those good old days back in Korea, saying “I was more confident and knew the answers to questions of students even before they finished the sentences” (Jeong, 02/08/2007).

Compared with the teacher-centered formal instruction in their home countries, it was more student-centered through the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in the U.S. when NNETs recounted the differences of their teaching styles in both settings. As Michelle pinpointed, “It’s more student-centered and students are expected to speak up in pairs or groups” (Michelle, 02/9/2007). The integration of different teaching methods and the awareness of students’ diverse backgrounds and learning needs were also emphasized in their teaching styles. For example, Susan described her teaching methods as follows:

I don't believe that is only one approach to teaching. I try to [incorporate] other approaches because you have different diverse learners and I always adjust my teaching skills to the needs of my students. But having said that, I believe it's important to teach what your students are asking because you want to make sure they are involved, they are included. (Susan, 02/07/2007)

Advantages and Disadvantages/Challenges in Teaching as a NNET

The self-reflective accounts of their teaching styles are also interrelated with how NNETs perceived the advantages and disadvantages in teaching in their home countries and the U.S. Through the lens of self-analysis of the teaching phenomena, it sheds light on how they capitalized on the teaching assets and resources they could utilize and tackled the challenges they faced in both ESL/EFL settings. Comparisons between advantages and challenge in teaching across both settings are categorized in Table 3:

Table 3
Advantages (+) and Disadvantages (challenges) (-) in Teaching in Both Settings

| Advantages (+)/ Disadvantages (-) | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Home country | (+) Successful learner model for students Similar cultural background and learning experience The use of L1 to supplement instruction at ease |
| | (-) Fixed class setting: big class size; public pressure Student low proficiency and motivation; High expectation of teacher to answer all questions Lack of cultural knowledge, authentic materials, resources, updated textbooks |
| U.S.A. | (+) Small class size; more resources; class observation Empathy: similar English learning experience More tolerant of teacher's lack of knowledge |
| | (-) No L1: limitation on vocabulary and pronunciation New environment: lack of teaching experience and cultural knowledge about the U.S. Anxiety: faced with questions unable to answer; making errors Hard to get a job |

The most salient feature emerging from NNETs' remarks is that they all agreed teaching in their home countries was easier, less challenging and had a better class control. It is because there were not many NETs teaching in their home countries while they were teaching back then. So they all thought of teaching back home as "no competition" or "not an issue" and that it was easier to get a teaching job. It also has a lot to do with how convenient and useful it was for them to "...go back to my first language to explain something and you are familiar with the culture and expectations of students" (Audrey, 02/12/2007). Another case in point that speaks for the advantage of teaching in the home country is that students saw them as a "role model" and as having the same cultural background. Similar English learning experiences also provided them with more authority in front of their students. For example, Symon recalled his glory days, "I was more of an expert or role model to my students in my country. It's more relaxing and they didn't question my expertise" (Symon, 02/15/2007).

Despite the prerogatives in teaching NNETs possessed, they also came across certain limitations of teaching in an EFL setting. Since exam-oriented instruction focusing on grammar-translation was prevalent in their home countries, the traditional teaching approach was constrained by big class size, fixed class settings and students' low motivation to learn English. The commonly used communicative language teaching (CLT) in an ESL setting was therefore unlikely to be implemented. As Symon pointed out,

It's hard to use CLT in public school back in my home country because other teachers or the principal would [observe] my teaching through the class window[s]. If I decided to move desks or chairs to do some interactive activities

in the classroom, I wasn't allowed to do that. Or if I wanted to do TPR [Total Physical Response], somebody would look through the windows and question me, saying "it's weird"...Also, students were not motivated to learn English because it's not common to go abroad at that time. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

He went on to talk about how the curriculum was also out-of-date in his home country, Ukraine:

Because we could only rely solely on textbooks, those textbooks [assigned to us] were a bit outdated...Those textbooks were written by those professors who studied English 20 years ago so it might not be updated. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

Some teachers also voiced concerns that they were lacking cultural knowledge of the target language when they taught in their home countries. Authentic teaching/learning resources were also limited in an EFL setting, which hindered their adoption of real-life materials to assist their teaching and student learning. Michelle recalled, "I wish I could have more cultural knowledge but that's something I was lacking so I was unable to help [my students]...Also, it's lacking authentic materials in my home country because there was no internet at that time" (Michelle, 02/9/2007).

Even though most of NNETs agreed that teachers had more authority as a role model in their home countries, the flip side was that they were also expected to be "omniscient." Audrey stated,

In Romania, as a teacher, you are expected to know everything and you're expected to be able to answer any kinds of questions. "C'mon, you are the teacher, you should know!" So there's more pressure. And I think it's also [because of] the cultural differences. (Audrey, 02/12/2007).

Teaching in the U.S. seems to be an eye-opening experience for them. When compared with those constraints of teaching they encountered in their home countries, the communicative approach (e.g., game and authentic materials) and small class size (e.g., doable pair/group activities) embodying ESL teaching here provides them with more options and resources. Above all, the cultural and linguistic background and similar English learning experiences make them more empathetic with their students. As Michelle stated,

I can relate more to my students because we all learned English as a foreign language in our countries and I can be more aware of their needs, such as culture shock. Sometimes I also make fun of Americans...so that my students can laugh with me. (Michelle, 02/9/2007)

Unlike the teacher-should-know-everything image in an EFL setting, the notion that teachers are not omniscient is more acceptable in an ESL setting. Compared with her perception of being a more than knowledgeable teacher in her home country as exemplified above, Audrey shared with us her teacher role in the U.S.:

But in the USA, you can just say "I don't know and I'll tell you tomorrow" or "I am not sure." Although I have been told that Asian students also have this misconception that teachers should know everything and be able to answer any kinds of questions, I try not to give them answers about everything and try to teach them the American way of [thinking]. I think they're ok with that or maybe someone who arrived here in the beginning might feel like, "oh, she doesn't know," but they'll be used to [the phenomenon] and realize that we're all human beings and we can't know everything. I learned this kind of teaching style from teachers I observed and from my teaching supervisor in my practicum. I was also surprised in the beginning that she didn't know the answer 'cause "you should know everything, teacher!" but I realize it's ok to say I don't know now. (Audrey, 02/12/2007)

The major challenge most NNETs faced in the U.S., especially novice teachers, was that they couldn't use their L1 in an ESL setting as conveniently as they used to in an EFL setting, especially when they encountered some difficulty of choosing the "right words." Audrey vividly recollected her experience, "...sometimes I can't remember some English words or phrases and I wish I could use my native language to explain some words" (Audrey, 02/12/2007). Also, their qualms about less mastery of English proficiency and lack of ESL teaching experience daunt their confidence of teaching in the U.S. Symon delineated his experience in his first-year teaching:

Collocations, and particular words when students asked were also a challenge to me that I didn't know how to answer, especially in the beginning of my teaching here...The combination of the limited language proficiency and [less teaching] experience made me tense. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

The anxiety about not being able to answer students' questions or making errors in front of them also overwhelms NNETs to a great extent. Jeong talked about his uneasiness of being "afraid, anxious, not used to the teaching ESL context—worried about how students feel why a NNET teaches them" (on-site notes, 02/08/2007). His concern also mirrors Symon's not being able to "win the heart" of his students:

In the beginning of my listening and speaking class, they asked me two questions that I couldn't handle very well. Because I wasn't sure how to answer their questions, I was stumbling and tense. And maybe the next day I didn't know how to respond again and I wasn't confident enough and I felt tense...I followed the whole lesson plan but didn't make it work...They even complained to the program about my teaching. For example, they didn't like pair work, but it's pointless not to do pair work in a L/S [listening/speaking] class. Because they didn't like me or trust me, they didn't like every way I taught. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

Unfortunately, this kind of "traumatic" experience also haunted Symon's later teaching:

I am pretty confident with lower-level class but I am a bit apprehensive when teaching higher-level students. For example, I am teaching grammar 5 now. Even though I am really good at grammar and I studied EFL myself and had to study all the grammar...they're advanced students and I made mistakes sometimes in the past and I felt embarrassed when they corrected me. Even though I plan my lesson well and the instruction goes well and students trust me, I am still apprehensive about that maybe someday they might ask me questions I am not pretty sure if the particular grammar rule is correct or not. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

The most striking concern voiced by all the NNETs is that it is hard to get a teaching job as a NNET in the U.S. They were also unsatisfied with being a "low-paid ESL teacher." Some of them could even sense the air of "discrimination" in their job pursuits. For example, Michelle reflected on her past experience of being a NNET in the U.S.:

It's also hard to get a job here as a non-native English teacher. I had to fight a lot to get a job as a non-native English teacher and would probably have to fight for several jobs in order to get the second best, not the first one even if I [got] my Master's degree...There seemed to be certain discrimination sometimes when a non-native English teacher went for a teaching job in English [countries]. I always had to start as a [substitute] teacher until I proved to be a qualified teacher as a non-native English teacher than them [native English teachers]. (Michelle, 02/09/2007)

NNETs' Self-image with Levels of Teaching Experience

The transition from teaching in their home countries to living and being a NNET in the U.S. is a crucial trajectory that deeply impacts how they teach in an ESL setting. The newly constructed notion of teaching in the U.S. coupled with how they could “survive” as a NNET in a new English-speaking environment are complexly challenging their prior English learning and teaching experiences and their diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The formation of their self-perceptions about teaching in the U.S. is also fluctuating, ranging from individual to individual and to different amounts of teaching experience. Table 4 sums up the characteristics of NNETs' self-image with levels of teaching experience:

Table 4
Self-image across Experienced and Novice NNETs

| Self-image |
|---|
| Retain one's own cultural identity |
| A different “me” in class |
| Fully merged into a new environment: fluid identity |
| Use diverse backgrounds and similar learning experiences as a merit |

Among all the NNETs we interviewed, Michelle, the most experienced teacher, keeps her composure throughout her real-life experience in teaching and self-perceptions as being a NNET in the U.S. Her extensive teaching experience and being comfortable with her own cultural identity strengthens her confidence and self-image. However, a slight degree of uneasiness is also raised in that she is safe only under the umbrella of being one of the NNETs in her program:

I don't think I've changed my identity. I am still who I am. If I were the only nonnative English teacher in our program, that might be a problem.?! But since I am the one out of four, I don't think it's a problem. If I don't know what I am teaching in class, that might be a problem because that [negative comments from students] will show in teacher's evaluation. There is nothing to do with whether or not you're a native teacher or nonnative teacher, but how you teach in class. (Michelle, 02/09/2007)

Interestingly, NNETs perceive themselves differently in an English-speaking country with different levels of teaching experience. Compared with Michelle, the less experienced teachers appear less static about who they are. They are more adaptable to the new environment in a sense that they either consciously or unconsciously become more “Americanized.” For example, Symon casts a different image whenever he is in class:

In my TESOL practicum, my fellow students and I talked about when you go teaching in class, you change or are different from who you really are in everyday life. I am the same. But when I walk in class, I am sure I am smiling more, making more jokes. I am kind of pretending consciously, copying the American approach...I am an American. It's not that I am trying to be one but unconsciously, I did try. Normally, I am not that outgoing. I am a bit reserved.

But in class, I play the role of an outgoing and talkative person. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

Audrey also described how she put on her “new skin” as a NNET in order to be more visible in the U.S.:

I always change something about my cultural identity when I live in a foreign country because I want to belong there. I have to adjust my cultural attitudes and perceptions or applications to those American people but I can't adjust everything so I am still pretty much Romanian in many ways. So I just took something from this culture that I am OK with. (Audrey, 02/12/2007)

Jeong, the only Asian NNET in our study, takes on a different view about being a NNET in the U.S. Even though he also echoes Michelle's “being who you are,” his lack of teaching experience coupled with the fact that he is not “white” pushes him to work even harder in order to survive in an English-speaking environment. As he points out, “I am still who I am because I can't change my native language and skin color” (Jeong, 02/08/2007). So he endeavors to improve his lesson plans, to think out loud to make instruction progress more smoothly and fully dedicates himself to teaching in order to “win the confidence and appreciation of students” (02/08/2007).

Despite that most NNETs express opinions that their multicultural and multilingual backgrounds brought from their home countries contribute significantly to their teaching in the U.S., the less experienced teachers we interviewed seem to utilize the asset to supplement their lack of teaching experience. Also, the similar English learning experiences make them more attached to their students as opposed to their native colleagues. For example, Susan and Audrey shared their self-perceptions of taking advantage of the multicultural/lingual asset:

I've been thrown into learning English from scratch, thrown into the culture shock that some of the American teachers might not have experienced. So that may be the difference that I did experience the culture shock and what it's like to be in college while learning English. So I may develop more empathy for students 'cause I can say to my students, “Trust me, I know you're struggling and I know English is not easy, 'cause I also learned English from A to Z.” (Susan, 02/07/2007)

I don't necessarily think I have an advantage of being a NNET but maybe I have the advantage that comes from the fact that I am multilingual, and I've lived in many cultures, and I can appreciate and understand cultural differences and have no problem with anyone [coming] from different cultures. (Audrey, 02/12/2007)

NNETs' Positionality of Cultural Identity vis-à-vis Students

Apparently, all NNETs more or less came across a “grey area” where they started to face the music of being questioned by students about their cultural identity, especially in the initial stage of their teaching as a NNET in the U.S. The most commonly asked question, “Where are you from?” triggers various versions of responses, interrelated with the levels of their teaching experience and individual strategies that they employ to grapple with the direct but thorny question. The extent to which they perceive themselves as NNETs and retain their cultural identity determines how they answer the question satisfactorily to both themselves and students. Table 5 presents the different ways of how NNETs position themselves in front of their students:

Table 5
Positionality of Cultural Identity in Teaching

| Cultural identity |
|---|
| Being labeled: foreign accent and name |
| Partial disclosure: evasive about one's cultural identity |
| Implicit about the "nativeness": change of cultural identity |
| Acculturation: being Americanized |
| Professionalism: value teaching quality, but not nonnative identity |

The most salient feature that singles most NNETs out is their foreign accents and names. It also plays a critical role of how they react to students' attitudes from this noticeable aspect. The experienced NNET, Michelle, seems quite candid about her cultural identity and doesn't conceal it from her students just because her accent sounds "not American." Even so, she is still aware of the extent to which her disclosure of her true identity may influence how her students will judge her teaching:

I think a lot of students might notice that I have a British accent and asked me if I am an American or a British. I am pretty upfront and honest with my students. I said, "I am not an American." Now it's easier for me to tell them that I am not an American or a nonnative English teacher in the beginning of class...But there is a slight change in their attitude when they hear I am not an American. Because if I go to another country to study and pay a lot of money, I want to study with a person from that country and why do I have to be taught by a teacher who is not an American but somebody else? But I am not the only one [NNET] out of the four teachers so I hope it won't have a big impact on them when they study here. But with more advanced students, I can use it [NNET identity] as an incentive to provide them with some motivation and say, "Look, I know who you are and what you are doing. I've been there and I've done that. If I can do it, you can do it, too." (Michelle, 02/09/2007)

In contrast, the more similar American accent a NNET speaks, the safer. It helps NNETs get pass the trouble water despite their foreign names that label them as NNETs. As Symon indicated,

Actually when I first came here, I spoke British English. But gradually, my accent changed. It's not like I tried to copy or something but it just happened itself...I am pretty sure that students don't know I've been in this country [only] for a short period of time because of my pronunciation [that sounds like an American]. I thought it could be a problem because of my [foreign] name. But my coworkers said, "well, we have a lot of differences in our program, we also have Korean Americans so the name is not a problem." (Symon, 02/15/2007)

Unlike Michelle who is honest with her students about who she is, the less experienced teachers take an opposite strategy to tackle this issue. Even though Symon has been teaching in the U.S. for around four years, he still decides not to reveal his cultural identity in the beginning until he is confident that he has won the trust of his students in the latter term of the class:

Because my name is unfamiliar to them, I tell them it's a Ukrainian name and I have the Ukrainian background but I don't tell them where I was born or how long I have been here. So most of them believe that I've been living here for a long while. But later in the quarter, I have got students who trust me, good relationship with them and the class goes well. To encourage students more, I start to share with them that I started to learn English when I graduated from high school and I've been in this country for only a few years. So they would think if teacher learned English as an adult, they can do it, too...I have an advantage to be a role model. (Symon, 02/15/2007)

Similar to Symon's partial disclosure of his "nativeness" but with more implicit, Audrey's take on this issue is "shedding her cultural identity" and "wearing an American skin." It also reveals her insecurity of being identified as a NNET by her students:

I prefer to be seen as a native English speaker [NES] because I don't know how students will react if they know that I am not a NES. I am not sure if that will make them feel that I am less competent than the other teachers and that's the reason why I never tell them I am not a NES...I was also advised by my supervisor to do that, not to tell them that I am not a NES. (Audrey, 02/12/2007)

She goes on talking about the strategy she uses to parry students' questions:

I try to keep it very short and simple when students ask me where I am from and my background...I am very succinct. They know my background is a Romanian, but...I didn't leave room for too much discussion. People [Students] do judge very quickly so you don't want to leave room for doubts or anything. I never say I wasn't born here but I just don't talk about it. I don't know what I'd answer if I was asked [about this question] but I don't think someone would actually ask. (Audrey, 02/12/2007)

The acculturation and length of stay in the U.S. will also reshape NNETs' cultural identity and how they position themselves when faced with students' questions. For example, even though Susan only has limited ESL teaching experience, her long-term stay in the U.S. and her attachment to the American culture make her seem Americanized in her teaching, regardless of the confrontation with her private students due to her "nonnativeness" in her early ESL teaching:

So sometimes students ask me, "where are you from?" I'd say, actually I am from here 'cause I've been here for so long. Yea, I was born there [Slovakia] and yes, I am Americanized in many ways. I am adapted to this culture, I love it here, it's my home...I don't have a specific label, I can't find that label and I don't really want to...The only time I experienced a little bit negative attitudes was when I was teaching a couple of Russian ladies. They would say, like, "I don't think you can teach us pronunciation, you know, you're not American." That's the only one time. (Susan, 02/07/2007)

Compared with his white NNET colleagues, Jeong finds another way out to tackle the fact that there is no way he could hide his cultural identity since his skin color speaks for his nonnativeness. The strategy that he uses to position himself in front of his students is, "...to realize what students care about is your teaching quality rather than your nationality or skin color as long as you act like a professional role model to them." (on-site notes, 02/08/2007)

Discussion

Where Are You From?

NNETs' self-perceptions of teaching styles, teaching phenomena in both settings, and cultural identity across levels of teaching experience are all interrelated to reconstruct how they position themselves as NNETs against students' attitudes in the U.S. Drawing on the results above, a model is proposed (see Figure 1) to highlight how those complex factors formulate NNETs' self-image:

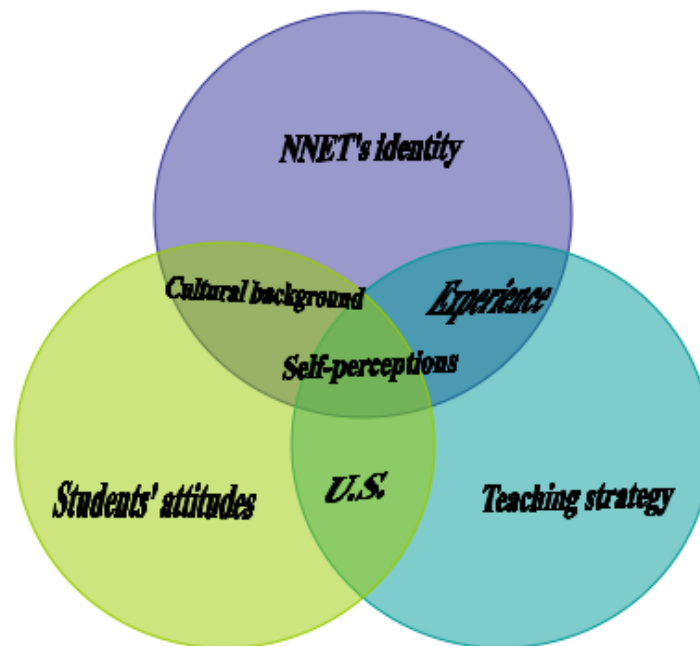


Figure 1. A model of NNETs' self-perceptions intertwined with other hidden factors

Centering on the intersection of the model, NNETs' self-perceptions are originated in the cultural backgrounds and teaching experience they bring from their home countries. Their prior teaching authority as a role model, corroborated by the same cultural background and similar English learning experience with their students, pronounces their "guru" status in the EFL setting. In other words, they know the learning needs of their students more than their counterparts, namely, NETs in their home countries. They are more confident and relaxed in an EFL setting. Despite the fact that there are certain constraints in EFL context as mentioned in the findings, their expertise in grammar-translation instruction, freedom of switching to L1, and less competition in the job market secure their identity as NNETs in their home countries. Their NNET identity is unchallenged due to the homogenous context.

However, their NNET's identity is critically impacted by the new English-speaking environment where "the grass might not be as green as they expected." On the contrary, their glory days in their home countries are now replaced with anxiety, challenge and doubts, especially in their early teaching in the U.S. In order to "survive" in the ESL arena, they need to employ different strategies to tackle thorny problems facing them. For instance, students' simple but direct question about "where they are from" would be the hot potato cast to them in the first class. Answering the question is apparently not hard, but how to answer the question honestly and strategically is another story that tests NNETs' self-perceptions of their cultural identity and awareness of

students' attitudes once their nonnative identity is revealed.

Our Voices Within

When asked about what suggestions they could offer for those NNETs who would like to teach in the U.S., they all wholeheartedly shared with us their insightful advice based on their real-life experiences and valuable teaching strategies. The self-reflective suggestions, once again, also mirror the progress of how they have strived to be NNETs in the U.S. and their survival guides. For example, some teachers stress that the notion of “embrace who you are” should go with each NNET no matter where they are. Only valuing one's own cultural and linguistic backgrounds can he or she bring into the class multiple and valuable perspectives, aligning with the multicultural/lingual backgrounds of students. The rich cultural and language assets are also the prerogatives that set NNETs apart from their NET colleagues.

Second, it is the “teaching quality and skills” that really matter. Our NNET participants voice that just because you are a NET doesn't mean you can teach better than a NNET if you don't have solid teaching training. It also shows that being a professional English teacher has nothing to do with the race, ethnicity and gender but the efforts each individual makes to his/her teaching.

Third, NNETs should work on their “pronunciation” as one of our participants, Michelle, stressed in her interview. Even though most NNETs still speak with foreign accents, it won't hinder their teaching efficiency as long as their pronunciation is intelligible.

Fourth, NNETs need to be more “confident” and not worried about making mistakes because teaching is also a learning experience. The student-centered and tolerable atmosphere in an ESL setting also allows them to say “I don't know” instead of playing the role of an omniscient teacher from their home countries. Having a sense of humor also relieves the tension and facilitates the instruction.

Last but not least, the NNETs we interviewed all voice the importance of being “empathetic” with students. Given the similar English learning experiences and living in a foreign country, NNETs can be more understanding and aware of the very needs of their students from a diversity of backgrounds. “If I can do it, you can do it, too” vividly sets a good role-model for their students, which also echoes the glory days when they used to teach in their home countries.

Conclusion

Through the in-depth interviews with the five NNET participants, the emic perspectives (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 163) drawn from them not only unpack the nuanced factors that we, as NNET researchers, intend to explore, but also empower the five NNETs to self-reflect on their faced challenges, cultural identity, and teaching strategies in order to survive as a nonnative teacher in the U.S. The phenomena through the insider lenses of the five NNETs and insightful patterns analyzed in our study also mirror the findings in the prior studies. For example, the challenges the five NNETs have encountered also echo 1) the pressing issues in obscuring or abandoning nonnative identity to secure employment and teaching credibility questioned by the students in Davies (1991) and Thomas (1999), and 2) the lack of confidence in language proficiency and nonnative status in Kamhi-Stein (2000) and Medgyes (1992). Despite the constraints most NNET participants encounter in teaching in the U.S., they also voice the strengths that make them stand out from their NET counterparts. Those strengths also

corroborate the advantages addressed in being a successful learning role-model for students (Medgyes, 1992), having similar English learning experience and stronger grammar competency than NETs (Arva & Medgyes, 1999; Auerbach, 1993; Medgyes, 1999) and diverse multicultural/lingual assets (Brian, 1999).

Returning to the research questions posed in our study, perhaps the most uplifting finding that bridges the gap the previous literature leaves is NNETs' self-perceived positionality of nonnative identity across amount of teaching experience. The complex trajectory along which they position their identity is also positioned by their concerns about students' attitudes toward them if their nonnative identity is revealed. Among the five NNETs, the most experienced NNET is "transparent and honest" with her students without hiding her nonnativeness. Her confidence in teaching and being comfortable with her cultural identity articulate her motto, "I am who I am." The less experienced NNET, on the contrary, is evasive about his nonnativeness, especially in the beginning of class. He only reveals his nonnative identity once he is confident that he has won the heart of his students. Interestingly, novice NNETs are even more implicit about their nonnative identity. One of them prefers to be seen as a native teacher by completely avoiding the native origin discussion with her students while the other is totally "Americanized" due to her long-term stay in the U.S. Her acculturation also frees her from being questioned by her students about whether or not she is "native" enough. The only Asian NNET in our study, unlike his white counterparts, endeavors to work on his teaching skills and quality in order to shift the focus from the native/nonnative issue to his teaching professionalism. Since his skin color speaks for his nonnative identity, it is inevitable that he needs to employ a strategy different from those white NNETs in order to overcome his perceived constraint and expand his visibility.

Implications for Future Research

As the number of NNETs is increasing worldwide, it is critical to conduct more research on the issues and concerns that NNETs have regarding their TESOL profession. Such research will not only reveal NNETs' inner voices but also raise our collective consciousness and awareness as both native and nonnative English teachers. Although the majority of ESL professionals in the U.S. are native English speakers, the phenomenon of a growing body of NNETs cannot go ignored (Liu, J., 1999b). From our own experiences, we have also witnessed that teaching ESL in an English-speaking country is a big challenge for NNETs even if they are qualified to teach ESL after receiving a MATESOL degree.

Although there are some interesting findings revealed in this study, it was conducted on a relatively small scale. Additionally, among the five participants, there is only one NNET who has substantial teaching experience, which doesn't lead to any generalizations about how experienced and novice NNETs differ in their self-perceptions. However, their take on grappling with this issue of how they position themselves in the U.S. and how they are perceived by their students still can shed some light on the salient patterns of the phenomena illustrated in the model presented above. Also, it might have been more informative to observe NNETs' classes to see if there is a match between their stated self-perceptions and changed teaching styles with their actual teaching behaviors in the classroom. Furthermore, four out of five NNETs in our study are Caucasians. Their white features might make it easier for them to hide their nonnative identity if they wish. Therefore, it would have been more beneficial to have more Asian NNETs involved so that we could have a better understanding of how their nonnative students impact their self-perceptions as "non-white" NNETs. We believe that with more NNETs of different

ances and have different amount of teaching experience involved, a greater understanding could be achieved with more widespread implications. A voice from Michelle (02/9/2007), the most experienced NNETs in our study, pronounces the importance of NNETs in the globalization era:

There is always the policy or even discrimination toward nonnative English teachers so those issues and the fact that you're not native English teachers still remain. But be upfront and you are who you are. There's nothing to do with your being a nonnative English teacher but more to do with your teaching ability, qualification...Also, remind your students who they will speak English to and why they are studying English. It's not just Americans they speak English with, but with people around the world. Actually, there are now more nonnative English speakers speaking English in the world than native English speakers.

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ⁱ Pseudonyms are chosen for the five participants throughout the study in order to protect their real identities.

Appendix

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your background (education, ethnicity, language learning and teaching experiences)?
2. When did you arrive in the U.S.? What made you decide to study or work here?
3. What countries have you taught in? What differences do you find in your teaching in those countries? (teaching methods/styles)
4. Did you experience any challenges when you taught English as a NNET in your home country compared to now?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages in teaching English as a NNET in your home country and now?
6. How do you see yourself as a nonnative ESL teacher in the U.S.? Do you notice if there is any change in your cultural identity?
7. What are students' attitudes toward you as a NNET both in your home country and the U.S.?

-
8. How about your NE colleagues' attitudes?
 9. Have you changed your identity based on these attitudes? Why or why not?
 10. What are your suggestions to NNETs who are interested in teaching English in an English speaking country?

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The Effectiveness of a Corpus-based Instruction in Deepening EFL Learners' Knowledge of Periphrastic Causatives

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Abstract

This study investigated whether a corpus-based instruction could deepen EFL learners' knowledge of periphrastic causatives: *make*, *cause*, and *let*. The participants were 47 Taiwanese undergraduates from two intact classes. One class as the experimental group received a three-month corpus-based instruction; the other as the control group had no instruction on English causatives. A pre-test was first administered to measure participants' knowledge of periphrastic causatives. Following a data-driven model of illustration - interaction - induction, the researcher as instructor conducted the instruction and took notes on students' performance. After the instruction, a post-test was given to both groups whereas a questionnaire on learning effects and students' feelings for corpus-based activities was distributed to the experimental group. Three data sources were analyzed: pre- and post-tests, field notes, and questionnaires. The results indicated that the experimental group improved and outperformed the control group significantly in the post-test. The questionnaire results confirmed that the instruction was effective in increasing students' knowledge of the three causatives. However, the field notes revealed learners' difficulties in using certain causatives. To better distinguish these verbs' usages, learners should attend to semantic distinctions more than syntactic structures. Instructors also need to provide clear guidance on data search and data interpretation.

Keywords: corpus-based instruction, causatives, learner corpus

Introduction

Causation as a semantic primitive depicts an important cognitive process in the human mind (Goddard, 1998). Words for describing causation, hence, can be seen in almost all languages. In English, causative verbs as one of the seven major semantic domains are often found in academic prose (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999).

Accordingly, it is necessary for EFL (English as a foreign language) writers to acquire causative verbs. Previous studies have revealed learners' tendency of favoring periphrastic causatives such as *make* and *cause* (Altenberg & Granger, 2001; Helms-Park, 2001; Juffs, 1996; Montrul, 2000). However, periphrastic causatives may create problems for EFL learners due to their subtle differences in semantics. Unaware of these differences, learners tended to produce awkward or erroneous expressions with these causatives in their writing.

In view of learners' possible difficulty in using periphrastic causatives, this study investigated whether a corpus-based instruction would deepen Chinese EFL learners' existing knowledge of periphrastic causatives *make*, *cause*, and *let*. The corpus-based instruction incorporated the errors identified in a self-compiled learner corpus and examples from native-speaker corpora into the instructional materials. By identifying learners' common problems in producing English periphrastic causatives, the researcher as instructor provided timely instructional intervention to help learners distinguish the usages of the three causatives. It is hoped that such a corpus-based instruction will not only improve learners' knowledge of periphrastic causatives but also help them find an effective way to tackle L2 near-synonyms.

Periphrastic Causatives in English

Goddard (1998) divides English causative verbs into three major types: lexical, morphological, and periphrastic (or analytic) causatives. Lexical causatives are words that contain the meaning of causation in their lexical meaning, for example, *kill* with an embedded meaning of causing someone to *die*. Morphological causatives refer to verbs with a suffix *-en* or *-ify* (e.g., *widen*, *nullify*) that carries the meaning of causation. Periphrastic causatives such as *make*, *have*, and *get* have their own meaning as a main verb but are used as causatives when they involve two clauses as in *I made/had John leave*.

Normally, lexical and morphological causatives have one argument with clearly specified agent and patient/theme. For example, in *I killed John*, an agent *I* did an action (e.g., *kill*) and directly resulted in the death of a patient *John* (Goddard, 1998). In contrast, periphrastic causatives have one argument with a main verb encoding the notion of cause and a second argument with a complement verb describing a result (Hamawand, 2005; Wolff, 2003). In *I made John leave*, the agent (or causer) *I* acted force on the patient *John* and resulted in an effect that is manifested in a verb complement with a subject, or causee, (e.g., *John*) and a verb (e.g., *leave*). Such a structure seems less straightforward because language users have to choose a causer that is able to exercise force or influence on the

causee and check whether the causee and the complement verb match in semantics. They also need to clarify the relationship between the main verb and the complement verb, making sure that the result can be brought about by the main verb, i.e., the periphrastic causative.

Although the number of periphrastic causatives seems limited, they are not always interchangeable syntactically or semantically. Wolff (2003, p. 42) distinguishes three types of periphrastic causatives: CAUSE-type (e. g., *cause, make, get*), PREVENT-type (e.g., *prevent, hinder, keep*), and ENABLE-type (e. g., *let, enable, help*). According to Wolff, the CAUSE-type verbs “entail or strongly imply the occurrence of a result” (p. 43) whereas the PREVENT-type verbs entail non-occurrence of a result. On the other hand, the ENABLE-type verbs strongly imply but do not necessarily entail the occurrence of a result. For example, in *I let John leave*, the agent *I* intends to cause the result (i. e., *John leave*), but the result may or may occur (e. g., *I let John leave, but he didn’t leave.*). Wolff also adopts the force dynamic model to compare the CAUSE-type and ENABLE-type verbs. In the sentence *The blast caused the boat to heel*, the tendency of the patient (i.e., *the boat*) is against the result (i.e., *to heel*), so opposition exists between the causer (i.e., *the blast*) and the causee (i. e., *the boat*) (p. 9). By contrast, in the sentence *Vitamin B enables the body to digest food*, the tendency of the patient (i. e., *the body*) is in accordance with the result (i.e., *to digest food*) with no opposition between the causer (i. e., *Vitamin B*) and the causee (i.e., *the body*) (p. 9). As shown above, *make, cause, and let* exhibit subtle differences in meaning because they belong to different types of periphrastic causatives.

Studies on Causatives *Make, Cause, and Let*

Make as a highly polysemous verb has a wider range of use as a periphrastic causative than *cause* and *let*. Gilquin (2006) analyzed over 3000 constructions of periphrastic causatives *make, cause, get, and have* in the BNC. In terms of *make*, it was found that the most frequent pattern was the combination of an inanimate causer, an animate causee, and a non-volitional effect expressed by a complement verb of psychological state, for example, *Er I, I was going in the evening you know, doing the tailoring class but of course my <pause> illnesses have stopped me doing all of that and made me realize I can’t do it all* (Gilquin, 2006, p. 175). Contrary to common expectation, only 18% of *make* constructions involved a combination of an animate causer, an animate causee, and a volitional effect.

Gilquin’s (2006) results with *cause*, however, revealed a different pattern with *make* although both belong to the CAUSE-type verbs. *Cause* was rarely used with the combination of a human causer and a human causee. Rather, the majority of the *cause*

constructions involved an inanimate causer, for example, *The importance and complexity of financial matters have caused special procedures to be evolved to deal with them* (Gilquin, 2006, p. 174). In terms of *let*, Huang and Su (2009) found that the causative constructions of *let* in the BNC tended to favor an animate causer whereas the causee could be animate or inanimate although an animate causee occupied a higher proportion of data, for example, *If you are ill and cannot go to work, you must let your manager know as soon as possible*. The subtle differences in the usage of *make*, *cause*, and *let*, though explicit to native speakers, may appear puzzling for those who learn English as a second language (L2).

Indeed, numerous studies have revealed the challenge in producing periphrastic causatives for L2 learners of English. In Altenberg and Granger (2001), both French and Swedish learners of English created deviant uses of causative *make* as compared with a native speaker corpus. The Swedish learners favored *make* followed by a verb complement but sometimes created peculiar expressions (e.g., **make the air polluted*, p. 182) that should do without *make* (i.e., *pollute the air*). While they also tended to overuse *make* followed by an adjective complement, the French group seemed to under-use such a construction. However, both groups of learners preferred *make* constructions to lexical causatives possibly under the influence of their L1. Such a tendency was also found in Turkish (Montrul, 2000) and Vietnamese (Helms-Park, 2001) learners of English. It seems that no matter whether there exist periphrastic causatives in learners' L1 or not, learners often use *make* as a convenient way to express causation.

Learners' favor of periphrastic causatives over lexical causatives has also been evidenced in Chinese EFL learners. Huang and Su (2007) found that Chinese EFL learners not only overused causative *make* but also created an impressive number of interlanguage variants. Other than the awkward handling of *make* that could be replaced with another causative verb, some variants stemmed from the mismatch between the subject and the verb in the verb complement (e.g., *This attitude brings me much pressure and *makes my emotions losing control*). Others exhibited an inappropriate complement verb (e.g., *The food you have will transfer into energy in your body and *make you be like reborn*). Learners' deviant use could also be attributed to the influence of the Chinese causative *ràng*, which has a wider meaning range than English *let* or *make*. Thinking of *ràng* when producing English causatives, learners seemed to treat *let* and *make* as synonymous and used them interchangeably. In a further investigation into Chinese EFL learners' lexical variants in formal and informal texts, Huang (2008) found that the greatest percentage of variants occurred in the category of L2 near-synonyms. Learners were confused with pairs of synonymous lexical items or a group of words with similar meanings,

particularly periphrastic causatives such as *make*, *cause*, and *let*. To help learners distinguish the different uses of periphrastic causatives, teachers could resort to language corpora for illustrating native-speaker usage of these verbs.

The Use of Language Corpora in L2 Learning and Teaching

The emergence of large corpora has made many aspects of corpus study possible and thus has provided a lot of resources for learning a second language. Language corpora not only demonstrate the typical and frequent use of an individual word or phrase (Gabel, 2001; Hunston, 2002; Stubbs, 2001) but also allow the comparison of near-synonyms (Adolphs, 2006; McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006). Examining corpus examples of seven synonymous verbs expressing “shaking,” Atkins and Levin (1995) found that despite their semantic similarities, the seven verbs exhibit real differences in the syntactic behavior of transitivity as shown in their overlapping but not identical collocates.

Because corpus data display a word’s usage in authentic, meaningful contexts, language corpora can facilitate L2 learners’ vocabulary learning. As emphasized by Altenberg and Granger (2001, p. 190), “Concordance-based exercises extracted from native corpora are a useful resource for raising advanced learners’ awareness of the structural and collocational complexity of high-frequency verbs.” Particularly for near-synonyms whose subtle differences cannot be discerned as in the case of periphrastic causatives, corpus data allow learners to examine their collocational patterns in a variety of contexts, contrast their syntactic behavior, and thus induce their subtle semantic differences (Cobb, 2003; Martin, 1984). In view of these advantages and learners’ possible difficulties in producing the three periphrastic causatives *make*, *cause* and *let*, this study explored the feasibility of a corpus-based instruction in deepening Chinese EFL learners’ knowledge of these verbs.

The corpus-based instruction in this study followed a “three Is” model, i.e., illustration - interaction - induction, originally proposed by Carter and McCarthy (1995) and elaborated by McEnery et al. (2006). In contrast to the traditional approach of “presentation - practice - production,” in which learners play a passive role, the “three Is” model places learners in the center of a corpus-based instruction whereas teachers facilitate students’ learning. In this model, students first look at real data from language corpora (i.e., illustration) and search the linguistic form they aim for. Then they engage in “interaction” by sharing each other’s opinions and observations. Through interactive discussions, learners reshape their presumptions and study the data from a different perspective. If necessary, they may initiate more searches for corpus data to verify their hypothesis. At the last stage, learners are encouraged to induce their own rules for the target linguistic feature

(i.e., induction) (McEnery et al., 2006). Such a model matches a deep approach to learning in which learners monitor and regulate the development of their understanding of a learning task (Magno, 2009). At the first two stages, teachers have to help learners formulate the enquiry and create a cooperative environment for learners' active interaction and sharing of discoveries. At the stage of induction, teachers as a facilitator check the rules induced by learners and provide timely advice on ways to refine the rules.

With the above model as the skeleton in this study, the researcher examined the effectiveness of a corpus-based instruction by posing three research questions:

- (a) How does the experimental group that receives the instruction improve their knowledge of periphrastic causatives after the instruction as opposed to the control group?
- (b) What are the experimental group's opinions about the administration of the corpus-based instruction?
- (c) How does the experimental group perform on class tasks and assignments during the instruction as shown in the instructor's field notes? Do students encounter any difficulties in reshaping their knowledge of periphrastic causatives?

Method

Research Design

Prior to the corpus-based instruction, the researcher administered a self-designed "Test on Causative Verbs" as a pre-test to an experimental group who received the instruction and a control group who did not. The instruction, lasting three months, incorporated native-speaker corpora and common errors of *make*, *cause*, and *let* found in a self-compiled learner corpus as course materials. During the instruction, the researcher as instructor took notes on students' performance in class tasks and assignments. After the completion of the instruction, the researcher administered the aforementioned test as a post-test to the two groups. Additionally, a questionnaire was given to the experimental group for surveying students' opinions about the corpus-based instruction.

Participants and Research Context

This study was carried out at a university of science and technology in Taiwan. The participants were 47 English-major juniors, all Chinese EFL learners, from two intact

classes. Having been screened through a joint entrance exam, these students were admitted to the English department with a similar proficiency level in English and randomly assigned to two different classes. All of them had learned English for six years in high school and another two and a half years at the university when the study was conducted. Even though students may have taken different elective courses at the university, the two classes had received similar training in English from the same required courses offered by the department. Hence, their English proficiency was considered to be at a similar level.

These participants were selected based on purposive and convenience sampling. Because the study focused on the use of periphrastic causatives in learners' written output, the students who were learning English academic writing were the best candidates. As the two classes had to remain intact for practical reasons, one class served as the experimental group (2 males and 24 females) whereas the other was treated as the control group (2 males and 19 females). Without random sampling, this study employed a quasi-experimental design that is common in classroom research. Not conducting the experiment in a lab where all extraneous factors could be strictly controlled, the researcher was aware of the limited generalizability of the results, a limitation that is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid in classroom research.

This research was conducted when the participants were taking a required Advanced English Writing course at the second semester of their junior year. The experimental group was taught by the researcher whereas the control group was taught by another instructor. During the semester when the study was carried out, the two groups of students practiced essays on similar rhetorical styles such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect as well as argumentation. For the experimental group, the corpus-based instruction was incorporated into the regular course schedule for the whole semester. The control group, by contrast, did not receive explicit instruction on the use of causative verbs.

Instruments and Data Sources

The research data came from three major sources: (a) the two groups' results in the pre- and post-tests on their knowledge of causative verbs, (b) the experimental group's responses to a questionnaire on the effectiveness of the corpus-based instruction, and (c) the instructor's field notes.

The first research instrument, a self-designed "Test on Causative Verbs," aimed to measure quantitatively learners' knowledge of causative verbs *make*, *cause*, and *let*. The test consists of 40 items that require the testees to judge the accuracy of an underlined causative expression in a sentential context and provide a better word or phrase if the expression is

incorrect (refer to the Appendix). All the test items, 30 erroneous ones and 10 correct ones, were retrieved from a self-compiled learner corpus. The corpus consists of approximately 900 writing essays produced by previous English-major students at the same department where the current participants studied. These essays cover all the rhetorical styles that were also practiced by the participants during their junior year. Such a close match in learner profile enables a truthful description of learners' problematic production of the three periphrastic causatives. For the sake of clarity in test items, the examples extracted from the corpus were slightly revised. The researcher also consulted native speakers to ensure the appropriateness of test items. It should be noted that the test and the corpus-based instruction used the same learner corpus as resources for their design. Hence, the aspects of knowledge measured in the test corresponded well with those covered in the instruction so that students' possible gains in the test scores could be attributed to the success of the instruction. In other words, what was tested represented the problems students often encountered; these problems were further addressed in the instruction.

The second instrument was a questionnaire for surveying students' opinions about the corpus-based instruction. The questionnaire, written in Chinese, is composed of three parts: overall learning effects, teaching activities, and corpora use. The first part targets at students' prior knowledge of causative verbs and their perceived improvement after the corpus-based instruction. It consists of one open-ended question and 6 questions with a 4-point Likert scale for students to indicate their degree of agreement to each statement (1: totally disagree, 2: disagree, 3: agree, 4: totally agree). The second part of the questionnaire asks whether the corpus-based class activities were helpful in broadening and deepening their knowledge of causative verbs. It contains 2 open-ended questions and 6 questions with a 4-point Likert scale. The last part surveys student-perceived advantages and disadvantages of language corpora, aiming to reveal students' feelings about corpus use in their learning of the target causatives. In a multiple-choice format, one question focuses on advantages and the other on disadvantages. Under each question are 6 choices and one blank line for students to specify other answers.

The last data source came from the course instructor's field notes on the procession of corpus-based activities, the participants' reaction in class, and their performance on class tasks and assignments. These field notes were analyzed to pinpoint the instructor's obstacles encountered during the instruction as well as the participants' progress and struggle in refining their knowledge of the three periphrastic causatives.

The Corpus-Based Instruction

Based on the principles of the three Is model (McEnery et al., 2006), the researcher as instructor incorporated data from the self-compiled learner corpus and examples from native-speaker corpora into the three-month instruction. The procedure basically followed the pattern of asking students to correct erroneous uses retrieved from the learner corpus, engaging students in discussing erroneous cases and discovering native-speaker use from corpora, and pushing students to induce rules of usage of the target causatives. Todd (2001) followed a similar procedure to test whether Thai learners of English could induce grammatical and lexical rules from concordances and self-correct their errors marked by the teacher. The results confirmed learners' ability to induce valid lexico-grammatical patterns from concordances and engage successfully in correcting their own errors. O'Sullivan and Chambers' (2006) study on English learners of French also concluded the usefulness of corpus consultation in helping learners correct grammatical, lexical, as well as syntactic errors. These studies have provided a strong support for the researcher to use the approach of error correction through the use of corpus data.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, class tasks and assignments related to the content of the instruction were regularly given. Although not all of them were error corrections in nature, they all aimed to build up students' knowledge of English periphrastic causatives, the major goal of the instructional intervention. Illustrated here are three key activities.

Students' performance on the practice before Week 8 revealed that many of learners' awkward expressions stemmed from the influence of Chinese causatives *shǐ* and *ràng*. Hence, in Week 8, the instructor asked the students, working in groups, to search a Chinese-English translation corpus and identify various English verbs or phrases for *shǐ* and *ràng*. In this activity, students looked at the real data (illustration), discussed with peers (interaction), and induced on their own the English causative expressions that denote *shǐ* or *ràng* (induction). Later, the instructor provided individual consultation to help each group evaluate their results.

Based on students' performance on Week 8 tasks and assignments, the instructor found that students' heavy reliance on periphrastic causatives resulted from a lack of knowledge of other alternative causatives. To expand such knowledge, the first task in Week 12 required the students to sort 16 causatives (i.e., *let, allow, help, leave, enable, cause, make, get, force, prevent, block, hinder, impede, keep, protect, save* from Wolff &

Song, 2003, pp. 322-328) presented in sentential contexts into different categories and induce the syntactic pattern of each verb. The instructor then introduced the three types of periphrastic causatives, namely the ENABLE-type, CAUSE-type, and PREVENT-type. The other two class tasks required students to work individually or in groups to use the above causative verbs in an appropriate context. To consolidate the knowledge, the instructor gave an assignment that required each student to find 50 example sentences for an assigned causative verb from English native-speaker corpora and induce the verb's syntactic and semantic rules of usage.

To wrap up the corpus-based instruction, the instructor conducted in Week 16 a class activity that asked students to summarize the different uses of *make*, *cause*, and *let*. The students discussed with their partner to induce the differences between two juxtaposed sets of data from the BNC and the self-compiled learner corpus. The data contained sentences involving causatives *make*, *cause*, and *let* with the causer and causee highlighted. After students completed their work, the instructor showed the whole class a list of rules for *make*, *cause*, and *let* and explained their differences.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

In the fourth week of the semester, the "Test on Causative Verbs" was administered to the two groups of students as a pre-test for detecting students' baseline knowledge. The same test was given in Week 16 as a post-test to measure any progress. Each group took the test in their own classroom and finished the test within 35 minutes. During the period of instruction, the instructor constantly took notes and evaluated the experimental group's performance. The questionnaire was given in Week 17 to the experimental group, who took approximately 8 minutes to complete it.

The Test on Causative Verbs required the testees to judge the accuracy of causative usage and provide a correct causative expression for any wrong usage. Hence, the scoring of each item was done by assigning separate scores to judgment and provision of a correct answer. A correct judgment was assigned 1 point whereas 0 point is assigned to any wrong judgment. So the perfect score for judgment is 40. For each item with an inaccurate causative expression, an answer that fits the context of a test item well in both semantics and syntax was assigned 2 points. An answer that is partially correct in syntax and marginally acceptable in semantics is assigned 1 point. An answer that is wrong in syntax and unacceptable in semantics is assigned 0 point. The researcher did all the scoring and consulted another researcher when encountering ambiguous answers. Because there are 30 erroneous items in the test, the perfect score for the provision of correct answers is 60. So

the total perfect score for the test is 100. Once each participant's scores for the pre- and post-tests were obtained, the performance of the control and experimental groups was compared through a two-way ANOVA for a mixed design. The within-group independent variable is time (pre-test vs. post-test) whereas the between-group independent variable is group (control vs. experimental groups). The dependent variable is test scores.

The analysis of the questionnaire started with counting the frequency of participants who circled each number for each item with a 4-point Likert scale. Here, the Likert scale for the participants to indicate degree of agreement was considered an ordinal scale because the intervals between points on the scale are not necessarily of equal value (Argyrous, 2005; Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). With such a limitation, the scale cannot be treated as an interval scale and thus, only frequency of each category (i.e., totally disagree, disagree, agree, totally agree) was counted. For each open-ended question, all answers were recorded and similar answers combined. For the multiple-choice questions, the number of participants who selected each choice for each item was calculated. The analysis of the instructor's field notes focused on students' performance on class tasks and assignments as well as their difficulties in completing the class activities. The purpose was to compensate the analyses of other data sources and provide a clearer picture on the effectiveness of the corpus-based instruction.

Results

Results of the Test on Causative Verbs

The results of descriptive statistics for the pre- and post-tests are presented in Table 1. In the pre-test, the control group has a slightly higher mean score than the experimental group while the experimental group's standard deviation is higher. In the post-test, the experimental group scored much higher in both mean and standard deviation. The control group seemed to perform steadily in the two tests as their means were very close. By contrast, the experimental group improved a lot in the post-test despite a wider individual variation.

Table 1

Results of Descriptive Statistics in the Pre- and Post-tests

| | Pre-test | | Post-test | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Control (N = 21) | 35.62 | 5.82 | 35.19 | 5.64 |
| Experimental (N = 26) | 33.54 | 6.81 | 42.38 | 9.54 |

Note. SD means “standard deviation.”

The experimental group’s better performance in the post-test is evidenced in the ANOVA results in Table 2. The upper panel shows a significant main effect of the variable “time” and a significant interaction effect but an insignificant main effect of “group.” In order to discover the interaction between the two variables, the main effect of “time” was compared between the two groups. As displayed in the lower panel, the between-group statistics is not significant in the pre-test, indicating the two groups’ equivalent baseline knowledge. But after the instruction, the two groups performed differently in the post-test with the experimental group scoring significantly higher than the control group (refer to Figure 1). These results clearly suggested the usefulness of the corpus-based instruction in improving the experimental group’s knowledge of periphrastic causatives.

Table 2

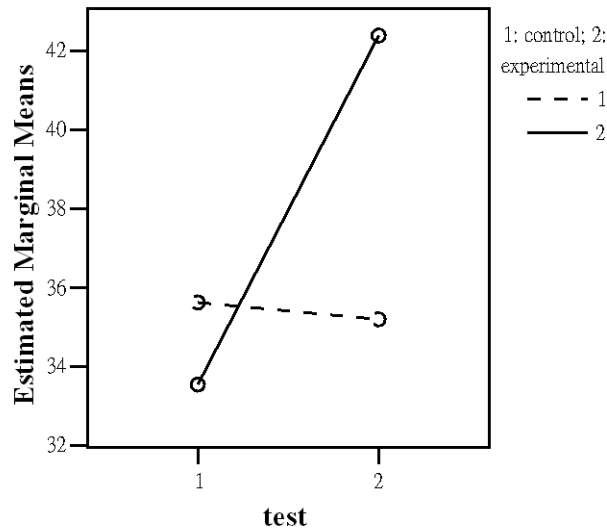
Results of Two-way ANOVA

| Overall ANOVA Results | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|----|---------|----------|-----------|
| Source | SS | df | MS | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Time | 411.566 | 1 | 411.566 | 13.506 | .001** |
| Group | 151.883 | 1 | 151.883 | 2.024 | .162 |
| Time × Group | 499.651 | 1 | 499.651 | 16.397 | < .001*** |
| within-group error | 3377.542 | 45 | 75.056 | | |
| error (Time) | 1371.364 | 45 | 30.473 | | |
| Total | | 93 | | | |
| Main Effect of “Time” | | | | | |
| Source | SS | df | MS | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
| <u>Pre-test</u> | | | | | |
| between-group | 50.288 | 1 | 50.288 | 1.232 | .273 |
| within-group | 1837.414 | 45 | 40.831 | | |
| Total | 1887.702 | 46 | | | |
| <u>Post-test</u> | | | | | |
| between-group | 601.246 | 1 | 601.246 | 9.293 | .004** |
| within-group | 2911.392 | 45 | 64.698 | | |
| Total | 3512.638 | 46 | | | |

Note. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Figure 1

Plot of the Two Groups' Mean Differences in Pre- and Post-tests



Note. The number “1” on the X-axis represents the pre-test and “2” represents the post-test. The solid line depicts the performance of the experimental group while the dotted line shows the control group’s performance.

Questionnaire Results

Table 3 displays the results of the first part of the questionnaire: overall learning effects. The number in each cell represents the frequency of students who chose each option. Items 1, 3, and 4 are related to students’ prior knowledge of causatives. The results indicated that more than two-thirds of students were unclear about the usage of *make*, *cause*, and *let* and other causative verbs before the instruction. By contrast, such knowledge increased after the instruction as indicated in items 2 and 5. Most students also agreed that learning the usage of causative verbs was useful for improving their English writing ability (refer to item 6). These findings suggested that students generally held a positive attitude towards the instruction, which helped them clarify the usage of the three periphrastic causatives and expanded their knowledge of alternative causative verbs. However, a few students still found *make* and *let* puzzling whereas *cause* seemed easier to handle (refer to item 7).

Table 3

Results of the First Part of the Questionnaire: Overall Learning Effects (N = 26)

| Item | <u>Totally disagree</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>Totally agree</u> | Total frequency |
|--|--|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. unclear about the differences/similarities among <i>make</i> , <i>cause</i> , <i>let</i> before the instruction | 0 | 7 | 14 | 5 | 26 |
| 2. able to distinguish the usage of <i>make</i> , <i>cause</i> , <i>let</i> after the instruction | 0 | 7 | 19 | 0 | 26 |
| 3. unaware of other causative verbs such as <i>enable</i> , <i>get</i> , <i>leave</i> before the instruction | 1 | 7 | 16 | 2 | 26 |
| 4. unclear about the usage of other causative verbs before the instruction | 0 | 3 | 18 | 5 | 26 |
| 5. clearer about the usage of other causative verbs after the instruction | 0 | 1 | 23 | 2 | 26 |
| 6. Knowledge of causative verbs is helpful for English writing. | 0 | 0 | 14 | 9 | 23* |
| 7. still unclear about the usage of causative verbs such as: | <i>let</i> (3), <i>make</i> (3), <i>leave</i> (3), <i>get</i> (2), <i>cause</i> (1), <i>enable</i> (1) | | | | |

Note. *Three students did not respond to this item, so the total frequency is 23.

The number in the parentheses for Item 7 indicates the number of students who wrote down the word. Please note that a couple of students wrote down more than one word whereas some did not provide any answer.

Table 4 presents the results concerning the effectiveness of the corpus-based class activities. Except for nearly one-third of students with a negative attitude toward “group discussion in error correction” and “individual assignments” (items 2 and 3), most participants considered the class activities helpful (items 1 to 5). Particularly helpful were the teacher’s explanation and illustration. Many students also favored the use of translation and native-speaker corpora as well as “discovery” learning of inducing the usage of causative verbs. Hence, the majority of them expressed willingness to use corpora to learn the usage of English words in the future (refer to item 6). Even though some students disfavored self-induction of verb usage and group discussion, the participants generally

agreed on the effectiveness of the corpus-based activities in broadening and deepening their knowledge of causative verbs.

Table 4

Results of the Second Part of the Questionnaire: Teaching Activities (N = 26)

| Class activity | <u>Totally</u> <u>disagree</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>Totally</u> <u>agree</u> | Total frequency |
|---|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. teacher's explanation and illustration | 0 | 0 | 21 | 5 | 26 |
| 2. group discussion in error correction | 1 | 7 | 16 | 2 | 26 |
| 3. individual assignments | 0 | 7 | 19 | 0 | 26 |
| 4. use of Chinese-English translation corpus | 0 | 5 | 19 | 2 | 26 |
| 5. induction of usage of causatives through the use of English native-speaker corpora | 0 | 4 | 20 | 2 | 26 |
| 6. will use corpora to learn other vocabulary | 0 | 3 | 21 | 2 | 26 |
| 7. the most effective activity in this semester: | induction of usage (4), combination of group discussion and other activities (4), teacher's explanation (1), group discussion (1), individual assignment (1), use of translation corpus (1) | | | | |
| 8. the least effective activity in this semester: | induction of usage (4), group discussion (3), teacher's explanation (1), quiz (1) | | | | |

Note. The number in the parentheses for Items 7 and 8 indicates the number of students who provided similar answers.

Table 5 summarizes the results of students' perception of the advantages and disadvantages of language corpora. As shown in the first panel, more than 80% of students pointed out the advantages of corpora in exhibiting numerous example sentences and allowing them to find collocations. Nearly 70% of students acknowledged the usefulness of corpora in illustrating native speakers' authentic data and the usage of near-synonyms. However, only about 40% of students considered the use of corpora beneficial in inducing the usage of words or finding translation equivalents. In terms of the disadvantages of corpora, the participants were least satisfied with the unstable condition of on-line concordancers. In addition, the limited sentential context in concordancers (61.54%) and a large quantity of concordance lines (53.85%) seemed to affect their judgment of the correctness of corpora sentences as more than 70% of students reported such a disadvantage. The results suggested that some students still felt unconfident in the use of corpora and probably need more hands-on practice before they can make full use of language corpora.

Overall, the questionnaire results revealed the corpus-based instruction as effective in helping students understand the usage of causative verbs. Most participants in the experimental group benefited from the class activities despite a few students remaining puzzled about the usage of specific periphrastic causatives.

Table 5

Results of the Third Part of the Questionnaire: Corpora Use (N = 26)

| Advantages: Corpora allow me to... | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| induce usage of words on my own | 11 | 42.31 |
| compare usage of near-synonyms | 18 | 69.23 |
| get native speakers' authentic data | 18 | 69.23 |
| read many example sentences | 22 | 84.62 |
| find collocations | 22 | 84.62 |
| find English equivalents for Chinese expressions | 10 | 38.46 |
| Others: I will continue using these corpora. | | |
| Disadvantages: Corpora are hard to use due to | Frequency | Percentage |
| incomplete sentences | 8 | 30.77 |
| difficulty in understanding sentence meanings with limited context | 16 | 61.54 |
| unstable condition of on-line concordancers | 22 | 84.62 |
| inability to judge the correctness of corpora sentences | 19 | 73.08 |
| difficulty in inducing a word's usage from many concordance lines | 14 | 53.85 |
| complicated command for searching target words | 5 | 19.23 |
| Others: 1. unable to use Chinese as target words | | |
| 2. unorganized information in concordance lines | | |
| 3. unable to search a target word without knowing its meaning | | |

Note. The percentage was obtained by having the frequency divided by 26, i.e., the total number of participants.

Results of the Instructor's Field Notes

The field note results center on students' performance on class tasks and assignments, supplemented with the instructor's observation. First, the instructor's evaluation of the practice before Week 8 revealed students' insensitivity of the erroneous use of the three causatives. In Week 8, the instructor observed students' difficulty in identifying the English causative expressions for Chinese *shǐ* or *ràng* and in revising expressions of *make*, *cause*, and *let* with intense awkwardness. In view of a close relationship between such difficulty and students' insufficient knowledge of other causative verbs, the instructor administered a

sorting task in Week 12, aiming to expand students' knowledge of alternative causatives. The results revealed students' tendency of categorizing the causative verbs solely based on the similarities in syntactic patterns. Moreover, some students seemed unclear about the differences between the ENABLE- and CAUSE-types of verbs. It was suspected that students' confusion occurred because they paid overdue attention to syntactic structures without noticing those verbs' semantic differences.

In Week 16, the instructor observed that whereas a few students had expanded their knowledge of causative verbs with the help of instruction, some were still unable to distinguish the usage of the verbs. These students may be undergoing the restructuring of old knowledge but have not constructed their new knowledge. The evaluation of students' performance on the wrapping-up task, again, revealed their tendency of focusing on the syntactic structures rather than semantic differences, an outcome likely resulting from their level of English proficiency. As indicated by Montrul (2000, p. 264), "Lower level learners learn semantically based alternations through syntax, whereas higher level learners display a higher degree of semantic and syntactic differentiation." The current participants, inexperienced in distinguishing near-synonyms, naturally attended to structural differences. With the advancement in target language proficiency, they should be better at discriminating word usage semantically.

To conclude, it was found that with increasing exposure to more causatives, the students became more puzzled about the usage of causatives. For each causative verb introduced by the instructor, the students paid more attention to its syntactic rules than semantic distinctions with other synonyms. Although they were given ample opportunities to use on-line concordancers and engage in group discussions, they sometimes felt lost in their "discovery learning" and hence did not always perform satisfactorily. Echoing the results of the questionnaire, the students still needed a lot of guidance from the instructor not only on the search of information from concordancers but also on the induction of word usage. In terms of the three periphrastic causatives, *make* has the most complicated syntactic patterns and seemed most difficult for students to find clear-cut rules. On the other hand, *cause* seemed to induce least difficulty whereas the usage of *let* still created confusion despite its simplistic syntactic patterns.

Discussion

This study investigated the effectiveness of a corpus-based instruction in deepening Chinese EFL learners' knowledge of periphrastic causatives *make*, *cause*, and *let*. The results of a self-designed Test on Causative Verbs indicated that the experimental group

performed significantly better than the control group in the post-test after the instruction and also achieved a significant higher mean score in the post-test than in the pre-test. This outcome converged with the questionnaire results in confirming the effectiveness of the instruction in increasing students' knowledge of the three target verbs. While students generally held a positive attitude toward the corpus-based class activities and the use of language corpora, a few students remained confused about the usage of certain periphrastic causatives, a phenomenon observed in the instructor's field notes. Students' unsatisfactory performance on class tasks and assignments highlighted their need for clear guidance from the instructor on data search and data interpretation.

The success of the corpus-based instruction could be attributed to a pattern that combines teachers' explicit instruction and students' discovery learning through corpora use. The instructional intervention was revealed to be effective not only in restructuring learners' original knowledge of high-frequency verbs they commonly misused but also in expanding their knowledge of other alternative expressions. In sharp contrast with the control group who remained unaware of their inappropriate usage even when they matured after one semester, the experimental group became more aware of the correct usage of the three periphrastic causatives and gained more knowledge of English periphrastic causatives in general. Such knowledge gains are valuable and can hardly be obtained through incidental learning, a time-consuming process with no guarantee of outcome.

The success of the corpus-based instruction also highlighted the benefit of error correction on raising students' awareness and engaging them in inducing correct patterns. As suggested by Todd (2001), learners' ability to induce patterns of word usage from concordances was strongly correlated with their ability to self-correct errors. Previous studies have also shown the value of students' self-correction in increasing the accuracy of grammatical and lexical forms in their L2 writing (Chandler, 2003; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, Wright, & Moldawa, 2009). The results generally confirmed the positive effects of teachers' error feedback and students' self-correction practices on improved accuracy and fluency in L2 writing. Some students were even able to carry on these positive effects to their subsequent writing. Error correction, apparently, works well to highlight learners' weak areas, focus learners' attention to certain patterns, and enable them to directly correct the wrong usage. In this study, the researcher had organized all common errors into patterns before conducting the activities of error correction. This was made possible through a learner corpus whose profile closely resembled the current participants' past learning experiences. Such a systematic way of providing error feedback enabled learners to deal with all possible errors they may make at one time and thus, appears to be a more efficient way of applying error correction.

The corpus-based instruction in this study required students to access native-speaker data through concordance programs, an approach perceived by most students as beneficial in learning vocabulary. Indeed, concordancers provide L2 learners with much more exposure to a target language word than incidental learning of vocabulary (Cobb, 1997). Also applied in the instruction were bilingual corpora which helped learners notice the lack of one-to-one translation equivalents and multiple possibilities of L2 expressions in different contexts. As shown in previous studies on Chinese learners of English, the use of bilingual concordancer allows learners to know word usages in different contexts and self-correct their own errors in essays (Wang, 2001; Yu & Yeh, 2004). The above practices demonstrated in this study are beneficial for future instructors who want to adopt a corpus-based instruction.

Under the circumstances when appropriate corpora are unavailable, teachers could create their own sub-corpus or collect data from large corpora and organize them into teaching materials for their own teaching purposes. Aston (1997) gave useful suggestions for designing a corpus-based instruction such as modifying texts to simplify the data for beginners, selecting data from familiar genres, reducing the quantity of data, and simplifying the tasks (pp. 62-63). Such a teacher-oriented learning may be more beneficial for beginning and intermediate learners (Aston, 1997; Gavioli, 1997) even though learner-oriented discovery learning is generally favored. Once learners have progressed in their metalinguistic skills and have accumulated experiences in corpora use, they can be granted more freedom and autonomy in searching data for their linguistic queries.

The idea of discovery learning proposed in the “three Is” model (McEnery et al., 2006) is very appealing at the first sight as it emphasizes data search initiated by learners for fulfilling their own needs and aims to cultivate learners into a “linguistic researcher” (Johns, 1997). Though ideally it is learner-directed learning, the reality was not so rosy. As indicated in the questionnaire and field notes, the EFL learners in this study still favored teacher guidance on data search and data interpretation, either of which could hardly be achieved through interaction with other learners. As cautioned by Gavioli (1997), simply asking students to access corpus data does not make them linguistic researchers because categorization and interpretation of corpus data draw on learners’ linguistic as well as metalinguistic skills. Without clear teacher guidance, learners are left alone fumbling for the best way to organize their findings, which certainly requires a lengthy process of trial and error.

Educational Implications and Conclusion

The results of this study have useful educational implications. First, the self-compiled learner corpus, though homogeneous in the data profile, provided authentic examples of errors commonly created by learners and allowed the instructor to design instructional materials to raise students' awareness of error patterns. Such a self-compiled learner corpus will save teachers' time in finding raw materials for their corpus-based instruction. The compilation of a learner corpus starts with collecting students' written or oral work each year while teachers are teaching related courses. These data are of great value because they exhibit interlanguage features that show learners' progress as well as struggle toward the mastery of a second language.

The success of the corpus-based instruction in this study has also highlighted the usefulness of native-speaker corpora and parallel bilingual corpora in language learning. Parallel corpora with translation data are helpful in displaying various translation equivalents for L2 vocabulary or expression (Hunston, 2002; Leech, 1997). Through the examination of all possible translation equivalents, learners would become aware that one-on-one correspondents between two languages are not always applicable; rather, more than one target language expressions are possible yet each of them is suitable for a different context. Such awareness is very important if learners aim for clear distinctions of L2 near-synonyms.

This study demonstrated the effectiveness of a corpus-based instruction in increasing students' knowledge of three periphrastic causatives. The error patterns induced from a learner corpus helped the instructor design teaching materials and worked to challenge learners' presumption of these words' usage. Once aware of their inadequate prior knowledge, learners were able to correct their erroneous use of these words and absorb new knowledge of other causatives. As the use of corpora in learning near-synonyms was found promising in this study, researchers are encouraged to seek more effective ways to apply language corpora to L2 learning.

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Appendix: Test on Causative Verbs

Read each sentence and judge if the usage of causative verbs (*make*, *cause*, or *let*) in the underlined phrase is correct or not. If the usage is correct, write “√” in the first blank. If the usage is incorrect, write “×” and provide a correct phrase in the second blank.

Example:

√ _____ 1. Don't put yourself in a dangerous situation. Try to make him think that you are unique and different from other girls he had met before.

× help me think 2. I like to ask for advice from friends who are different from me because they can let me think in a different way.

* * * * *

1. Tenacity is the most important factor that made Andrew achieve success in his work and become the promoter of Apex Communications.
2. Unhealthy diet is a common reason that makes people get cancer. With the development of biotechnology, more and more food we eat is not natural anymore.
3. Learning is a wonderful thing. But, who can decide to make students have a happy learning environment?
4. Since I am a person who loves to enjoy my own time in my room, I have made the room a comfortable place.
5. Taking care of elderly parents causes children great pressure in their daily life, economics, and leisure time.
6. In 2004, the film “Clean,” which was directed by Oliver, let Maggie win the Best Actress in Cannes Film Festival.
7. Life is precious, and we should avoid letting people commit suicide.
8. We may read lots of books to enrich our knowledge of traveling; however, traveling makes us acquire real experiences through our eyes and hands.
9. The addiction to drug and alcohol would make you have psychological diseases such as melancholia or schizophrenia.
10. As a teenager, he had a lot of pressure from school and his family. He knew that if he did not do well on his school work, his father would never let him play baseball again.
11. When I learned to walk as a child, I was scared of tumbling over, so I would grab everything which could make me stand firm.

12. Being a billionaire, I could do lots of things I want to do. For example, I would help people who need help, hire bodyguards for security, and make my parents' dreams come true.
13. Friends who are different from us are good in broadening our horizon and making us have tolerance of different ideas and people.
14. The institute provided a program to help ordinary people understand the feelings of disabled patients. This program went so well that it let the university require its medical students to enroll in the program.
15. Drug addiction indeed causes serious harm not only to individuals themselves but also to society.
16. The first thing that makes me surprise is the low admission fee for students; they just need to spend 30 dollars for a whole afternoon in the amusement park.
17. In our room, we hang our paintings on the wall to let the room feel much livelier.
18. I don't think there will be a perfect parent but people have a certain image of an ideal parent. What makes an ideal parent?
19. The invention of instant powder coffee made the market of coffee in demand, which stimulated an English chemist to manufacture coffee powder in a large amount.
20. In my opinion, the true meaning of education is to make learners build up confidence and self-esteem.
21. They prefer the films that trigger their interests and put them in the high mood, even let them laugh until they burst into tears.
22. He had an unhappy childhood. Perhaps it is the lack of his parents' love and companion that cause him to become so eccentric and mad.
23. An ideal friend gives me some useful advice to solve my problems. Providing me with advice makes me find the way to achieve my goal.
24. In order not to let you leave a bad impression on me, I must tell you that I was able to say a lot of words when I was ten months old.
25. The food you eat will transfer into energy in your body and make you be like reborn.
26. Corporal punishment can cause more influence on students' behavior than teachers' advice.
27. When I missed my hometown, I often express my negative emotion to Jim, and he always patiently made me encouraged.
28. After you finish your lunch, it's time to go to toilet again. When you walk in the toilet, the bad smell makes you step out right away.

29. If we learn to deal with friends who are different from us, it might be easier for us to communicate with any kind of people and make us be open-minded to accept all kinds of friends.
30. You have to choose romantic love songs, so everyone can dance or sing together and it can make the night reach the climax.
31. One way to keep healthy is to control our emotion. Controlling our mood is a good way to make us not to get angry.
32. Unbalanced consumption of food always causes people ill.
33. We all know that stress can let people be attacked of the heart disease more quickly and easily.
34. When writing compositions, we have to let readers know what we are talking about. A precise and clear topic is a key point to catch readers' attention.
35. Deceit, no matter with good intentions or bad intentions, is cheating someone else and may cause you put into jail.
36. Those couples who don't want a baby think children will make themselves bound and make their lives messy.
37. The purpose of specifying what you have done wrong is to make your girlfriend feel that you have really listened to her.
38. Don't think of your sweet memory with your ex-boyfriend very often; don't let you miss your ex-boyfriend.
39. I often create dreams at different stages of my life. My dreams make me expect a beautiful future.
40. When it comes to potato, Americans are the excellent cooks. They know best how to make it tasty and fascinating.

Attaining linguistic proficiency in the EFL/ESL adult classroom through English for Specific Purposes: The Nigeria example

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Abstract

The international status of English, among the languages of the world, makes it imperative for those whose mother tongue is not English, but need it for one reason or the other, to attain a certain level of proficiency that will make them perform optimally in a globalised world. To many people and countries, outside Britain and United States of America, English is either a Foreign Language (EFL) or a Second Language (ESL). Whatever the case, English is needed as a tool to function effectively in the world that is fast becoming a global village, with almost a global economy. Many attempts to make learners proficient in English in the EFL or ESL adult classroom have not been very successful as the learners, who are taught mainly in General Purpose English (GPE), still continue to falter, making their use of English as a tool in a globalised world an impediment to total functionality. This paper, with its theoretical framework situated in the Indian-American scholar Braj Kachru's Concentric Inner, Outer and Expanded Circles, is out to harness the potentials of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as a course and an approach, to communicative language teaching to achieve the needed level of proficiency to perform competitively in a globalised world. This is bearing in mind the fact that those adult learners of English as EFL/ESL can attain a commendable level of required proficiency, if the age factor is not over-emphasized to the detriment of other factors such as personal motivation and time commitment. Recommendations are made that will help achieve linguistic proficiency in the EFL/ESL adult classroom.

Keywords: Proficiency, GPE, EFL, ESL, ESP, Adult classroom.

Introduction

The English language has taken the wind off the sail of other international languages of the world to the extent that it is not only spoken in virtually all the major countries of the world, but it is now the second language of many. Apart from Chinese, English has the largest number of speakers but beats Chinese in the spread of the language across the globe in countries where it is not a native. Numm's (2005) observation that were all English speakers to be located on one continent or in only one geographical area, the importance of the figures would be reduced. This further attests to the importance of English over the language that has the largest population of speakers in the world. The desire for English by many countries of the world is on the increase because the language enjoys relative universality in diplomatic, scientific, and commercial circles. In fact, Jarvis (2005) has affirmed that there are, now, more non-native users than native users of English as well as

diversity of context in terms of the age of learners, nationality, learning background, etc for the first time in history, and that this has become a defining characteristic of ELT today.

In countries where the language is not indigenous; it either has the status of a foreign language (EFL) or a second language (ESL). In countries where it is still a foreign language it enjoys a less priority of use, and in most cases, it is studied just as a school subject and it has few domains of use. On the other hand, in countries where English is adopted as a second language, it enjoys a higher priority of use as it is, in such cases, acquired almost as a matter of course in the process of developing with the mother tongue. For example, in Nigeria, where the language is a second language, there are children who acquire the English language along with the mother tongue because their parents have had the benefit of western education (Ayodele, 2004). In an on-going research by the author, 96.33% of the respondents aged between 13 and 19 years were introduced to English between 1 and 6 years of age. Jarvis (op. cit.) has clarified the EFL/ESL distinction, further, when he says English is foreign when it is used by non-native speakers in a non-native English-speaking nation that is yet to adopt it as the official language, or when used by a non-native speaker on temporary visit to a native English-speaking country. This is the situation in many Asian nations such as Japan, China, Korea, etc. On the other hand, English is a second language to speakers whose nations have adopted it as the official language or by non-speakers who use it on migrating to a native English-speaking country.

Although in ESL cases, English is acquired alongside the mother tongue, the contact between the two languages has some natural effects on both languages. The predominant language of the immediate environment puts serious strain on the effectiveness of the use of the English language.

The English Language in Nigeria

Bamgbose (1971) has rightly stated the status of English in Nigeria when he says English is the most enduring legacy left behind by Nigeria's British colonial masters. English, as the official language in Nigeria, was introduced formally to Nigeria long before the nation's independence in 1960, as it had been a means of communication in general administration, law, mass media and education. In essence, before the nation's attainment of independence in 1960, the English language was fully on ground. Several factors contributed to the strength of English in Nigeria, most especially, the educational ordinances of 1882, 1896, 1918 and 1926, which were put in place deliberately to enhance the status of English in Nigeria, making it a pre-requisite for so many privileges in the country.

Nigeria is the second largest ESL user in the world, next to India. In Nigeria, there are about 500 indigenous languages supported by no less than 250 ethnic cultures and nationalities. It is among this Babel situation that the English language has to contend, especially as it plays the role of a linguistic mediator, among other roles, in the Nigeria's linguistic conundrum. Apart from official quarters and the education sector, where English is spoken and by no more than 20% of the population (Bondima, 2002; Bamisaye & Bankole, 2009), the indigenous languages are wide spread in use, even in official quarters and in the education sector, although informally. This puts the English language at a serious disadvantage in an ESL environment, thus lowering efficiency.

Apart from being a subject studied in Nigerian schools, from the primary up to the university level, English is the prescribed language for education, from the upper primary school up to the university level by virtue of the provisions of the National Policy on Education (1981). Part of the provisions is for Junior Secondary students to study two Nigerian languages made up of:

- (a) the language of their own area and
- (b) any one of the three major Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, subject to availability of teachers.

Although the policy is not being fully implemented, it nonetheless exerts a lot of pressure on the English language as it competes with these indigenous languages in their natural surroundings. Ordinarily, the younger generations who are exposed to English early enough ought to display some level of proficiency in the language, evidence abounds that the reverse is the case. The lack of proficiency at the lower levels of most EFL/ESL countries affects the use of the language at the upper level of the educational system where the English language is a vehicle of instruction, particularly in ESL countries such as Nigeria, where adult learners in the medium of English still continue to stutter, thus making learning in the medium of English tedious.

Theoretical framework

Although English does not have the largest number of speakers in the world, that having been conceded to Chinese, Svartvik & Leech (2006) have affirmed the fact that “what gives English its special status is its unrivalled position as a means of international communication” (p.1). They say it has become the working tongue of the ‘village’ which the Canadian writer Marshall McLuhan predicted that the electronically connected media would eventually transform the present world into. Today the language is the most sought after in the world, spreading its tentacles here and there. This paper examines the problem of proficiency by EFL/ESL users from the framework of Braj Kachru’s Concentric Inner, Outer and Expanding Circles. The Inner Circle consists of English as Native Language (ENL) to those who have English as a Mother Tongue and are known to have native speaker competence because they acquire the language in a natural setting. The Outer Circle comprises users of the language in a non-native environment, but far from English as Foreign Language (EFL). It is found in use in very many domains and has institutional support, in most cases, as a Second Language (ESL), but still without native speaker competence. In almost all Outer Circle countries, English is not only taught in schools, it is also the medium of communication in all official matters. This is the case in Nigeria, one of the major countries in the Outer Circle. The Expanding Circle covers users in other countries who now see the importance of English as a global language and want to avail themselves of the privileges the English language offers in the world that is fast becoming a global village in the areas of science, education and economy. In the Expanding Circle, proficiency in English is an individual affair and not an established or institutional policy. As a non-native tongue, therefore outside the Inner Circle, users in Outer and Expanding Circles lack the competence of users in the Inner Circle since they are exposed to the language in a non-native milieu.

The Problem

Those who belong to the Inner Circle are privileged, in that they learn the language under less pressure, unlike those in the Outer and Expanding Circles “who have to put years of time and effort into attaining some mastery of the language” (Svartik & Leech, 2006:4). For example, majority of second language English users in Nigeria, despite their age of exposure to English, almost at the same time they are introduced to their indigenous language (Ayodele, 2000) show no evidence of proficiency in the language. Although one may not expect the same level of competence with native speakers of the language, a level of proficiency which is expected of second language English users appears to be lacking in Nigeria, which is regarded as the second largest ESL country in the world, next only to India, with about 50 million speakers of English as second language (Jowitt, 2009). Performance in the examinations conducted by public examination bodies in the country continues to point to poor mastery of the English language. The poor performance at the lower levels of Nigeria’s educational system continues to impinge negatively on their performance in other school subjects and at the tertiary level. The case becomes most pathetic when there is evidence that undergraduates in some Nigerian universities with English as a second language cannot write simple applications or fill a simple form in English (Mary: 2009).

In some EFL situations, especially in classrooms where the learners share the same language, which may be either L1 or national language, the tendency is high for tasks that should normally be done in L2 to be done in L1 because of convenience and also the fact that it is natural to use L1. This is in addition to the fact that an EFL user may feel embarrassed by his incompetence in the use of L2 (Nation, 2003). With all these factors necessitating the use of L1 instead of L2, attaining the needed level of proficiency in the EFL classroom is difficult. There is therefore the need to discover a way of attaining proficiency in the EFL adult classroom. Although Nation advocates the use of L1 in foreign language learning, other methods may have to be adopted, especially in the adult EFL classroom.

In many tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the English language curriculum is still not significantly different from General English. Learners are still taken through the rituals of learning the basic rudiments which some of them have mastered, although at times poorly. The situation is more worrisome in specialized institutions such as universities of technology and polytechnics, where English is not regarded as a core course, but which nonetheless is essential for success, not only in their chosen career but also in the larger society. Ewuzie (2009) has condemned obsolete teaching methods that have maintained a firm grip on Nigeria’s tertiary institutions which merely produce certificate carriers with little or no industry experience. He cited a university don who has also expressed sadness at the fact that the curriculum for higher education in Nigeria focuses too much on learning without leaving any room for application and condemned any knowledge acquired in the course of studying for any degree if it is not applied.

The international status of English with its spread globally demands that if the language has to be taught and learnt, it must be taught and learnt well, if the full benefit proficiency in the language guarantees in the global economy is to be fully harnessed. English is the major language of science and technology and a major tool in international diplomacy and the internet. While it may not be expected that foreign or second language English users should match native speakers’ competence, Nunn’s (2005) observation ought to be the

guiding principle in his position that “...international communication seems to require the ability to adjust to almost infinitely diverse intercultural communication situations” (p. 1). This should apply not only to foreign language situation, but also to second language environment, based on the notion of communicative competence which is predicated on appropriateness. Attaining linguistic proficiency cannot be divorced from communicative competence, which is learning to communicate appropriately with the implication that learning should fit into a particular way of communicating in a target community (Nunn, 2005). A target community can be redefined as the audience or professional colleagues to whom a communicative activity is directed. ESP is a method of English language use that has a specific target audience for which English is customized.

Significance of the Paper

Although second and foreign English language learners may not attain native speaker competence, the purpose of this paper is to establish their capability to attain a level of proficiency required to function properly, in their various chosen fields, using the English language medium in a world that is daily shrinking into one big indivisible village. This is especially for adult learners who have been known for the inability to learn another language after initially acquiring a native language that is now competing with a new target language. This paper shows how this category of learners can attain this feat by adopting alternative pedagogic approach, which ESP provides, to second/foreign language English teaching and learning in EFL/ESL adult classroom.

Methodologies in the ESL classroom

Common Methodologies in General English in Nigeria ESL Classroom

General English is the curriculum that exposes second language English learners to a broad spectrum of issues in English with the hope that learners will pick and choose what is relevant to them (Malgwi, 2000). While this method may not be out of place for second language English learners at the lower levels of the educational system, the same may not be said about second language English adult learners who may need English for specific purposes, especially to further a career or a vocation. Second language English learners at tertiary level need more than a mere pick and choose curriculum, but a definite kind of English that will enable them achieve optimally in their chosen field of study that requires English as a medium.

In many General English curriculums, emphasis is on grammar, most often taught in isolation, which, as described by Professor Eric Hawkins in Griffiths (1992), is “like learning to swim by doing movements by the side of the pool but never having a chance to get into the water” (p.63) . The teacher teaches based on the perceived needs of the learners. The learners are left to forage in the labyrinth of the teacher’s ideas, some of which may not be relevant to the direct or immediate needs of the learners. In this kind of scenario, the learner is left at the mercy of the teacher, and he ends up with little benefits.

Methodologies in the English for Specific Purpose Classroom

English for Specific Purposes, as distinguished from General English, is English tailored towards specific needs. Hutchinson & Waters (1991) have observed that the

awareness of a target situation—a definable need to communicate in English is what distinguishes the ESP learner from the learner of General English. The popular slogan by Hutchinson and Waters: “tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need” (p.8) encapsulates the ESP mantra. The incursion of ESP into English language teaching underlies its importance. It was a response to the dwindling performance in English needed for a definite purpose. It debuted after World War III to satisfy the global linguistic needs in commerce, science, technology and international diplomacy. These are needs English has come to meet since then, thus making it the most sought after language globally after its advent on the global scene.

ESP methodology differs from General Purpose English in that its curriculum is purpose-specific based on the analyzed needs of the learners. According to (Coffey, 1985), it involves “a principle of selection from the language to meet the purposes defined” (p.79). Customized curriculum is then designed to meet the identified needs of learners. This is followed by directing the teaching and learning materials to meet specific needs. This kind of curriculum involves developing new kinds of literacy equipping learners with the communicative competence to partake in particular academic and professional cultural contexts (Hyland, 2002). The principle of restriction (Carter, 1983) is usually at work in ESP methodology as an aftermath of needs analysis, which tries to match the actual needs of beneficiaries of second language with appropriate teaching materials and technique. Courses are subsequently designed based on the relative importance and they are carefully arranged to suit the needs of target learners. One major pattern of ESP is the way it ignores areas that are not considered relevant to a specific field. This can be ascertained by the instructor through various means. For example, Sullivan and Girginer (2002) used the interaction and observation method to identify the actual needs of future pilots and air traffic controllers in Turkey to enable them teach them the English they required. This is, in fact, the major focus of ESP approach to teaching English in a non-indigenous setting, focusing learners’ special area of need (Dao-zhi and Chiang-hua, 1987).

For an efficient and effective ESP program in an ESL/EFL classroom, an inquiry based learning method is recommended and this can be based on the following suggestions. The first thing for the ESP teacher to do is to identify the actual as against the perceived needs of learners, which is actually a new approach in communicative language teaching. According to Atkinson (1992), “the current emphasis on communication in the teaching of modern languages involves a move towards encouraging more pupils and less teacher input” (p.6). The learner’s input comes in when he is allowed to identify his shortcomings which will help identify his needs. This is the entry point that has to be ascertained. The entry point can be ascertained through a test of ability conducted early enough, by giving a quiz on what the ESP teacher thinks the learners ought to know. If the learners show no knowledge of what they are expected to know, the ESP teacher then notes the deficiencies as possible areas of concentration in his course design. This is one aspect that appears to be lacking in many ESL/EFL classrooms at present where learners are treated at par. The outcome of the test of ability may necessitate separating the students into different grades based on the learners’ varied abilities. This may be more practicable in the ESL than EFL classroom as learners in ESL classroom have had a longer period of exposure to English than EFL learners.

ESP methodology, as inquiry based learning, highlights specific objectives (Nucifora, 1996). It involves finding out the actual needs of learners as against their perceived needs. This should be done by finding out their entry point thus identifying what they are bringing

in to a new learning environment. This should naturally lead to designing a specific curriculum that will suit the identified needs of learners rather than the instructor's perceived needs. In some cases, some students are again taught already acquired skills, while some needed ones are not attended to. Learners may then be grouped on the basis of their needs and not necessarily based on their courses as it is often suggested, because those on the same program may have different linguistic skills at the entry point. That is, in the first year of entry, the teaching of English, by whatever name, should be based on their immediate needs, while in subsequent years, the teaching of English should be developmental, and may be based on the course of study, with purpose-specific and should be progressive over a period of time. It should be borne in mind that a language is best learnt through constant interactions in various forms. At this point on, it is advised that an ESP program should be taught in small groups with discussion sessions. There should also be seminars with learners presenting papers with the type of English that suits specific disciplines. This is necessary because language is regulated by professional requirement, and as the requirements change, a change in the use of language should not be unexpected (Widdowson, 1998). It has been suggested by Nation (2003) for EFL learners to bring in their L1 knowledge to bear, as a useful tool, on their learning of L2, although without overusing it. This may not be necessary in the case of ESL since the learners have had longer periods of exposure to English in various domains. Some ways of using L2, as suggested by Nation, are, however, useful in attaining proficiency in the ESL/EFL classroom through the use of ESP. Some of them, as applied to adult learners adopting the ESP approach towards the attainment of proficiency in English either as a foreign or second language include the following as adopted for the ESP methodology:

- i. choosing manageable tasks within the learners' proficiency and in this case within the learners' profession or field of interest for which they are learning English with purpose-specific;
- ii. using staged and graded tasks that bring learners up to the required level;
- iii. adopting vocabularies that are common to the beneficiaries' profession; and making such vocabularies as unavoidable part of their teaching/learning and the tasks given;
- iv. making learners aware of the learning goals of each task so that they will see how using the vocabularies of respective professions will enhance achieving a clear short term learning goal and
- v. discussing with learners the value of using the vocabularies and the nuances of respective professions to encourage the use of English with purpose-specific.

An effective ESP instructional approach will include teacher-student interaction with specially prepared materials with purpose-specific and discipline related to help learners accomplish their learning objectives with the aid of classroom interactions through in-class and out-of-class methods. There should be clear objectives of what learners are expected to do with English at the end of the ESP program of instruction. This should be reflected in the type of assignments and tests that will most appropriately reflect the course objectives. This may include activity based assignments/tests with focus on English use in specific disciplines sequentially and frequently. Special writing projects should be introduced to make learners acquire the needed skills that will make them successful in an ESP program and later translate such skills to help them succeed in their chosen career after school. It is assumed that such students already have sufficient exposure to General Purpose English

for communication at the lower levels of education as a necessary foundation that will enable them acquire the new skills in the ESP classroom.

It is necessary to point out that the resources for an ESP program will be specially prepared with reference to the specific needs of learners. A situation where learners are taught using the same materials and expecting that learners will forage and select what is relevant to their needs may not work for adult learners in either EFL or ESL environment. This kind of practice leaves learners more confused at the end of the day. But an ESP approach to the teaching of English at tertiary level sources only for the relevant materials that are of immediate advantage to learners who had earlier been exposed to General English and now only need English for a specific purpose. The instructor should also be involved in the production of relevant materials where they are not immediately available.

Still on learning resources, the ESP instructor should be resourceful enough to make available what the learners need to make them successful, not only in ESP as a program, but as a tool to be optimally useful in careers where English is essential. The responsibility will often rest on the ESP instructor to provide study guides, lecture notes which may be placed on reserve in the library for easy accessibility to all. It may also be required of the ESP instructor to invite guest lecturers from time to time and in different fields who will give lectures that will reflect the use of English in their chosen fields. Learning resources can also include study groups that will inculcate as well as develop writing culture. In the area of syllabus design, the ESP instructor will determine the details: its depth and explicitness, and also decide the kind of flexibility that will be built into the syllabus, and more particularly, how to word the syllabus to make it more user-friendly.

All this might appear grandiose, but a desperate situation such as the state of English in many foreign and second language environments that need English for developmental purposes in the millennium, equally needs some bold steps. This is also important because research evidence abounds to the effect that late learners may also attain proficiency in second language learning comparable to early learners especially if such factors as personal motivation, anxiety, input and output skills, settings and time commitment (Zhao & Morgan, 2004) are explored. Adult learners, according to Ausubel, cited by Zhao and Morgan, have some advantages which they can bring to the learning of a second language. These advantages include:

- i. bigger L1 vocabulary making it unnecessary for them to acquire thousands of new concepts in the target language as children do, and all they need are verbal symbols that represent these concepts;
- ii. adults' capability of making conscious grammatical generalizations which are applied to suitable examples and
- iii. cognitive maturity of adults and their experience place them on a higher pedestal in some aspects of L2 performance (p.5).

ESP as a Course in Second/Foreign Language English Environment

Apart from some countries where English is a native language (ENL) many countries in the world now adopt it as second or foreign language to help them meet the needs of the millennium, because of the position of English as an international language and the fact that the language enjoys wide spread acceptance in science and research, commerce and in diplomatic circles. To these non-native speakers of English, especially at tertiary levels,

English should be properly deployed to meet their specific needs knowing full well that they cannot match the native speakers' competence, no matter how hard they may try.

ESP, like Language for Specific Purpose (LSP), is language as a means to an end and not an end in itself. Graduates in English are prepared for employment in media houses, both print and electronics, advertisement companies, public relations outfits, administrative set ups, etc. but the curriculum in tertiary institutions in many second language English countries such as Nigeria, can hardly prepare their graduates for such employments. Courses in phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics interspersed with a lot of literature courses can hardly put the graduates in good stead for employments outside the classroom. This kind of curriculum will not likely guarantee efficiency in areas the graduates are being prepared to pursue a career later in life, since "acquiring a body of linguistic knowledge for use is an essential part of any language learning" (Nunn, 2005: p.3). Second or foreign language English learners' linguistic proficiency should ensure effectiveness in their future potential employment, and this is possible by making English language teaching purpose-specific for a utilitarian end, rather than teaching it as an end in itself. This is because while ENL learners can carry over their native competence to their future job careers, the same may not be said of ESL/EFL learners. This is particularly so at the tertiary level where learners have chosen a career and they only need English as a tool to fully realize their dreams of being fully effective and optimally useful in their profession. Nigeria, as the second largest ESL country in the world, next only to India sees the importance of the English language beyond the General English taught at the lower levels of primary and secondary education, and so makes the teaching of English compulsory at the tertiary level. At this level, it is taught as Use of English (USE), a supposedly developmental course to help the students grasp the nitty-gritty of the language that will be the medium of expression in their tertiary education. Unfortunately, this USE program is taught in the first year of tertiary education in Nigeria on the belief that incoming students have had a measure of knowledge in English and that what is needed for them is a developmental program. This has been found to be grossly untrue and the assumptions very wrong as the one year USE program has been discovered inadequate considering the level of proficiency of Nigerian undergraduates even at the eve of graduation. This confirms the parlous state of the language in recent times as also attested to by the dismal performance of students in public examinations.

Although ESP is usually canvassed for a USE program at the tertiary level, it is also suggested that full-fledged English departments in universities in ESL/EFL countries should mount ESP programs in addition to the present curriculum, and even encourage students to specialize in ESP so as to go out to impart the needed knowledge in ESP as a new thinking in English language teaching and learning in EFL/ESL setting. This is not common, at present, in many ESL/EFL countries around the world. Using the ESP, as an approach to English language teaching could be part of Jowitt's (2009) idea of eclectic approach to English Language Teaching Across the World (ELTAW) in the present century. This confirms Sarigoz's (2008) observation that "today dedication to a single method is often approached with skepticism" (p.52).

ESP in ESL/EFL environment

ESP Course Description in ESL/EFL Environment

As part of the bold steps needed to achieve effective use of English by both ESL and EFL users in a world that is fast becoming a global village and the English language being a major means of communication, thus making it a global language, the following course description will form a starting point for further curriculum development. It is to act as a guide to teachers and instructors who may not be familiar with ESP course and so may be unable to know where to start from.

While preparing a description of an ESP curriculum for the ESL/EFL classroom, some basic questions are required to be answered. The first of such questions is the content the course will address and how it fits in with the discipline. The value of the course to the students is also very vital a question that has to be answered. The way the course is structured is also very significant in the course description. It is advised that in an ESP program for the ESL/EFL classroom there should be small groups having discussion sessions. Seminars as well as lectures with presentation of papers adopting the kind of English that suits specific disciplines should form part of the course description.

ESP Course Objectives in ESL/EFL Environment

In an ESP program designed for ESL/EFL environment, there should be clearly stated objectives which should include what learners will know and be able to do as a result of having gone through an ESP in an ESL/EFL environment. Part of the objectives should also be the learning skills learners will develop in an ESP program of instruction. In fact, the goal of the ESP teacher is similar to Jarvis's (2005) concept, which is "to promote a pedagogy which reflects what users are actually doing with language, rather than prescribing items to be taught" (p. 4). This prescriptive method, common in General English, cannot guarantee the needed proficiency for adult learners in an ESL/EFL setting. As a guide, the objectives of ESP course in an ESL/EFL environment could include the following among others depending on the specific environment and situation:

- i. to identify learners specific needs;
- ii. to make learners learn the specific English required for their use in specific professions without compromising standard;
- iii. to learn the vocabulary peculiar to a specific profession and
- iv. to assist learners attain the needed level of confidence in the use of English that will enable them perform optimally in their respective professions.

Instructional Approaches in ESP Class

A well structured course description and objectives should be followed by an appropriate instructional approach, if the objectives have to be fully achieved. The following instructional approaches are recommended in an ESP program for ESL/EFL classroom environment to attain linguistic competence:

- i. the teacher should be familiar with the actual needs of students and so have materials specially prepared with purpose-specific and discipline-related, and

- adopting an instructional approach most suitable and conducive to help learners accomplish set objectives; Hutchinson & Waters (1991), for example, favors the choice of texts from learners' discipline and
- ii. classroom interaction should be facilitated through in-class and out-of-class methods or any other method the teacher may find useful and usable for individual group of learners.

The approach adopted by a teacher has a lot of implications for the attainment of linguistic competence through the ESP methodology in an ESL/EFL environment. If the approach is appropriate, learners are bound to improve their proficiency that will be more beneficial in their use of English as it affects their specific professions.

Course Requirements/Assignments

Course requirements in an ESP program for ESL/EFL learners that will enable learners attain linguistic competence should centre on issues such as:

- i. what the students are expected to do in the course;
- ii. the kinds of assignments, tests that most appropriately reflect the course objectives, which may include activity based assignments/tests with focus on English use in specific disciplines sequentially and frequently, and special projects that will showcase the specific use of English in some disciplines and
- iii. the kinds of skills students need to have in order to be successful in an ESP program to help learners achieve linguistic competence, and these will include adequate exposure to General-purpose English at a lower level as well as adequate communication skills in the English language.

Course Policies

Clearly defined policies are needed for an effective ESP program for the attainment of linguistic competence in an ESL/EFL classroom and this must centre primarily on what is expected of learners. Other policy issues include evaluation of learners' works, and this will bother on the number of tests to be given and whether in-class or take-home. The issue of how students will receive feedback on their performance is also very vital as timely receipt of evaluation either through the instructor, self-assessment or peer review will help learners adjust timely and appropriately to the learning tasks. The frequency of the tests/assignments with appropriate feedback will be a good motivation needed for the attainment of linguistic proficiency. If tests/assignments are sparingly given the language may fall into disuse and this will not augur well for the attainment of linguistic proficiency in an ESL/EFL classroom adopting the ESP approach.

Texts/Resources/Readings

The issue of texts/resources for use should be addressed by the instructor who should not only be a teacher, but also a provider of texts and reading material. This he can provide personally or sourced from other places. One thing is that the material must be capable of meeting the needs of learners. When prepared personally by the instructor, it must be properly prepared with reference to the specific needs already identified and for which

objectives have been set out at the inception. The following issues bothering on learning resources should be addressed:

- i. the way learners will be most successful in the course, and this should be addressed by the resourcefulness of the instructor;
- ii. the resources that are available which learners can benefit from; in this case the ESP instructor should provide study guides, and lecture notes may be placed on reserve in the library;
- iii. guest speakers who are conversant with the use of vocabulary in specific disciplines may be invited to give lectures where the use of English in such disciplines will be showcased;
- iv. study groups may be organized and given assignments related to the use of English in specific disciplines and
- v. the culture of writing should be encouraged among learners who should be given writing assignments from time to time to perfect their use of English.

Syllabus Design

A course of instruction in ESP to help attain linguistic competence in an ESL/EFL classroom requires a well designed syllabus that will meet the needs of beneficiaries. Such a syllabus should take cognizance of the following:

- i. details of the syllabus to see its depth and explicitness;
- ii. whether or not some flexibility will be built into the syllabus to accommodate learners' identified and new needs as they manifest and
- iii. framing the syllabus to make it user-friendly.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Although ESP may not be a new phenomenon in the teaching and learning of the English language in some parts of the world, it is substantially still a novel idea in Nigeria, the second largest ESL country in the world. This status notwithstanding, proficiency in the use of the language continues to wane. This paper has traced the origin of ESP and considered its methodology and other issues such as objectives, instructional approaches, requirements/assignments, policies, learning resources and syllabus design as panacea to the dwindling proficiency in English in an ESL/EFL environment.

It is the opinion of this writer that attaining the expected proficiency in the use of English by ESL/EFL users requires the following:

- i. teachers in ESL/EFL countries should be made to undergo training in ESP to enable them adopt it in teaching learners, especially adult learners the kind of English that will make them perform optimally in their chosen profession;
- ii. existing departments of English or General Studies that teach English, by whatever name, should start considering the adoption of ESP as a method in the teaching of English, especially in specialized tertiary institutions where English is not considered a major, but which nonetheless is essential to successfully accomplish and actualize learners' goals in their respective professions;

- iii. English should be taught at all levels especially in ESL countries where it is taught as Use of English and contact restricted to only one or two semesters;
- iv. it is recommended, where English is taught only as Use of English to non-English majors, that the teaching should be faculty or departmental based with each faculty or even department having a dedicated instructor, where the personnel and resources are available, so that the instructor will be devoted to the specific needs of the faculty or department (Ghani, 1989);
- v. where the above is achievable, there should be specialized syllabus that is discipline-specific and
- vi. full-fledged departments of English in conventional universities should commence curriculum in ESP, as a necessity, to improve and equip graduates in English to impact positively on others and also make them fit into different employments in a world that is fast becoming a global village with a global economy and of which English is the medium of exchange.

There are no disputes on the idea of “earlier is better” but to predicate successful proficiency in second language on age alone is to diminish the importance of other critical factors such as personal motivation and time commitment. With different approaches, adult learners of foreign or second language English can also benefit significantly. This is the gap this paper is out to fill with the adoption of ESP as an approach to adult learners in EFL/ESL classroom.

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“Stories from Abroad” – Students’ Narratives about Intercultural Encounters

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze the narrative inquiries produced by proficient students of English (n= 40) who described and reflected upon their encounters with foreigners (native and non- native speakers of English). Narrative approach views individuals as ‘story- telling organisms’ who by narrating a story reflect upon and understand their experience. Narrating stories based on intercultural encounters brings a variety of benefits (both educational and personal). It helps to derive the meaning from a particular, single, context- specific situation; build the knowledge about culture-bound behaviour, gradually develop students’ intercultural competence, and finally increase their self-knowledge. As students reported, it was also a memorable and personally significant experience, however not always positive.

Keywords: narrative inquiry, intercultural competence, intercultural encounters, cultural awareness

Introduction

Current tendencies in educational and social sciences stress the role of internal cognitive and reflective processes in determining individual’s perception and action. In the view of narrative approach human beings are described as “story-telling organisms” (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 2, as cited in Wajnryb, 2003, p. 2; MacIntyre, as cited in Flyvbjerg, 2005, p. 63; Trahar, 2009). Wajnryb (2003) perceives an individual as “the reservoir of countless micro-episodes of experience constituted of recollections of previous (long past and recent past) engagements with people and events” (p. 14).

The major principle behind narrative analysis is that human beings make sense of random experience by the imposition of story structures (Sinclair Bell, 2002, p. 207; Trahar, 2009). Telling the story is significant as it organizes the past experience and prepares for future action. Clandinin and Connelly (1989, p. 2) summarize it by saying that “the storied quality of experience is both unconsciously restoried in life, and consciously restoried, retold and relived through processes of reflection. Narratives are as essential as the action itself.” Thus, according to Clandinin and Connelly (2006, p. 375), narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story. And as such, it is the first and foremost way of thinking about experience. Similar view is expressed by Wajnryb (2003, p. 8) who perceives experience as the raw material of story, which itself is the raw material of narrative text. For Wajnryb, the experience is the event or incident, moment or a slice of life that is encountered as it happens, whereas the story is a person’s reflection on the experience, which can be defined as the individual or introspective or subjective recollection of the human experience.

Narrative inquires may serve a variety of functions. However, Wajnryb (2003, p. 14) points out that the value of narratives lies in the fact that they combine two elements, i. e. the individual/ biographical aspect and the collective/ shared experience. Consequently, first and the most important function of the narratives lies in how they help individuals to structure and understand their experience. As Connelly and Clandinin (1989, p. 4) say, stories provide a narrative thread that people draw on to make sense of their experience and themselves. If additionally, the experience is connected with the situation culturally or linguistically different from participants' backgrounds, narrative inquiry provides shaped windows where participants could restore their understandings of diversity ((Mitton-Kükner, Nelson, Desrochers (2010, p. 1162). Secondly, by sharing with others, narratives or stories provide a common ground for discussion and ideas sharing.

Beijaard et al. (2004, p. 121 as cited in Tsui, 2007) adds that stories may serve as a catalyst for reflection as “through storytelling, teachers (or people in a general sense) engage in narrative theorizing” (p. 659).

And finally, narrative inquiry serves as a mediation between the past and the future, thus promoting another, future story (or forward looking story Mitton-Kükner, Nelson, Desrochers, 2010, p. 1168). Thinking narratively individuals consider who they are in the present while creating beginnings to who they might be in the future (Mitton-Kükner, Nelson, Desrochers, 2010, p. 1168).

Narrative - History and Current Applications

Narrative inquiry has been known from the Ancient Times as a basic way to derive meaning from experience (Flyvbjerg, 2005, p. 63). It, however, regained its popularity in the 20th century. Sinclair Bell (2002, p. 208) enumerates some areas in which narrative inquiry found its place, namely:

- teacher education (teacher professional development) - narratives in teacher education shed some light on how teachers construct their professional identity and how they shape their practice. Connelly and Clandinin (1989, p. 4) talk about “stories to live by”, i. e. a narrative inquiry of teacher’s professional identity, which allow teachers to discover their professional identity or their behavioural patterns. They may result in new or different stories (Beijaard et al, 2004, p. 121 as cited in Tsui, 2007, p. 659);
- language education - narratives provided by learners or language users indicate what and how patterns of language use are established;
- learner training (preparing learners for autonomy) - learner autobiography, diary studies and case studies; learner portfolio. Narratives inform the learners and enable them to get insight into their motivation, strategies and goals of language learning;
- narratives from language educators, allowing for explicit analysis and reflection.

There is also one more application of narratives I can think of, namely: a means for developing intercultural competence. Meeting a foreigner is always a unique experience of either positive or negative nature. Thinking about it, and consequently narrating it promotes reflection, understanding, and brings change. The value of narratives in fostering positive attitudes towards others is recognized by many authors. It is enough to mention the initiative of Council of Europe, namely: the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters, the document prepared by a group of researchers, including:

Micheal Byram, Martyn Barrett, Julia Ipgrave, Robert Jackson, Maria del Carmen Mendez Garcia and published for the first time in March 2009 (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/autobiogrweb_EN.asp, accessed 15.03.2010). In the document we can read that: “the retrospective view of the intercultural encounter favours a critical analysis of the way the user acted at the time, how he or she sees the encounter now and how he or she might respond in the future.” The *Autobiography* has the potential to promote change in various aspects, namely: behaviour, knowledge and skills, attitudes and action.

The Nature of Narratives

Narrative inquiry is based on the assumption that observation, followed by description and interpretation of the events brings understanding. Labov (Flyvbjerg, 2005, p. 64) says that when a good narrative is finished, it is unlikely to ask a question “what is the point?”, because the narrative is an answer itself.

Narrative analysis is sometimes compared to critical incidents (or Critical Incident Technique), and indeed, both of them share some similarities. As Tripp (1993, p. 112) points out, in both approaches the past (understood as a past experience) is used to illuminate, articulate, understand and gain control over our professional development, judgement and practice.

Critical incidents refer to positive or negative situations/ events that are experienced. According to Tripp (1993, p. 24), critical incidents are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures; that’s why they significantly contribute to one’s understanding of some phenomena. Analysis and evaluation of critical incidents enable to reflect upon the nature of these phenomena. Camilleri (2002, p. 15) prefers to use the term “biographical approach based on anecdotal evidence” given by people sensitive to culture. This feature, however, is also partially characteristic for narrative inquiry.

Tripp (1993, p. 24-25) claims that “critical incidents appear to be ‘typical’ rather than critical at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis”. He says that there are two important stages in the creation of critical incidents, namely: the production of an incident (observation, recall and description of what happened;) and analysis (finding more general meaning of the incident and its evaluation). This procedure can surely be followed in narrative inquiry.

The difference, however, lies in the purpose of using these two. Critical incidents may be the primary source of data, a departure point for reflection and understanding of certain values, judgements and practices. In contrast, when talking about narrative analysis, people work the other way round, from observations, narratives to some critical incidents that lie behind them. Both procedures can, however, reveal things unobservable in any other ways or challenge values that lie behind the incidents and narratives respectively.

The Study Proper

The study conducted among 40 students of English Philology Department (University of Silesia, Poland) aimed to shed the light on the following issues:

- What are the most common things, issues, topics covered in the narratives of intercultural encounters?

- What emotions are reported by the students when they narrate the intercultural encounter? Is meeting “the Others” viewed as a positive nor negative experience? What feelings accompany students when they narrate the situation?
- What value/ benefit do students see in the event? In what way have intercultural encounters contributed to students’ overall linguistic and cultural development?

The students attended the second year of MA programme. They mostly specialized in EFL teaching. Throughout their BA and MA studies they covered some courses in ELT, SLA theory, psychology, linguistics and applied linguistics. The gender distribution of the group was: 38 females and 2 males.

The study, conducted in March 2010, was preceded by a series of lectures concerning intercultural competence, techniques applied to develop cultural competence and stages of becoming interculturally competent. The students were requested to narrate, i. e. to describe and reflect upon the encounter with the foreigner. To enhance the process of narrativization the students were asked a series of questions (e. g. What happened? When? And Why? Why is this situation significant for you? What have you learned from this situation?).

The Study Results

The analysis of the students’ narratives showed that encounters with the foreigners evoked strong feelings on the part of the students. The vocabulary used in the narratives included a lot of emotionally loaded words. Additionally, the students provided a multitude of sincere comments and expressions denoting strong emotional engagement. Negative feelings prevail, namely:

- Surprise (due to something unpleasant, unexpected), bafflement (9),
- Discomfort, frustration (5),
- Shame (2),
- Stress, anxiety (2),
- Scepticism, disbelief (2),
- Fear of negative evaluation, fright, inability to concentrate, which usually accompanied their attempts to communicate,
- Nervousness,
- Disappointment (especially with their own verbal or non-verbal behaviour),
- Discouragement.

The students also reported some positive feelings, i. e.:

- Surprise (positive; great experience) (8),
- Amusement (2),
- Curiosity (interest).

From the analysis of the narratives we can guess that encounters with foreigners are thought- provoking experiences, which put the students into the unknown, difficult to cope with situation. Quite a lot of the students confessed to the feelings of uncertainty, resulting from:

- Confusion (i. e. lack of knowledge, not knowing how to react) (6),
- Embarrassment (6), caused by unexpected situation or interlocutor’s response,
- Astonishment (5),
- Dissonance due to cultural or linguistic differences.

The narratives described mostly the encounters with native speakers of English (Englishmen, Americans or Australians). Some of them, however, pictured the meetings with the representative of other nationalities, namely: Turkish, Bulgarian, Brazilian, French, Nigerian, Marrocean, Portugese.

As far as the topics of the encounters are concerned, they can be classified into four broad categories, namely: issues related to culture, language, attitude and situations increasing one's self-knowledge. Cultural issues refer mostly to recognizing differences in norms, values and patterns of behaviour. Linguistic issues concentrate mostly on suprasegmentals (i. e. intonation), problems with adjusting language to various social situations and difficulties in conveying hidden and refined meanings (i. e. metaphoric language, language humour). Category of attitudes covers the situations that contribute to the change of perception of foreigners as well as the verification of stereotypes. And finally, self- knowledge category deals with personal benefits, including increased understanding of one's own behaviour, emotions and expectations. The detailed enumeration of the issues that were tackled is presented in table 1.

Table 1
Thematic Analysis of Students' Narratives

| Category | Topics covered in students' narratives |
|-------------------|--|
| Cultural issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different interpretation of certain traditions students were accustomed to, unusual behavioural routines, everyday culture (e. g. buying sun cream for Xmas, celebrating Christmas on the beach in Portugal or in the streets in Nigeria, observing Lent, i. e. withdrawing from eating anything, different superstitions: unfolded umbrella brings bad luck in England); • Different values and norms of socially accepted behaviour, realizing different code of conduct and social norms (e. g. cheating, not locking doors; leaving tips, which is unwritten but essential rule to follow; differences in Polish, UK, and US educational systems; different meaning of non-verbal language-nodding head denotes refusal in Bulgaria); • Different degrees of formality to certain procedures (application for a job, job references); • Observing certain rituals, celebrating traditions and events, e. g. American being serious and solemn towards folding the flag ceremony and demonstrating it with pride); • Noticing unacceptable behaviour of tourists, e. g. observing tourists in Turkey who did not bother to observe Turkish traditions and were unwilling learn new things about Turkish culture). |
| Linguistic issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in recognizing language varieties and dialects (A.E./ B.E; Geordie); • Difficulties in differentiating between formal and informal language; colloquial language; humorous use of language and metaphorical expressions; • Difficulties with conveying meaning, esp. with specific words or some nuances; • Problems to adjust and modify language to various people (esp. old people, children) and situational contexts (e. g. informal encounters in a pub); • Difficulties with the frequency of occurrence esp. of polite forms: high frequency of 'thank you', 'please' in English when compared |

Cont. Table 1

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| | with Polish, which resulted in communicational failure, losing face and getting negative feedback from the interlocutor; |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting feedback on your English; • Wrong pronunciation or mispronunciation of the words. |
| Attitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking stereotypes, realizing false stereotypes, changing attitudes (e. g. British believed to be rude and reserved, in fact turned out to be hospitable, polite and willing to offer help;; 5 o'clock tea); • Realizing negative stereotypes, experiencing hostile attitude from others (e. g. being refused to serve by a French shop assistant, because of a good command of English); • Foreigner's low level of knowledge about Polish culture, lack of basic factual, i. e. geographical information about Poland (the example of Germans and Americans, who located Poland next to the Meditarrenian Sea or thought that Russian phrasebook would be suitable to communicate in Poland); • Noticing certain prejudices, indifferent or negative attitudes (French and Turkish situations). |
| Self- knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication apprehension (fear of speaking with native speakers, lack of spontaneity), difficulties in initiating conversations or making phone calls; • Problems with conducting conversation, understanding figurative, non-literal or implied meanings; problems with understanding non-verbal communication and cope with inadequate linguistic knowledge (e. g. "at first Americans are marveled at your command of English, later they start correcting you"); • Learning from a native speaker, getting some additional content or cultural knowledge (i. e. exchanging ideas with native speakers about language e. g. onomatopoeic words, colloquial English); observing native speaker behaviour (e. g. noticing native speaker's difficulty in explaining the word 'plausible' to his interlocutor). |

As far as the structure of the narratives is concerned, it varies depending on the author and the topic covered. Noticeable is the fact that there is a large discrepancy in terms of the length of particular parts (some narratives are elaborate, detailed and personal, whereas the others capture the most essential things). While analyzing the structure of the students' narrative inquiries in details, 87% of them is divided into paragraphs, whereas the remaining 13% is not. Majority of them follow the pattern: description of the situation (background), analysis and conclusions. The final part (conclusions) includes both general remarks or reflections as well applications or references to one's life.

The wording used in the narratives ranges from 340 (the minimum number of characters) to 788 (the maximum number), with 489, being the average number.

The narratives differ in form (some are dialogic, whereas others are purely descriptive, containing some observations and remarks) and in the depth of the analysis (some evaluate the situation from different angles, whereas others present one dimension of the event).

Quite interesting is this part of the narratives that tackles the relevance of the encounter to the life or present situation of the subjects. The analysis of the narratives

proved that meeting a foreigner is a memorable experience, providing a learning opportunity, which is significant for the learner. It can bring change in at least three areas: awareness of culture (both L1 and L2) and culturally- induced behaviour; language awareness and awareness of oneself as a learner and as a person. The benefits that the students drew from the narratives are enlisted in table 2.

Table 2

Benefits of Cultural Encounters Reported by Students in their Narratives

| Areas of change | The benefits of meeting a foreigner – the analysis of students' reports |
|--|--|
| Awareness of culture and culturally- induced behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the cultural differences, which results in greater sensitivity to cultural issues as well as the awareness of the impact of culture on people's behaviour; • Reflection about L1 and L2 differences and L1 and L2 culture, better knowledge and understanding of Polish culture; • Awareness that each culture is unique ("every culture has its own climate" as one of the students said); • Realizing the change of perception while learning English (it refers to initial conceptions to L2 culture which were verified in the process of individual's contact with this culture), change in thinking and perception of others, realization that some stereotypes or opinions are not true; • Awareness of how deeply rooted certain stereotypes are; • Surprise at American negligence and disinterest in some contemporary issues. |
| Language awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased language awareness, esp. for shared knowledge and culture specific linguistic features (e. g. idioms); broadening of linguistic knowledge, esp. concerning language variety, pronunciation, metaphorical or humorous use of language); • Observation of how people react, awareness of differences in behaviour and some social as well as linguistic barriers that may affect communication; observation and reflection of how people (esp. Americans) react to one's use of idioms or strange (incorrect or incomprehensible) language; • Awareness of language is used in different situations. |
| Awareness of oneself as a person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self- observation, esp. in difficult to handle or stress- evoking situations; • Better self-confidence thanks to some positive experience ("the devil is not as black as it is painted" as one of the students commented), broadening one' horizons; satisfaction; • Noticing the need to be inquisitive and curious towards other culture in order to extend one's knowledge and develop appropriate attitudes. |
| Awareness of oneself as a learner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of hard work that needs to be paid to learn a language; • Realizing the need for better and more detailed preparation for each visit; |

Cont. Table 2

- Awareness of how to use the environment for initiating and sustaining conversation;
- Awareness of some barriers (e. g. one's unwillingness to learn about other cultures, lack of openness towards others).
- Recognizing the importance of pronunciation, language and native speakers, which resulted in the change of one's teaching;
- The need of being a learner (necessity to be open and willing to absorb the knowledge); freeing oneself from assumptions that high level of proficiency guarantees no problems in communication;
- Verification of one's previous knowledge and opinions, change in thinking about native speakers and Polish people;
- Surprise at American negligence and disinterest in some contemporary issues.

Two samples of students' narratives are included in Appendix.

Conclusions

Asking students to reflect and then report upon the intercultural encounters brings several benefits of the short-term and long-term relevance. First of all, the task combines cultural, linguistic and personal elements, and as such enables to handle real-life experience, which is later transformed into useful knowledge (and self-knowledge). As a result, it may gradually build intercultural competence. Camilleri (2002: 23) summarizes it by saying that as a means of fostering intercultural competence there is a need for:

- a) developing cognitive complexity in responding to new environments
- b) motivating affective co-orientation towards fresh encounters
- c) directing behaviour to perform various interactions with additional social groups.

Narratives about intercultural encounters may also serve as a practical tool for helping individuals to make sense from intercultural encounters. The idea of multilingual and multicultural society, strongly supported by Council of Europe and ECML (2008 was proclaimed as a year of Intercultural Dialogue; www.coe.int; www.ecml.at) as well as UNESCO (2010 was declared as a Year for Rapprochement of Cultures; <http://www.unesco.org>, 15 March 2010), calls for the development of attitudes (e.g. understanding, sensitivity, tolerance, openness) and skills (e.g. observation, reflection) necessary to handle intercultural encounter.

Narrating about intercultural encounters sharpens participants' perception as learners but also as future teachers. It makes them realize what to focus on in their teaching practice and what to emphasize in teaching to avoid embarrassing situations and minimize sociocultural transfer.

In this particular study narratives seem to affect four dimensions of an individual: me as a person (attitudes, emotions, self-knowledge, self-concept, self-belief or self-confidence), me as the participant of the intercultural encounter (feelings, sensitivity to cultural issues, etc.), me as a learner (deeper understanding, recognition of language issues previously neglected or missed) and me as a future teacher (a promise and rationale for changing one's future teaching).

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Webgraphy:

- <http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/AUTOBIOGRAPHY/>
- <http://www.coe.int>, 15 March 2010
- <http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/AUTOBIOGRAPHY/>, 15 March 2010
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- <http://www.unesco.org/en/rapprochement-of-cultures>, 15 March 2010
- <http://www.ukessays.com/essays/linguistics/william-labov.php>, 20 July 2010

Appendix

Samples of students' narratives.

Example 1

"I had an opportunity to spend some time among American and British native speakers of English, while staying in Canada and England. When it comes to cultural differences I did not notice many of them. In term of temperament, paradoxically, American people seem to be closer to Polish people than the British. They are easy-going and hospitable, just as Polish people. When I was in Canada, I could pay a visit without making an appointment in advance and it was not considered rude.(...) From what I experienced, American people are more sincere and authentic.

The thing that I really liked about American people is that they always try to be positive about everything, irrespectively of what happens. When I asked my American friends how it was going they often smiled and said that everything was fine. It is of course impossible that things were always fine, but try to ask a Polish person the same question and then you have them complaining at length about all the problems of the world...

There are also some obvious differences between the language we learn in the classroom and the authentic one. At first, everyone compliment you on your excellent command of English. Both American and British people seem to be glad about the fact that a foreigner speaks to them in their own language. One of my American friend marveled at the fact that I actually learned English "so well" without living in an English-speaking country. However, when they got to know you better, they start to be more frank with you. They correct your mistakes and laugh at them. At the beginning, I found it quite annoying, but then I got used to that, and I was grateful for that in the long run. You have to be very careful about the choice of vocabulary. I think rather British than American dialect is promoted in Polish schools, and this can mislead many Polish student of English, especially at an advanced level, as they are to talk to an American native speaker. Generally, American dialect, apart from slangish words, is simpler. American people do not use sophisticated words ,because they do not think it is necessary. Communication is simple. Principle of minimum effort. Lots of abbreviations. There are some nice expressions and idioms that American people would never use such as "to give somebody a fright" - they consider them rather snobbish. And when I once said "I'm not form this neck of woods", my American friends nearly fell off their chairs ☺.

The problem that I experienced when I was in Canada was with the accent. always learned British accent and I had only British phonetics and I always preferred British accent to the American one. But sometimes when I tried to talk to American people with the British accent, they did not understand me. I am not sure if they really did not understand me or they were just pretending. I learned somewhere that American people do not really like when someone talks with a fake British accent. Since that time, I always try to switch to American accent whenever I meet an American native speaker."

Example 2 "Cross-cultural incident"

"The cross-cultural incident that most lingers in my memory took place in London where I was living for a year and a half during my gap year. I was twenty one. I was requested to sub my friend for a month. I consented to her proposal since it was a golden opportunity for me to get teaching experience in a multicultural classroom. I was teaching 2 groups of children. The group highly varied in terms of nationalities. In the third week I was called by the principal who wanted to have a talk with me. I remember that I got excited about it since it appeared to me that I was faring well in my work. It turned out that the parent of a Thai child come to the principal to lodge a complaint against me. The parent complained that I once patted his child's head and that I tended to hand out papers over his child's head. When I heard that I was extremely baffled and astonished. At first, I felt as someone played a joke on me. But the I realized that it was happening really. I learned form the principal that in Southeast Asia the head is considered to be the most sacred part of the human body and one should never touch anyone's else's head. Hence, in Southeast Asian countries it is exceptionally inappropriate to touch one's head and passing an object over a person's head is perceived as an insult.

What I learnt from this cross-cultural experience is that it is crucial indeed to get knowledge of various cultures, especially of these with which we are in touch on a regular basis. Furthermore, we should also make an attempt at understanding these cultures. In addition to this, one should also bear in mind what people form various cultures may feel or think since what we may be doing may actually make them feel uncomfortable, confused or they may even be piqued at our behaviour or words. It turns out, as it was my case that the gesture of patting someone else's head has a totally different meaning in Western culture than in Asian, and that in turn may result in troublesome and unpleasant situations and might lead to miscommunication."

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Commonalities and Discrepancies in L2 Teachers' Beliefs and Practices about Vocabulary Pedagogy: A Small Culture Perspective

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Abstract

In the past two decades, research has increasingly focused on the relationship between second language (L2) teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practices. Relatively few studies, however, have examined teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction, in spite of the central role that vocabulary acquisition plays in L2 learning, and the importance of instruction in fostering learners' vocabulary development. This paper seeks to redress that balance by reporting on a case study of four Chinese English teachers in the People's Republic of China, focusing on their beliefs about vocabulary teaching and their pedagogical practices. Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and stimulated recall were employed to elicit the teachers' beliefs and to help understand their practices. The teachers expressed similar beliefs relating to such aspects of vocabulary pedagogy as explicit vocabulary instruction, vocabulary instruction and communication, word meaning guessing, and use of Chinese. However, their pedagogical practices in the observed lessons showed both commonalities and differences. Also, some of their expressed beliefs were congruent with their practices, while there was little or no manifestation of others. The findings are discussed in light of the small cultures that potentially mediate the teachers' beliefs and practices.

Keywords: EFL teaching and learning, vocabulary instruction, teacher beliefs, teacher pedagogical practices, small cultures

Introduction

In the past two decades, second language (L2) research has increasingly focused on teacher cognition, particularly the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practices (Andrews, 2003; S. Borg, 2001; Borg, 2003, 2006; Fang, 1996; Johnson, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Theriot & Tice, 2009). However, relatively few studies have examined L2 teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction (Borg, 2006) despite the central role that vocabulary acquisition plays in L2 learning (Schmitt, 2008) and the importance of instruction in fostering learners' vocabulary

development (Graves, 1987; Laufer, 2005; Schmitt, 2008). This paper seeks to redress that balance by reporting on a case study of four English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in the People's Republic of China, focusing on their beliefs about vocabulary teaching and their pedagogical practices.

Teacher Beliefs and Pedagogical Practices

By drawing on previous definitions (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; M. Borg, 2001; Borg, 2003; Pajares, 1992), teacher beliefs in this study are defined as teachers' thoughts about what should be done with teaching, and include both core and peripheral beliefs. Core beliefs, being "experientially ingrained" (Phipps & Borg, 2009: 388), "are stable and exert a more powerful influence on behaviour than peripheral beliefs" (Phipps & Borg, 2009: 381), whereas peripheral beliefs, being "theoretically embraced" (Phipps & Borg, 2009: 388), may not be reflected in pedagogical practices due to the influence of contextual factors. For instance, in Phipps and Borg (2009) the participant teachers theoretically believed in the value of group work for students, but their practical knowledge told them that teacher-class interactions were easier to manage and could benefit students more, so they used teacher-class interactions instead of group work in grammar teaching. Therefore, their theoretical belief about the value of group work constitutes peripheral belief whereas their practical knowledge about teacher-class interactions formulates core belief.

Teacher beliefs have been found to mutually interact with teachers' pedagogical practices (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Thompson, 1992). That is, teacher beliefs can motivate, shape, or guide teachers' pedagogical practices while teachers' classroom practices can impact upon their beliefs. Teacher beliefs and pedagogical practices have also been observed to be consistent sometimes (Johnson, 1992) but inconsistent at other times (Fang, 1996), and consistencies and inconsistencies can coexist (Basturkmen et al., 2004).

The tensions between teacher beliefs and practices are attributable to the influence of such contextual factors as curriculum, learners' language proficiency, time constraints, and examinations (Borg, 2003). Recently researchers have argued that such inconsistencies result from the competition between teachers' core beliefs and peripheral beliefs and are linked with the mediation of contextual factors: specifically, when contextual factors allow teachers' practices to be guided by their core and peripheral beliefs, few inconsistencies will be observed; otherwise, the pedagogical practices guided by core beliefs will take priority, and inconsistencies between practices and peripheral beliefs will occur (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

These contextual factors can actually be viewed as different levels of small culture. The default notion of culture denotes the large culture, that is, the ethnic, national and international entities (Holliday, 1999). Different from the default notion, small culture refers to "the composite of cohesive behaviour within any social grouping" (Holliday, 1999: 247). A small culture forms when a social grouping has a discernable set of cohesive behaviours and understandings relating to group cohesion (Holliday, 1999). In education, it may refer to school, classroom, teacher and other educational cultures, running between and within large ethnic, national and international cultures. For example, in an international classroom, the members' educational, classroom, collegial and peer experience can converge, building up a new small culture. Thus, small culture is a dynamic

process and can be used as a heuristic means for interpreting emergent group behaviours (Holliday, 1999).

In light of the above explication, vocabulary instruction in a foreign language context should relate to at least three levels of small culture. The first level is the EFL learning culture, the major features of which are the essentialness of classroom instruction and limited opportunities for real language use (Oxford, 2003). The second level is institutional culture, which may require teachers to use a set course book, adopt a fixed teaching approach, follow a similar teaching pace, and even cover similar focal points, as practiced in China. The third level is classroom culture, which may be constituted by the teachers' style, students' English proficiency, vocabulary size and knowledge of word learning strategies, class discipline and so on. The present study adopts this small culture perspective.

The small culture perspective is a further development of the existing cross-cultural studies in cognition research, especially the research relating to learners' epistemological beliefs, that is, beliefs about knowing and knowledge. In recent years, Schommer's (1990) well-known five-dimensional scheme of personal epistemology (consisting of the structure, certainty and source of knowledge, and the control and speed of knowledge acquisition) has been applied or adapted to examine relevant issues in Asian cultures (Hofer, 2010). While Hofer (2008, 2010) welcomes such cross-cultural studies, she calls for research moving "beyond cross-cultural explanations towards deeper within-country explanations of how individuals come to believe about what they do about knowledge and knowing" (Hofer, 2008, p. 17). For Hofer, "cross-cultural explanations" refer to the expansion of research from the United States and Europe to Asian contexts, that is, across national and international cultures, whereas "within-country explanations" should mean the small culture perspective as defined in the current study. Thus, as the small culture perspective serves as a response to Hofer's call, it constitutes a novelty of the present study. However, in contrast with the studies on learners' epistemological beliefs as reviewed in Hofer (2010), the present study focuses on teachers' beliefs about a domain-specific issue: vocabulary instruction.

Current Trends in Vocabulary Instruction and Relevant Studies

It is generally recognized that L2 vocabulary instruction should incorporate both implicit and explicit teaching (Coady, 1997; Sokmen, 1997). Implicit instruction, often taking the form of inferring word meanings from context, can lead to incidental word learning, but it is inadequate for L2 learners' vocabulary acquisition because word meaning guessing is a time-consuming and error-prone process, which may not bring about long-term retention (e.g. Laufer, 2005). Besides, L2 learners, especially learners of a foreign language rather than a second language, who are learning language in the time-constrained instructional context, cannot afford to rely only on implicit word learning (Oxford, 2003). In short, implicit instruction cannot provide learners with sufficient word-learning opportunities to engage in adequate word processing (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008). Hence, explicit teaching is indispensable for L2 word learning. Moreover, in both first language (L1) and L2 teaching, vocabulary instruction entails teaching words and teaching word learning strategies (Graves, 1987; Nation, 2005) because vocabulary instruction cannot cover all the words that learners need for communication, while strategy teaching can help learners develop autonomous word learning competence (Graves, 1987).

As for actual pedagogical practices, empirical studies have revealed the range of classroom vocabulary instruction activities and techniques. Swain and Carroll (1987) and Wright (1993) both found that word instruction in immersion classrooms was associated primarily with reading input, and mainly focused on meaning, with word form and word use being mostly overlooked. Yet a case study of a science content-based class manifested that lexis-related instruction went beyond word meaning, ranging over linguistic, sociolinguistic and discorsal aspects of a word (Lapkin & Swain, 1996). The findings of the above studies indicate that even classes of a similar nature may show discrepancies in vocabulary instruction. This is also exemplified by Tang and Nesi (2003), who found that lexical richness in teacher output was greater in Hong Kong communicative English classes, while more words were explicitly taught in corresponding classes in Guangzhou.

Studies have also revealed the positive effects of specific vocabulary instruction techniques and classroom activities. In particular, researchers found that code-mixing in story-telling (Celik, 2003), semantic mapping (Morin & Goebel, 2001), such techniques as rich instruction, high frequency of encounters with taught words and extending word learning beyond classrooms (Beck, McKeown, & Omanson, 1987), varying classroom configurations including teacher- or student-directed discussions and independent reading (Harmon, 1998), and both overt classroom interactions and covert participation (Dobinson, 2001) all helped lexical learning, although Lightbown, Meare and Halter (1998) noted that communicative classroom interactions mainly provided repeated exposure to high-frequency English words as they contained few new words.

Only one study up to now has examined teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction. The study (Konopak & Williams, 1994), employing written forced-choice instruments, categorized English L1 elementary teachers' vocabulary instruction according to three hypotheses about vocabulary and reading comprehension: a knowledge hypothesis (i.e. knowing a word means knowing word-related ideas), an instrumental hypothesis (i. e. knowledge of individual words is sufficient for comprehension) and an access hypothesis (i. e. knowing a word implies quickly retrieving and using its definition). The results revealed that the teachers overwhelmingly held knowledge orientations, mostly consistent with their lesson descriptions. However, the study constrained teachers' choices, provided no observational data, and hence could not reflect the authentic picture of teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary pedagogy; that is, it lacked ecological validity (Borg, 2006). Also, the findings of the study may not reflect the situation in tertiary-level EFL teaching. Therefore, more studies are warranted.

The Present Study

Research Questions

The present study examined Chinese EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction in classrooms from a small culture perspective. Three research questions (RQs) guided the study:

1. What are L2 teachers' beliefs about vocabulary teaching?
2. How do L2 teachers practice vocabulary instruction in classrooms?
3. To what extent are L2 teachers' beliefs about vocabulary teaching consistent with their pedagogical practices?

Research Context

The study is situated in the context of tertiary EFL teaching in Mainland China, where the learners of English are differentiated between English majors and non-English majors. Non-English majors learn English as a compulsory course in the first two years of their university study to get a Bachelor Degree in a subject other than English. They are usually taught in large classes, where they follow one set of course books and experience a teacher-centered, textbook-bound and language-focused approach. English majors study English and English-related courses for four years to get a Bachelor Degree in English language and literature. They are usually taught in small classes, which provides favorable conditions for communicative language teaching (CLT), although what Chinese EFL teachers do, even in spoken classes, is a weak version of CLT at most (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Wu & Fang, 2002). English majors often have much higher English proficiency than non-English majors since they can have more contact with English. This study is grounded in the English major instructional context.

Method

Participants

The four female participants, Rose, Karen, Jane and Betty (all pseudonyms), came from a key university in South China. As shown in Table 1, Rose and Karen were teaching Year-Two English majors, but Rose's class was the best in Grade Two, whereas Karen's class was average. Jane and Betty were teaching two average Year-One English major classes. Despite teaching students of different grades, the four teachers were assigned to use the same series of course books entitled Communicative English for Chinese Learners (CECL). The theme-based CECL series, co-written by a well-known English teaching expert and a number of teachers in this university, aims to cultivate learners' communicative competence through completing a series of intertwined listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks and activities. Each teacher was allocated seven CECL teaching periods with the same class per week, which were conducted as two double-periods and one triple-period, with each period lasting for 40 minutes. The four teachers had varying experiences with CECL, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1
Profiles of the Four Teachers

| Teachers | Years of teaching | Years of teaching CECL | Qualification | Grade taught | <i>Other information</i> |
|----------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
| Rose | 40 | 24 | BA in English | Year 2 | One of the CECL authors Experience of CECL as a university student |
| Karen | 10 | 10 | MA in lexicography | Year 2 | |
| Jane | 3 | 3 | MA in translation | Year 1 | No learner experience of CECL |
| Betty | 7 | 1 | MA in translation | Year 1 | Experience of CECL as a university student |

Data Collection

Three methods: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and stimulated recall (Basturkmen et al., 2004; Gass & Mackey, 2000) were utilized to elicit teachers' beliefs, understand their pedagogical practices, triangulate the observational data, and infer teachers' unexpressed beliefs (Kagan, 1990). The data were collected by the first-named author, referred to hereafter as "the researcher".

First, interviews were conducted using a guide to focus teachers' attention directly on the issue under study (Bernard, 1988). The interview guide consisted of such open-ended questions as "Do you think vocabulary should be taught in EFL teaching? How do you think vocabulary should be taught and why?" The interview, conducted in Chinese and tape-recorded, lasted for about 30 minutes for each teacher.

Then, the researcher observed the four teachers' double-lessons with their permission on different days. As the researcher took notes, an invited cameraman helped video-tape the lessons. The lessons of Rose and Karen lasted 55 minutes, with the remaining 20 minutes or so being spent on students' morning English report, a routine activity for Year-Two students; those of Jane and Betty both lasted 77 minutes. The lessons represented the teachers' usual instruction, as the teachers and their students confirmed.

About one week after the lesson observation, the stimulated recall was performed. While reading her own lesson transcript, each teacher recalled whether the identified lexical instruction instances were planned or emergent and why those lexical items were focused on. Although the accuracy of the recall might have been adversely affected because of the time lapse between the event and the recall (Ericsson & Simon, 1993), the lesson transcripts helped to offset this and increase the accuracy, according to the teachers. The stimulated recall, conducted in Chinese and tape-recorded, lasted about 30 minutes for each teacher.

Data Analysis

The transcribed data were analyzed as follows. First, all the themes relating to teachers' beliefs were singled out from the semi-structured interviews and the stimulated recall through reading the transcript and listening to the tape repeatedly. Then, each teacher's overall performance of vocabulary instruction was identified in the observed lesson. This was then broken down into vocabulary instruction episodes (VIEs), which were coded. In the study, lexis refers to either single words or multiple-word phrases (Schmitt, 2000). A VIE was defined as the classroom discourse from the point where the attention to vocabulary starts to the point where it ends due to a change in topic (Basturkmen et al., 2004; Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001). Based on the above literature, the identified VIEs were coded from six aspects, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2
VIEs Coding Scheme

| <i>Aspects of coding</i> | <i>Definitions</i> | <i>Categories</i> |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Word initiation | When a VIE was initiated | <i>Reactive</i> (correction by teacher); <i>teacher-initiated</i> instruction; <i>student-initiated</i> query or response |
| Word type | Complexity of a word | <i>Single word</i> ; <i>multiple-word phrase</i> |
| Word knowledge focus | What aspects of word knowledge are discussed | <i>Word form</i> (spelling, pronunciation); <i>word meaning</i> ; <i>word use</i> |
| Instruction contingency | The possibility of word instruction being done | <i>Planned</i> instruction; <i>emergent</i> instruction |
| Instruction purpose | Why a word was taught | <i>Message transfer</i> / <i>meaning understanding</i> ; <i>lexical learning</i> ; <i>unclear purpose</i> |
| Instruction strategy | Methods used for vocabulary teaching | <i>Explicit instruction</i> ; <i>association</i> ; <i>putting into use</i> ; <i>rephrasing</i> ; <i>elaboration</i> ; <i>form-meaning mapping</i> ; <i>use of L1</i> ** |

** The six types of instruction strategy are defined as follows:

- *Explicit instruction*: teacher performing direct teaching by using different methods, for example, explaining word form, word meaning or word use, paraphrasing, or English-Chinese translation;
- *Association*: word teaching by referring to derivational forms, synonyms or antonyms, or by inference;
- *Putting into use*: using a word in a sentence or collocation;
- *Rephrasing*: using different words to express the same meaning;
- *Elaboration*: conveying word meaning by describing a related situation;
- *Form-meaning mapping*: provided with word meaning, students were pushed to retrieve the appropriate word form.
- *Use of L1*: conveying word meaning by switching to Chinese.

In order to enhance the validity and reliability of the data analysis, the VIEs were coded by the researcher repeatedly until unanimity was reached on the last two times' coding, the quoted interview data and the coded VIEs were validated by the teachers, and the stimulated recall data were referred to for triangulation. On completion of data coding, the teachers' VIEs were quantified so as to obtain an overall picture of their vocabulary pedagogy. Finally, the teachers' beliefs and their pedagogical practices were connected.

Findings

Teachers' Beliefs about Vocabulary Teaching

Overall, eight themes emerged from the teachers' interviews and stimulated recall relating to their beliefs. At least three teachers expressed views in relation to each theme. The teachers expressed both shared beliefs (on five themes) and discrepant beliefs (on three themes), which are presented below respectively.

1. Teachers' Shared Beliefs

1) The Importance of Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

All four teachers believed that explicit vocabulary instruction was necessary in EFL teaching. In Rose's words, "It is not about whether vocabulary should be taught or not. The point is how to teach. It is an issue of approach." Rose specifically advocated that useful words and expressions should be pointed out to students so as to arouse their noticing, and only in this way could students possibly use those words and expressions in their production. Karen stated that if students could not guess word meanings, she preferred telling them about the meanings directly or giving them one or two sample sentences for a better understanding, but Karen would not extend her teaching to other aspects of word knowledge because of the limited class time. Karen's self-reporting of her word teaching practices indicates her belief in the necessity of explicit word instruction because beliefs are usually manifested in what people do (Pajares, 1992). Jane said that when she taught CECL for the first time, she did not attach much attention to vocabulary teaching because, as a novice teacher, she did not realize its importance and felt unable to attend to vocabulary teaching in class while focusing on training students' communicative competence. However, later on she realized the importance of word teaching. Jane suggested that students should ideally have a separate lexicology course, so that they could have real contact with vocabulary and feel the fun of learning word meanings and usage, in ways that the communicative approach prevented her from doing. Betty held that words that are potentially new to students should be explained in classroom teaching. For example, when conducting a listening comprehension task, she would do pre-listening or post-listening word teaching. These teachers' belief about the importance of vocabulary instruction is consistent with the views of researchers about the role of explicit instruction in lexical learning (e.g. Laufer, 2005; Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2008).

2) Vocabulary Instruction and Communication

The teachers all believed that vocabulary instruction should be conducted through communication or completing communicative tasks including language-focused activities. Rose thought that learning language through use does not exclude singling out language items for attention as they arise in communication. Karen stated that vocabulary teaching should be conducted through doing all kinds of exercises, taking advantage of the large number of exercises / activities contained in the course book. Jane said that vocabulary teaching should be incorporated in the process of teaching when the right moment arose, while Betty reported that potentially new words that occurred in her teaching would be explained. The teachers' belief about teaching vocabulary in communication or while students are performing activities is close to the proposal of using meaning-focused input and output to learn lexical items (Nation & Gu, 2007).

3) Word Meaning Guessing

All four teachers believed that students should be requested to guess word meanings. Rose stated that students should be trained to guess word meanings from listening because this is how people communicate in reality. She said, "If one student goes to work in an IT

company and he or she has memorized all the necessary words, there are still many uncertainties. How can the teacher predict? Thus, students should be led to learn language by themselves through doing tasks and be trained to take risks in language learning. Then, if they are in real life situations, they will not be panic-stricken.” Karen reported that after students had finished the exercises in the course book, she would usually pick out several difficult words or phrases and request students to guess their meanings. Although students might guess wrongly, Karen insisted that the effort was worthwhile. Jane stated that although word meaning guessing was insufficient for word learning, students should be encouraged to develop that practice. Betty insisted that teachers should encourage students to guess word meanings from reading. The teachers’ belief about word meaning guessing substantiates the idea that word meaning guessing is one of the most preferred and frequently-used word learning strategies (Schmitt, 2008). Their views about vocabulary instruction, teaching words in communication, and word meaning guessing in combination suggest that the teachers advocated that both implicit and explicit word teaching were necessary for EFL vocabulary acquisition, as researchers have argued (e.g. Sokmen, 1997).

4) The Use of L1

The teachers all believed that although using Chinese was not a must in vocabulary instruction, Chinese could be employed to help both students’ understanding and teachers’ exact meaning transfer. Rose insisted that Chinese should be utilized when the English meaning could not be conveyed to students easily. She cited *lake* as an example, saying that if the teacher provided students with its English meaning: “*a large area of water surrounded by land*”, students might still have difficulty in making out its meaning, while if its Chinese meaning was provided, students would immediately get it. Rose’s view agreed with Karen’s idea that Chinese meaning could be provided as a help if students could not catch the English meaning. Jane thought that Chinese should be used when the teacher found it hard to express in English something exclusively Chinese, or was explaining key concepts and notions, or felt students would be unable to understand the English explanation. In Jane’s words, the purpose was to help students’ understanding, increase vividness and have students feel the correspondence between English and Chinese. Betty said that ideally Chinese should not be used because otherwise students might develop the habit of doing translation in class, which is not good for learning a foreign language; however, Chinese could be used to save further confusion when students failed to catch the English meaning of a word by other means. In short, all four teachers held that Chinese could be used as a “scaffolding tool” in teaching words (Brooks-Lewis, 2009, pp. 219-220). Their stated belief about L1 use is also consistent with the views of researchers (e.g. Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Celik, 2003).

5) Word Self-study

Three of the teachers, when interviewed, explicitly mentioned that students should be required to do word self-study after class. Rose felt that students need to learn vocabulary through extensive reading, for example, reading newspapers, and that it would be a pity if students only focused on course books for two years. Karen said that her own university teacher used to provide a wordlist for students’ self-study. She reasoned, “University students already have the ability. If the teacher does too much instruction in class, students

will lose interest and think that the teacher is spoon-feeding them. If students feel a word interesting and useful, they will check the dictionary and pick out sample sentences for mastering the word.” Meanwhile, Betty believed that students should be provided with extra words to study after class depending on the topic concerned. She said that when teaching the units: *“Home and House”* and *“Character and Personality”*, she distributed related wordlists to her students.

2. Teachers’ Discrepant Beliefs

1) The Kind of Word Knowledge Taught

The teachers expressed disparate beliefs about the kind of word knowledge taught. Rose stated that useful words and expressions should be pointed out for students, fine shades of word meaning should be taught, and world knowledge including cultural knowledge should be incorporated into vocabulary teaching so that students could avoid literal translation in expressing ideas. Karen insisted that students should be mainly taught word meanings, either by guessing, direct instruction or sentence illustration, and she would not extend her teaching to other aspects of word knowledge due to the limited class time. Unlike Rose and Karen, Jane and Betty emphasized teaching basic and common words. Jane stated that basic vocabulary must be memorized, and the more words students memorized, the better it would be because this was the foundation of English learning. Betty also stated that teachers should require students to memorize common and productive words rather than receptive words because it was both impossible and unnecessary for students to memorize all the words that they encountered, and words were easy to forget without frequent opportunities to use them.

2) The Role of Learner Factors

Three of the teachers stated that their vocabulary instruction also depended on learner factors, but they pinpointed different factors. Rose and Jane insisted that students’ English proficiency should be considered, but they gave different interpretations. Teaching an advanced class, Rose tended to teach word meanings directly. She said that if she taught an average class, it would be enough to arouse students’ noticing because words and expressions within one unit would appear repeatedly and students should be encouraged to understand word meanings gradually. Unlike Rose, Jane insisted that it was enough to simply guide good students to complete communicative activities without paying special attention to vocabulary, but average or low-proficiency students had to be explicitly taught vocabulary. In Jane’s recent teaching she had increased vocabulary instruction because of the poor English proficiency of her students. Not mentioning students’ English proficiency, Betty said that she relied on students’ response in class to make decisions on vocabulary teaching, especially for the words she used in her lecture. If she perceived from students’ facial expressions that a word might be new, she would do word teaching.

3) Dictionary Checking

All four teachers agreed with the usefulness of dictionary checking for students’ word learning, but they held different beliefs about dictionary checking in class. Rose insisted

that students should be encouraged to check unknown words in the dictionary, especially after class because of the limited class time, but she allowed students to check dictionaries for word meanings, spellings or pronunciations in class in order to train them to work out problems by themselves. For Rose, the important thing was to give students guidance, not to study for them. In her words, “A student who does not study is like a person who cannot swim but falls in the water. The first time you pull him out, but he will fall into the water again and finally will be drowned.” Betty said that if students’ word meaning guessing was far from accurate, she would sometimes ask students to check the dictionary immediately in class. However, Karen held that dictionary checking in class should not be allowed because students should get rid of the habit of checking the dictionary as soon as they come across a new word, especially when the unknown word would not affect message transfer. Also, students might not be able to find the right meaning quickly in class as a word usually has several meaning entries in the dictionary. Thus, checking dictionaries might prevent students from keeping up with class instruction.

Teachers’ Pedagogical Practices

Classroom observations revealed that the four teachers’ lessons were mainly teacher-fronted, involving different activities but similar frequencies of VIEs. As outlined in Table 3, Rose’s and Jane’s lessons involved higher frequencies of VIEs: 0.29 VIEs and 0.3 VIEs per minute respectively, whereas Betty’s class had the lowest frequency: 0.19 VIEs per minute.

The teachers all incorporated vocabulary instruction in completing activities, though in different ways. Rose included word teaching in her communication with students. Karen mainly explained or elaborated potentially problematic words. Jane guided students to elicit word meanings or appropriate words. Betty singled out potentially unknown words or phrases from the input material and questioned students about their meanings, and then explained them or extended her instruction to other related words.

As summarized in Table 4, the teachers’ VIEs, in terms of frequency, showed the following overall trend. They were more teacher-initiated than student-initiated and reactive, focusing more on single words than on multiple-word phrases, more on word meanings than on word forms and word use, more emergent than planned, more for message transfer than for lexical learning, and involving explicit instruction more than such instruction strategies as association, putting into use, elaboration, rephrasing, form-meaning mapping and the use of L1. These features are generally consistent with those of previous studies (Lapkin & Swain, 1996; Punch & Robinson, 1992; Swain & Carroll, 1987; Tang & Nesi, 2003; Wright, 1993) despite their different research contexts.

Table 3
Activities Performed in the Observed Lessons and the Frequencies of VIEs

| <i>Teacher</i> | <i>Activities performed in observed lesson</i> | <i>Length of observed lesson (mins.)</i> | <i>Number of VIEs</i> | <i>Frequency of VIEs (per min.)</i> |
|----------------|--|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Rose | Student presentation of an ad; discussing brand name translation; listening to a dialogue and answering post-listening questions; reading and discussing two ads | 55 | 16 | 0.29 |
| Karen | Pre-reading discussion; a post-reading word exercise; listening to a conversation and post-listening discussion | 55 | 13 | 0.24 |
| Jane | A cloze; reading 8 post cards; listening to 8 short and 2 long dialogues | 77 | 23 | 0.3 |
| Betty | Discussing cultural differences in apology; listening to 3 dialogues and answering post-listening questions | 77 | 15 | 0.19 |

However, individually the teachers showed variations against the overall trend. Particularly, Jane taught more word forms than word meanings, and hence did form-meaning mapping most instead of explicit instruction in her lesson. Karen and Betty did more planned than emergent word teaching and taught words more for lexical learning than for message transfer. The variations are understandable because the teachers taught students of different English proficiency and covered different activities in their lessons as shown in Table 3.

Table 4
Features of the Teachers' VIEs

| <i>Features</i> | <i>Categories</i> | <i>Rose</i> | <i>Karen</i> | <i>Jane</i> | <i>Betty</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Word Initiation | Reactive Teacher | 4 (25%) | 0 | 2 (0.95%) | 1 (6.67%) | 7 (10.5%) |
| | Student | 10 (62.5%) | 13 (100%) | 11 (47.83%) | 14 (93.33%) | 48 (71.6%) |
| | Total (100%) | 2 (12.5%) | 0 | 10 (43.48%) | 0 | 12 (17.9%) |
| Word type | Single | 16 | 13 | 23 | 15 | 67 |
| | Multiple | 15 (93.75%) | 9 (69.23%) | 11 (47.83%) | 8 (53.33%) | 43 (64.2%) |
| Word knowledge focus | Form | 4 (25%) | 0 | 13 (56.52%) | 6 (40%) | 23 (34.3%) |
| | Meaning | 12 (75%) | 13 (100%) | 7 (30.43%) | 6 (40%) | 38 (56.7%) |
| | Use | 0 | 0 | 3 (13.04%) | 3 (20%) | 6 (9%) |
| Instruction contingency | Planned | 3 (18.75%) | 8 (61.54%) | 10 (43.48%) | 8 (53.33%) | 29 (43.3%) |
| | Emergent | 13 (81.25%) | 5 (38.46%) | 13 (56.52%) | 7 (46.67%) | 38 (56.7%) |
| Instruction purpose | Message | 12 (75%) | 6 (46.15%) | 14 (60.87%) | 4 (26.67%) | 36 (53.7%) |
| | Lexical learning | 4 (25%) | 7 (53.85%) | 9 (30.13%) | 11 (73.33%) | 31 (46.3%) |
| Instruction strategy | Explicit instruction | 17 (63%) | 11 (42.3%) | 9 (27.3%) | 10 (50%) | 47 (44.3%) |
| | Association | 5 (18.5%) | 2 (7.7%) | 2 (6.1%) | 3 (15%) | 12 (11.3%) |
| | Putting into use | 1 (3.7%) | 0 | 4 (12.1%) | 2 (10%) | 7 (6.6%) |
| | Elaboration | 0 | 4 (15.4%) | 1 (3%) | 2 (10%) | 7 (6.6%) |
| | Rephrasing | 0 | 4 (15.4%) | 0 | 0 | 4 (3.8%) |
| | Form-meaning mapping | 0 | 0 | 13 (39.4%) | 1 (5%) | 14 (13.2%) |
| | Use of L1 | 4 (14.8%) | 5 (19.2) | 4 (12.1%) | 2 (10%) | 15 (14.2%) |
| | Total (100%) | 27 | 26 | 33 | 20 | 106 |

Note: The total number of VIEs for the first five features was 67, while the total number of instruction strategy uses was 106 because more than one strategy was used in some VIEs.

The Relationship between Teachers' Beliefs and Pedagogical Practices

Overall the four teachers' beliefs were found to be congruent with their pedagogical practices in three respects. That is, in line with their expressed beliefs, the teachers involved vocabulary instruction in their pedagogical practices, conducted vocabulary instruction through communication or performing activities and tasks, and occasionally switched to Chinese in teaching vocabulary. Individually the four teachers' beliefs and practices also showed consistencies. Particularly, Rose's beliefs about using explicit instruction with good students, training students to check dictionaries in class, and involving cultural knowledge in vocabulary instruction were observed in her teaching of the most proficient class in Grade Two. Karen employed explicit instruction most in her lesson and mainly focused on teaching word meanings, which conformed to her stated beliefs. Jane's belief about the importance of vocabulary instruction in EFL teaching was manifested in her trying to elicit from students more appropriate words and expressions when they were doing activities, in many cases through form-meaning mapping, and doing more emergent than planned teaching. Betty's belief about memorizing basic vocabulary was reflected in her trying to extend her explanation of new words to the revision of related known words. However, inconsistencies were also noted because word meaning guessing, dictionary checking and word self-study were either not observed or observed only rarely in the teachers' pedagogical instruction although they expressed their belief in the importance of such strategies in vocabulary teaching.

Discussion

The study investigated four Chinese EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction. The results reveal that the teachers expressed shared beliefs relating to such aspects of vocabulary pedagogy as explicit vocabulary instruction, vocabulary instruction and communication, word meaning guessing, use of L1, and word self-study, but they held discrepant beliefs concerning the kinds of word knowledge taught, the role of learner factors, and dictionary checking; the teachers' pedagogical practices were observed to have shown both commonalities and differences; some of the teachers' expressed beliefs were congruent with their practices, whereas there was little or no manifestation of other beliefs. The findings of the study not only enrich our understanding of the issue under study but also contribute to the literature since few previous studies have examined teachers' beliefs and practices about vocabulary instruction.

The findings of the study will be interpreted from a perspective of small cultures, including China's EFL teaching and learning culture, institutional culture, and classroom culture. The small culture perspective constitutes another contribution of the study to the literature because such a perspective has seldom been utilized in examining teacher cognition. The discussion is organized in four parts.

1. Teachers' Shared Beliefs

The cultivation of the teachers' shared beliefs can probably be attributed to the mediation of small cultures (Holliday, 1999): the Chinese EFL learning culture and the institutional culture that the teachers shared. Despite their different English learning

experiences, the teachers all learned English in China, sharing an EFL culture, which features the essentialness of classroom instruction and limited access to real language use. Thus, there is no wonder that the teachers all emphasized incorporating explicit vocabulary instruction in classroom input and communication, and stressed resorting to Chinese when necessary, since they shared the same L1 as their students. Besides, the teachers, working in the same Faculty, had to observe the Faculty tradition, which required them to use fixed course books, follow the same teaching approach (i.e. CLT), adopt a similar teaching pace, and even share the teaching of key points by holding collective lesson preparations. All these constituted the institutional teaching culture, which should have shaped the teachers' cognitions about vocabulary instruction (Borg, 2003, 2006).

The institutional teaching culture was even able to convert teachers' incompatible beliefs. One example is Jane's change from her original belief in detailed systematic vocabulary instruction, formed under her own university teachers' influence, to her current belief in teaching vocabulary through communication, formulated in the institutional teaching culture. Jane's case manifests how institutional culture may impact upon teachers' pedagogical practices and beliefs. Meanwhile, Jane's belief in the value of detailed vocabulary teaching suggests that the cultural context that the teachers experienced previously, specifically their own language learning experiences, also played a role in cultivating their beliefs about vocabulary teaching (Holt Reynolds, 1992). This is also reflected in the case of Rose. Rose in the interview recalled that her church school English teacher would write Chinese meanings on the blackboard if the students could not guess word meanings correctly from the reading input. Such learning experiences, Rose explicitly declared, had influenced her own use of Chinese in vocabulary teaching. The difference between Rose and Jane is that Rose carried her previous belief into the current cultural context since they were compatible. The teachers' shared beliefs formulated from a small culture perspective also substantiate the effect of educational background (Schommer, 1990) and school culture (Qian & Pan, 2002) on learners' as well as teachers' cultivation of epistemological beliefs.

2. Teachers' Discrepant Beliefs

The teachers also expressed subtly different beliefs. Particularly, regarding the type of word knowledge taught, Rose and Karen emphasized teaching word meanings, whereas Jane and Betty stressed teaching basic and productive words and more varieties of expressions. This difference should be ascribed to students' different English proficiency, one factor of the lower level small culture: the classroom culture. Rose and Karen were teaching Year-Two students while Jane and Betty were teaching Year-One students. It is unsurprising that they believed in imparting different word knowledge, as advanced learners possess larger vocabulary sizes, better word knowledge, and greater word self-study abilities than lower-proficiency learners. This difference of belief was actually observed in the teachers' lessons. Students' English proficiency also gave rise to the teachers' discrepant beliefs about how learner factors would affect their approach to word teaching. Rose, teaching one of the most proficient Year-Two classes, insisted that learners with higher English proficiency should be taught word meanings directly and explicitly, whereas Jane, teaching an average Year-One class, maintained that learners with lower English proficiency should be offered more explicit lexical teaching. Yet, the teachers' stated beliefs about giving different word instruction to learners of different English proficiency could not be

observed in the study because they each taught only one class, the students of which were considered to possess similar English proficiency and were therefore taught identically. In short, somewhat in line with researchers' views (e.g. Beck et al., 1987), learners' English proficiency mediated teachers' decisions about what word knowledge to teach and how.

3. Consistencies between Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

The shared small cultures are also likely to have contributed to the consistencies of the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the importance of vocabulary instruction in EFL teaching, teaching vocabulary in communication, and the use of L1. In particular, the consistencies should be associated with the fact that the institutional culture required the teachers to follow a CLT approach and utilize the same series of theme-based and activity-centered course books. On the one hand, the CLT approach pushed the teachers to focus on communication; meanwhile, to promote better communication, teachers needed to help students learn to cope with unknown words, since teaching language form(s) is an important component of a communicative curriculum (Savignon, 2004). On the other hand, to finish the course book, as they were expected, the teachers had to focus on completing the activities. As a result, they incorporated vocabulary instruction in communication or performing activities. This is actually consistent with the finding in immersion education that vocabulary instruction is associated with reading input (Swain & Carroll, 1987; Wright, 1993). In short, the institutional culture might have mediated the teachers' pedagogical practices and hence their beliefs about vocabulary instruction, creating the consistencies between them.

4. Inconsistencies between Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

All four teachers acknowledged the usefulness of dictionary checking for word learning, which is reasonable in consideration of the EFL learning culture in China. However, they held different ideas about using dictionaries in class, and cases of dictionary use were either not observed or observed only rarely even with teachers who claimed to allow dictionary use in class (i.e. Betty and Rose). The teachers' different beliefs about dictionary checking and the inconsistencies between their beliefs and practices denote the possible contradiction between dictionary use in class and efficient classroom teaching, or between teachers' peripheral beliefs and their core beliefs (Phipps & Borg, 2009), for teachers' beliefs about knowing, as the core belief, influence how they teach (Chai, Deng, Wong, & Qian, 2010). That is, Rose and Betty considered that dictionary checking in class was compatible with efficient classroom teaching because they, especially Rose, tended to teach students the method of word learning, whereas Karen thought the opposite because she feared that using dictionaries would interrupt learners' "flow of concentration" (Summers, 1988: 113). Their contradictory ideas are simply different responses to the essentialness and time constraint of classroom instruction associated with China's EFL learning culture. Besides, the inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and practices about dictionary checking can also be attributed to China's classroom culture, in which teachers are often considered as more knowledgeable and powerful than students and responsible for teaching well while students are regarded as responsible for listening to the teacher (Zhang, 2010). Thus, dictionary checking, a form of learner autonomy, was rarely observed in the study in spite of teachers' belief about its benefit for students.

Additionally, despite the teachers' unanimous expressed beliefs about word meaning guessing, no relevant examples were observed in their teaching. The teachers' limited use of word guessing seems to support the view that despite the importance of word meaning guessing as a lexical learning strategy, it is neither effective nor efficient for word learning due to its demand for rich contextual information and its time-consuming nature (e.g. Laufer, 2005). This, again, illustrates the contradiction between the teachers' peripheral beliefs and their core beliefs, that is, their belief about word meaning guessing and their belief about efficient instruction, as argued in Phipps and Borg (2009). Also it can be attributed to China's classroom culture, as stated with dictionary checking in the above.

Finally, the teachers' shared belief about word self-study highlights the importance they placed on learners' independent word learning, since classroom vocabulary instruction could only cover a limited number of words (Beck et al., 1987). The absence of word self-study from the observed lessons can be ascribed to the fact that word self-study was an after-class activity for students.

To conclude, the above discussion indicates that in the study the teachers' shared beliefs, similar practices, and consistencies between their beliefs and practices might be attributed to the mediation of the Chinese EFL learning culture and the institutional culture that they shared. At the same time, the teachers' discrepant beliefs, different practices, and inconsistencies between their beliefs and practices seem to have been formulated under the influence of the classroom culture that each teacher confronted as well as the balance between teachers' core beliefs and peripheral beliefs. In light of the interpretation from the small culture perspective, the dynamic relationship of beliefs, practices, and small cultures can be further described as follows: on the one hand, teachers' beliefs guide their practices with the mediation of small cultures, resulting in both consistencies and inconsistencies between their beliefs and practices; on the other hand, teachers' practices, under the influence of small cultures, contribute to the formulation of both shared and discrepant beliefs.

Inevitably, a small-scale study of this nature has limitations. In particular, a more extended period of observation of each teacher's vocabulary instruction practices might have enhanced the reliability and validity of the analysis of those practices. Nevertheless, the study has contributed to the literature in several important ways. First, it examined a rarely-researched issue and contributed to an enriched understanding of EFL teachers' cognition and practices about vocabulary pedagogy. Second, the study reported a number of interesting findings, for example, the teachers' report of the importance of word meaning guessing in lexical learning and their rare use of the strategy in instruction. Third, the study adopted a small culture perspective, which previous studies have seldom utilized in examining teacher cognition. More importantly, the small culture perspective is a further development of the cross-cultural research relating to epistemological beliefs, and it helps explain individual teachers' different beliefs and practices within one large culture (Hofer, 2008). Further, the findings of the study have important implications for EFL teacher education. In particular, EFL teacher education, either in general or relating to vocabulary instruction, needs to take into account the beliefs of participants in pre-service and in-service programmes, their pedagogical practices, and the small cultures that they work in or that they experienced as learners so that the objectives of teacher education can be well attained.

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'Authors' or 'Animators': Encouraging Critique in Japanese English for Academic Purpose Classes

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Abstract

This article discusses approaches to teaching critical reading for academic purposes. Based on findings of a survey done in class, it argues for the fact that reading critically is an important aspect of academic reading. The context is an EAP Reading course taught to first year liberal arts students in a tertiary institution in Japan. The curriculum in this bachelors' program is multidisciplinary, providing a selection of courses in the liberal arts, including sociology, anthropology and international relations. The program is taught in English and in the first year, students do a course in English for Academic Purposes. The synopsis for the Reading component of the EAP course notes that critical reading strategies will be taught so that students are alerted to issues relating to language, power and discourse as well as the construction, portrayal and representation of different ideas, identities and subjectivities.

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, Language, Power and Representation

Introduction

Contextualizing the Teaching of EAP in Japan

English is taught in schools and tertiary institutions in Japan. However, in terms of methodology, Japan has had a history of the grammar-translation approach even though in recent years, attempts have been made to introduce communicative language teaching (Sergeant, 2009). Notably absent are approaches that view language (and meaning making through language) as discourse and social practice rather than as atomized structure.

In contemporary Japan, prevalent discussions around the English language and ELT have been centred round the belief that Japanese people need to learn it as a means for them to communicate with the outside world (Oda, 2007). Oda (2007) terms it the "English is essential for everyone" discourse, something which "has been constructed and reinforced over the years" in the official releases to the media (p. 123). In addition, even as the country faces the twin problem of an aging population and declining birthrates, Japanese universities facing seriously declining enrolments are increasingly offering programs taught in English. This is done for two principal reasons: (1) as a way to attract more students from overseas, who may not be able to sit through lectures in Japanese, and (2) as an approach to marketing and image creation – part of a belief in how a collocation of 'English' with images of 'modernity' and 'progressiveness' can be capitalized on to bring in more students and more money – but illustrative of how commodification and instrumentalism fast encroaches on education (Fairclough, 1992). With this trend has come the need for support programs in service English, some of which come in the form of EAP programs which would necessarily entail some attempt at change from grammar-

translation and other approaches that view language as form and structure, to approaches that encourage deeper reflection and critique.

Approaches to EAP

Discussions on the role and nature of EAP, nonetheless, have taken different angles. Lea and Street (1998) have these summarised as three possible ways of looking at English teaching for the academy. One notion of EAP is that it is a support program that concentrates on teaching surface skills like grammar, vocabulary, paragraphing and punctuation, looking upon the lack of these as “deficit” that needs to be solved through teacher-directed instruction. Johns (1997) describes how in such classes, mastery and memory of correct grammatical forms is emphasized, where “language is form(al)” and “all other “linguistic, psychological, and social factors are secondary, or in some cases, ignored” (1997, p. 7). Turner (1999) notes that such a notion of academic literacy relegates EAP to a “remedial” role. A second notion of EAP is that of having students acculturated into academic discourse, which means acquisition of the discourses, practices and genres of academia. With this approach, students are viewed as having to be enculturated into an ‘academic’ way of speaking and doing, while teaching would involve having students acquire ‘generic’ ways of speaking, doing and writing. A third, the notion of academic literacies, is one where EAP takes on a more reflexive turn. Students are taught to look at issues of language, epistemology, and culture as ones which are essentially imbued with the influence of ideology and power. In an academic literacies approach, students are given the opportunity to look critically at language, knowledge and access to meaning making as imbrications of each other and of ideology, power discourses and social action. Specifically relating to the teaching of reading, critical reading implies reading beyond the explicit to incorporate matters of identity, epistemologies and power differences, what Turner calls a “reading in”, which includes, for example, “locating omissions as much as understanding what is explicitly located in the text” (1999, p. 158). Turner argues that the teaching of reading in EAP “should play a critical, rather than a remedial role in higher education” (1999, p. 158) bearing in mind the benefits to be reaped from deeper empowerment of students.

Theoretical Foundations for a Critical Approach to EAP Reading

The Socio-Situatedness of Text. With regards to theoretical underpinnings for critical reading, the literature on social theory of text, discourse and power and also academic literacies is useful. A common strand in such writing is the notion of text as being a socially and historically situated construct. Kress’ work on the social theory of text views text as a product of the “social semiotic action of representation” (p. 84). Hence, more than “getting meaning from...written text”, he looks at reading as part of the work of “making sense of the world around” (p. 140). As part of this, he considers reading to be the work of understanding social action and social activity, and the work of reading as deciphering and understanding social relations as well as social action and interaction.

Blanton (1998) adds to this, stressing an individualized perspective on reading. She notes the importance of fostering the behavior of “talking” to texts and being aware that students “can and should bring their own thoughts and experience to bear” when they are reading, “in order to create a reading of their own” (p. 227-228). Students should be

encouraged to “interpret texts in the light of their own experience and their own experience in the light of texts” and to “agree or disagree with texts in the light of” their life experience (p. 226). The point to be noted here is that “texts do not constitute the sole authority on any subject” because students can also claim authority over texts as they read critically (p. 232). This ties in with Kress’ notion of the “socially-located” reader (2003, p. 140), who comes into reading with a socio-historical background that s/he brings into interpretation of the text, rather than one who merely decodes ‘meaning’ from page to page and considers reading to be over and done with after the last page has been decoded (Blanton, 1998).

Concurring, Wallace notes that “reading is social: social in the sense that readers and writers enact their roles as members of communities; social in that it unfolds in a social context, both an immediate and wider social context” (2003, p. 9). For Wallace, “reading is a three way interaction between the writer, the text and the reader, each of which...is socially constrained and directed if not socially constructed” (2003, p. 9). She further adds the element of power amidst such an interaction when she says that reading involves a “shifting and dynamic relationship between text producers, text receivers and the text itself. Any one of the participants in this interaction may assert greater power, depending on a number of variables in the reading situation” (2003, p. 9). In relation to the exercise of power, Wallace (2003, p. 165) makes the distinction between readers who ‘animate’ and readers who ‘author’ texts. She describes how text ‘animators’ simply comprehend and paraphrase texts for meaning “unproblematically”, while text ‘authors’ are more analytical when they take it upon themselves to ‘create’ or ‘author’ texts through resistance and critique.

Hence, Kress, Blanton and Wallace all furnish classroom practitioners with vital notions of the constructedness of meaning and the situatedness of text as well as the dialogic element in reading that is crucial to critical approaches. Wallace, furthermore, includes the element of power and the assertion of power centred in text producers, text receivers and even the text itself.

Texts, Values, Belief Systems and Background Knowledge. Wallace (2003) notes that ‘community’ texts – those that are circulated in everyday life – are amenable for the critical reading classroom as these tend to be ones that exert influence in the community, and being familiar, would readily draw out responses based on students’ background knowledge, values and beliefs. Tying in with Kress’ concept of the socially-located reader, students are encouraged to be “aware of the placing and meaning of texts in a range of settings beyond the classroom” (Wallace, 2002, p 112) and of texts as “objects or artefacts...that...embody the values and belief systems of the societies and communities from which they arise” (p 113). Indeed, vital to critical reading is the fundamental premise that textual content is never monolithic or monologic, but dialogic and socially-situated.

This is where students’ background and extra-textual knowledge becomes useful. Spellmeyer (1998) argues for having students “bring their extra-textual knowledge to bear upon every text we give them and to provide them with strategies for using this knowledge to undertake a conversation” (p. 121) with the text and the agencies of power and control that lie behind them. By way of illustrating the importance of reader participation and commitment, Spellmeyer (1998) tells of a student who engages with Emile Durkheim’s *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* in a systematic, impersonal, academic way with nothing of his own to say, noting that there is a “pervasive absence of commitment” in the student’s reading of the work. For Spellmeyer (1998), it is important that students “venture...into the

realm of implication, through assent, disagreement” (p 116); students who are trained simply to “filter, absorb and digest” show a lack in “any sense of inquiry” (p 115). He describes the student’s response to child suicide as:

Perfectly generic...Rather than exploring solutions...he abandons the problem...he forestalls any consideration of Durkheim’s personality and motives, although the reconstruction of Durkheim’s situation might have started him on the way to a more engaged reading. In *Suicide* Durkheim makes any number of assertions which readily invite dispute but the text dominates the student...so completely that his response could not be more deferential or more perfunctory...Durkheim’s prose is densely furnished with supporting illustrations which allow him to examine related forms of behavior in order to identify...cultural institutions that promote these forms. (Spellmeyer, 1998, p 117)

While the student suggests that institutions like the home, group, club, church or community could reduce child suicide, he fails to look further and “ask why they currently fail to discourage suicide...to ask that question, he would need to adopt a critical attitude toward his own family, group, church and community” (p 117). Spellmeyer notes that the student’s “unwillingness to...intrude upon what he perceives as the objectivity of academic discourse finally prevents him from coming to understand such discourse” (p 118). The opportunity for the student to engage critically with ideas is not taken to full potential.

Typical Japanese Reading Lessons – Concern for Conformity and Correctness

The above understandings of critical reading need to be contrasted with Low and Woodburn’s (1999) observation of Japanese learners’ deep attention to what is right, wrong, conventional, definite or exact, and low tolerance for variation, difference, uncertainty or change. For learners conditioned to the importance of exactitude, situatedness, dialogization and critique become a challenge. Japanese learners who show anxiety when it comes to change and uncertainty are often not forthcoming when asked to offer personal and/or critical viewpoints. Indeed, a typical Japanese reading class is said to be characterized by activities related to promoting surface comprehension. These would include: (1) pre-reading activities covering prediction and framing of content; (2) checking meaning of unfamiliar words; (3) post-reading exercises such as comprehension questions and cloze exercises on the contents.

Such activities are to be viewed alongside a culture in education where students have traditionally been conditioned to comply and conform rather than voice their thoughts and feelings and where only the teacher is accorded authority over what is considered right, wrong or legitimate. In this instance, teacher authority would be reinforced by the sorts of surface comprehension questions that require right-wrong answers to true-false items, cloze exercises or such items that do not require any degree of critical response. Such practices may emanate from a belief that discrete or one-word answers are an accurate measure of comprehension. The role of the teacher then becomes that of someone who affirms or confirms a right or wrong answer.

Sato (2004) also describes teacher authority in this way:

Without their physical presence, teachers enjoy invisible authority – referring to the authority, respect, and control teachers secure...The explicit hierarchical organization of schools and classrooms bestow teachers with structural authority. (Sato, 2004, p. 189)

An outcome of this is that students coming into university may not be familiar with the type of critical insight that would hopefully be expected of them, even as Sato observes how “day-to-day classroom life is colorless, and students’ perspectives largely remain off the canvas altogether” (Sato, 2004, p. 14).

Nevertheless, Sato (1999) sees the opposite as also being possible: “the cultural veneer of homogeneity is fabricated by standardized practices, and conceals...actual diversity and individuality” (1999, p. 120). She argues that conformity for the Japanese is often just an outward veneer, part of a Japanese concern for a harmonious surface, where uniform procedures and forms of behavior reflect outward appearance, not necessarily homogeneity or uniformity...within students’ hearts and minds...Students may practice identical skills...but once learned, these basic skills actually enable them to become more adventuresome (Sato, 2004, p. 202-203).

Bearing this in mind, both students and teachers can work towards some assurance and agreement that opinion and critique are vital for learning.

Aims – What the Study Sought to Determine

A study was conducted with a view to obtaining data on students’ learning experiences in reading classes, prompted also by the hypothesis that activities relating to understanding factual or literal content predominate over activities that involved critical reading. The study sought specifically to find out (1) the sorts of activities students were familiar with in reading classes (2) whether students had been exposed to activities that carried a critical dimension, including activities that facilitated an ‘authoring’ of text rather than simple text ‘animation’.

Method

Survey Questionnaire and Attention to Ethics

Students were given a questionnaire in English together with Japanese translation. This follows other studies among Japanese learners of English where, for the purposes of data reliability, data gathering was conducted in Japanese (Kubota, 2011; Kubota and McKay, 2009). The questionnaire took about 15 minutes of a 100-minute lesson to complete. Students were given information explaining the aims of the survey, confidentiality of information, appropriation of findings (i. e. in course planning and in professional discussions regarding curriculum and methodology), participant anonymity and volition.

Design of the Questionnaire

In designing the questionnaire, the following factors were considered: (1) conciseness; (2) items that elicit information on the reading activities respondents had been exposed to; (3) a spread and balance of both critique oriented items as well as items focusing on surface comprehension; so as to (4) facilitate differentiation between teaching styles focusing on surface comprehension versus teaching styles that view language as a tool for articulating critical opinions and creating meaning. The resultant questionnaire (Appendix A) comprised of 14 items: 7 items on content-focussed reading activities (1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 13) and 7 items on activities that required student critique (2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 14). Hence, checking a dictionary for new words (item 1) would be an example of the former, while discussing social issues related to the contents (item 2) would be an example of the latter. In keeping with sound data collection measures, instructions in both English and Japanese were carefully crafted (Mackey & Gass, 2005) for clarity and conciseness.

Participants

There were 19 participants turning in 19 responses. All the participants were members of a first year academic reading class of 22 people. This particular class was chosen because of students' substantial exposure to English through previous study in high school, study-abroad programs as well as in private schools evidenced in their having TOEIC test scores between 410 and 450. There were two absentees on the day the survey was conducted. One student did not turn in the questionnaire.

Findings and Analysis

Percentages on 'traditional' content-focussed reading activities (items 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 13) reveal that such activities featured prominently in the students' experience (Appendix B). This is to be contrasted with the percentages on activities requiring critique (2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 14), which reveal a relative dearth or paucity of such activities. For ease of reference, the figures are summarised here.

| | Common | Not Common | Never |
|---|--------|------------|-------|
| Average of Percentages from items 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 13 on content-focussed reading activities | 60.1% | 37.6% | 2.3% |
| Average of Percentages from items 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 14 on critique-focussed reading activities | 20.3% | 65.4% | 14.3% |

Percentages on 'traditional' content-focussed reading activities versus Percentages on reading activities requiring critique

In terms of extremities, 16 of the 19 students reported that content summary (item 8) was common. The same number circled 'Not common' for questioning authors' motives (item 9). This suggests a strong tendency towards literal or factual content as opposed to

critique. However, items 5 and 7 draw attention because the figures run counter to the general trend, while also refuting the original hypothesis. Items 5 and 7 (Retelling contents to friends, True-False questions) are actually items promoting surface comprehension but are reported as being relatively uncommon. From the standpoint that reading and critique should be encouraged, the findings for both items 5 and 7 can be deemed positive. Retelling activities collocate with communicative language teaching (CLT) and are consanguine with jigsaw or information gap activities. The relative rarity of retelling could be because CLT is often not integrated into reading class given regimes of practice that advocate partitioning of reading, writing, speaking and listening. It could also mean that CLT, while popular in ELT literature, may not be so in practice in Japanese classrooms. True-false items on their part epitomize a non-critical and picayune (Stanlaw, 2004) approach to checking surface comprehension, better dissociated from of academic reading.

Pedagogical Implications

With findings suggesting a need for more opportunities for critique, the remainder of the discussion will examine pedagogical strategies that may prove useful.

Encouraging Socially Located Critique

To begin with, with Wallace's (2003) point about familiar topics in mind, students can be given materials they can relate to: a seventeen-year-old sumo wrestler who suffered severe bullying, eventually losing his life (Japan Times, 20 March 2008); the matter of how a famous transsexual queen found it hard to rent an apartment, suffering repeated rejections (Japan Times, 5 December 2009); the *gomi-yashiki* phenomenon, the presence of 'trash' houses in the neighborhood, where people accumulate an excessive amount of trash, attracting stray animals and other vermin (Japan Times, 12 September 2009). Illustrations in this discussion are taken from these articles.

With the article on trash houses, students considered matters from the viewpoint of those people who have been accumulating trash, as well as from the viewpoint of their neighbors. Some tried to think about why owners of trash houses tend to be older people living alone, evidence of what Turner (1999) has called the "reading in" process or what Wallace (2003) describes as attempts at attaching further and deeper meanings to text. One student showed first-hand knowledge of the matter, saying that town councils have not been able to do much about the trash and how stray cats roam around these houses. Yet another student went further when she associated the problem of trash houses with forms of anti-social behavior like drink-driving or disturbing the peace. Such responses attest to Kress' notion of the socially located reader.

Students can be encouraged to draw on what they have seen, read or learnt previously. They bring along unique experiences from different encounters in school, community and internet. These can prove to be valuable sources to draw on in the "reading in" process.

Giving Students Guidelines and Metalanguage for Critique

By way of practical guidelines, students can think about:

- (1) "the participants involved in the social action as it takes place"
- (2) "their social relations with each other" (Kress, 2003, p. 84).

They can also be asked to consider:

- (3) the sort of actions participants perform on each other
- (4) how and why participants behave the way they do in relation to others
- (5) authors' attitudes towards their subject matter

Allowing students to be familiar with basic metalanguage can prove useful. Teaching a "metalanguage, or a language about language" means that students get to learn "a language about their strategies for completing tasks, thus enabling them to discuss, critique, and reflect upon what they have done and how they have done it" (Johns, 1997, p. 128). Metalanguage such as (1) Perspectives (2) Identities (3) Power Relations can be introduced. The discussion below begins with what the metalinguistic 'tool' can be used for, some supporting literature and how it has been applied.

Perspectives

'Perspectives' refers to how certain ways of viewing things can be foregrounded as being natural, obvious and conventional while others seem to be less natural or common. It is used here to signal the fact that scrutinizing matters from multiple viewpoints is vital for effective reading. Differences in perspective are, of course, the result of (social or ideological) conditioning, resulting in naturalized or standardized ways of apprehending different phenomena, as well as the coercive power of text. Yahya (1994) notes how texts can bind a reader "in a moment of collusion and coercion" (p.70) to cause the reader to assume the perspectives offered in the text and be led to accept the descriptions of life as being 'truth' and 'reality'. She calls this reader interpellation. The interpellated reader accepts certain dominant perspectives as being natural.

Critical reading thus involves looking at other perspectives, like how Yahya (1994) examines matters from the perspective of a marginalized native woman in a short story by W. Somerset Maugham. In the story, Guy, a colonial administrator in Malaysia marries Doris while on furlough in England, without telling her about his relationship with a native woman. Yahya (1994) points out that native characters are not given long, in-depth conversations like the white characters to whom rationality and assertiveness are attributed. The natives communicate through non-verbal signals, wild gesticulations or stylized posturings.

In critical reading, students are encouraged to consider matters from the silent or marginalized character's viewpoint. This concurs with Apple and Christian-Smith's call to (1991, p.17) examine "the treatment and invisibility of oppressed groups in...texts", through considering "other voices to counter the lack of serious attention to, say, the vibrant cultures of people of color" and with Kress' (2003) question about the importance of examining the nature of social relations in text. Wallace (2002) similarly notes that critical language study encourages reading texts "in different ways, to subject everyday texts to other than everyday readings" (p. 112-113).

In the article about trash houses, students were encouraged to look at the issue from different perspectives. Typically, students tapped on their knowledge of suburban neighborhoods, where beneath a facade of regularized Japanese serenity, there can be deep undercurrents of unsettledness. Points raised by the students included why there were

trash houses in Japan, looking from the perspective of the people who hoarded things – ‘Maybe they are poor’; ‘I think they were poor a long time ago and now they don’t want to throw out the things’. There were also reactions of empathy – ‘Maybe the old people are very lonely’; ‘I think the old people may be invalid and they cannot remove the rubbish themselves’; ‘The trash is a way to remember the past for the old people’. Some students turned to the long-suffering neighbors and discussed their feelings of helplessness – ‘I think the neighbors find it very difficult to live beside *gomiyashiki* but they cannot do anything’; ‘It is not fair on the neighbors and the government should do something’. Others felt that the government could not solve the problem. They said that camera crew from television stations have visited trash houses with volunteers who helped clean up, but when the same crew visited the houses several months after, the houses were again filled with trash. With the sumo article, students looked at matters from the perspective of the dead boy – ‘I think Takashi Saito is pitiful. Maybe he had a dream for the future’; ‘Saito’s life was wasted, he was only very young’. Blame was put on the stable master for instigating the beatings and bullying that resulted in injury and death – ‘I think the stable master and three wrestlers arrested must repent of his death’. The wrestlers who administered the beatings and cigarette burnings were blamed, but others said that they were used by the stable master. Others looked at matters from the stable master’s perspective. They reasoned that with sumo’s waning popularity, stables were facing falling enrolments. Fewer enrolments meant less money and the stable master became angry because the boy wanted to quit training. Students criticized the sumo federation with incisive comments about their secrecy – ‘this kind of incident has been secret of the bad side until now’; ‘Japan sumo association must want to hide problem’; ‘I would completely lose the trust of association of sumo by this case’ and commented that television broadcasters would stand to lose money from bad publicity for the sport. Students tried their hand at ‘authoring’ the text from different viewpoints (Wallace, 2003).

Identities

Identities refer to the way students view or position themselves vis-a-vis what is discussed in the text. Students discover that their identity or positioning or the way they (choose to) see themselves can affect the way they respond to text. McKinney (2003) links the ability to approach an issue critically with a reader’s consciousness of self and sense of identity. For McKinney knowing, learning and critique are matters relating the self to the social. Hence questions like “How am I implicated in the social world” and “How am I implicated in social inequality” become questions that invite critical evaluation (McKinney, 2003, p. 196). In the present case, students focussed on how their socio-cultural identities came to bear on their responses to the issues they encountered.

Students drew on their Japanese identities when they spoke about sumo being a Japanese sport. There were expressions of anger at the sumo association as well as the stable responsible for the boy’s death. There was disappointment at the bad publicity for a Japanese sport which meant bad publicity for Japan. Students pointed out that the ultimate loser was Japanese culture itself – ‘Can you say the sumo wrestling is sports of the Japanese culture proudly from now on?’; ‘Sumo is Japanese traditional sport...I’m sad to hear this news’; ‘I was very ashamed because sumo is Japanese traditional culture. I do not believe that people who inherit Japanese tradition should pollute it’; ‘I was sad because I felt Japanese culture is broken, we Japanese are breaking our own culture’.

For (many) Japanese students growing up in a conceptually monocultural society and used to being part of the dominant majority, looking at matters from a minority positioning can be enlightening. Hence with the transsexual who found it hard to rent an apartment despite being a celebrity, students were forced to dig deep into their own positionings – resulting in responses like ‘I think Ai Haruna is very brave’; ‘Transsexual people are not easily admitted into Japanese society; Japan is not like Thailand, the Philippines or Australia’; ‘The landlords are afraid of complaints from neighbors, I think Japan must change’. The question of conformism also came up in a society which does not take kindly to diversity, deviation or difference: ‘I think in Japan, everybody must be the same and behave the same’.

With the article on trash houses, there were different responses between students who noticed the fact that the author was not Japanese but American, and those who did not. Once students picked up on this with hints from the teacher, they were able to follow up on matters to do with the author’s allusions to the Ainu and the way they have been treated, the sluggish economy, Japanese frugality and their addiction to *pachinko* (slot machines). In doing so, they discovered that the article was not just about trash houses per se but also about Japan through foreign eyes. Students discovered that whereas it would have been unusual for people of a Japanese majority to allude to the Ainu, this was not the case with foreign commentators who would pick on such matters out of an overall concern for ethnic minorities or human rights, for example. One student said that ‘foreign writers would create an imagined problem about Japan’. Other reactions included: ‘the Ainu people are part of the Japanese people and we don’t see any problem’ and that ‘I am not sure if there are any Ainu people left but I know that their culture remains in Hokkaido’. Whether one agrees with these (critically motivated) perceptions, the point is that students were able to engage with ideas vis-a-vis conceptualizations and assertions of their own identity positionings.

Power Relations

‘Power relations’ refer to how power differences are located in text which readers can uncover and resist. Students discover how people or agencies wield or exercise power. Students also examine how sources of power and influence set off outcomes which naturalize unequal power relations. Examinations of power relations can be found in text analyses like Baik (1994) who examines how North and South Korea are portrayed, analyses concerned with power inequalities such as Bigelow (1997) which studies how Native Americans are portrayed, as well as Hughes (1996) which studies a similar theme in relation to Papua New Guinea.

With the article on the dead wrestler, students were able to rethink what actually happened after the boy’s death – saying that if the boy’s father had not pursued the matter, the case would have been ‘let go as dying by heart attack’, as was claimed by the police: ‘Police wanted to burn his body and cover the truth and said he died because of heart disease. This was not true’. In so doing, they came upon the fact that the police held a certain amount of power. Other students responded to the power wielded through bullying and harassment: ‘He is victim of bullying. He suffered torments because of bullying’; ‘In fact, Japan has many kinds of bullying. I hope bullying will end’. Some students also raised the point that broadcasting networks also had a stake on power because of their

earnings from broadcasting sumo. Students said that such networks would not favour bad publicity for sumo.

As for the trash houses, some students discovered that the American author of the article was exercising authorial power over her subject matter. More than about trash houses, the article commented on Japanese society and what foreigners might see as quaint or unusual – Japanese frugality, addiction to *pachinko* or the apparent non-recognition of ethnic minorities. This attracted countering responses such as ‘As you know, casinos are not allowed in Japan and the people want a place to gamble’ or ‘I think the old people were poor before and so they want to save everything they have’; ‘Foreigners think a lot about human rights’. Students discover that texts are not neutral, but are sites where power is staked out. As readers, they can tease out such relations of power and in response, offer dialogical viewpoints.

Conclusion

Reading critically enables students to scrutinize and respond to different ways knowledge is constructed and represented. Johns (1997) warns about the “danger of teaching assimilation to academic cultures and their texts rather than critique” and promoting students’ “acceptance of the status quo” (p. 18). Through critical reading, students co-author and co-construct knowledge and discover the complexities of meaning making and construction. In relation to EAP, students learn to robustly engage with knowledge from different disciplines as critically conditioned readers. This would only help engender a richer dialog that all academia would welcome.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire on Reading Lessons (Reading クラスのアンケート)

Important Note to Students (学生への重要な注意事項)

This questionnaire is part of on-going attempts to improve the EAP Reading course. Please note that your participation is strictly voluntary. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. The answers you provide will be used in professional discussions related to the planning of better EAP Reading programs, but will be otherwise kept totally confidential. This questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete.

このアンケートEAP授業の改善に役立てる為のものです。

参加者は自由参加で強制するものではありません。

アンケートに名前を記載する必要はありません。アンケートの回答は、EAPリーディングプログラムの改善に役立てる目的に使用されるもので、回答を公表されることはありません。このアンケートは、約15分かかります。

Instructions

Please respond to the following items by marking ‘O’ beside the most appropriate answer.

回答は、「頻繁」「あまりない」「ほとんどない」の3つのうち1つに○をつけてください。

Activities in Reading Class

How common were these activities in your Reading classes?

リーディングクラスでの頻度について

1. Checking dictionary for new words 授業中に習う新しい単語は辞書で調べる
 - a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
2. Talking about social issues related to the contents
授業中に講師と社会問題について話し合う
 - a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
3. Debating social issues related to the contents
授業中に講師と社会問題について批評する
 - a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
4. Reading Aloud to aid comprehension 授業中声に出して読む講習

Cont. Appendix A

- a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
5. Retelling contents to a friend 授業中にリーディング内容を友達に伝える講
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
6. Questioning a character's motives 文献の主人公の動機について話し合う講習
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
7. True and false exercises 正しいものと間違っているものを見つける講習
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
8. Summarising contents 内容をまとめる
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
9. Questioning author's motives 作者の動機を批評する
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない
10. Discussing students' opinions on the content リーディング内容から出た学生の意見を論議する
 a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Never ほとんどない

Questions 11-14 are related to the following paragraph

下記の英文を読んでください。回答は、「頻繁」「あまりない」「ほとんどない」の3つのうち1つに○をつけてください。

Takashi Saito was a 17-year-old boy who trained in a sumo stable. His father wanted him to become a sumo wrestler. One day, he was found dead in the sumo stable. His father was told by the stable master, Junichiro Yamamoto that Saito died of heart failure. However, Yamamoto did not allow Saito's father to see his son's body. So Saito's father went to the police. After looking into the matter, the police also said that Saito died of heart failure. Later, the sumo federation came out in support of Yamamoto. However, after going to a lawyer, Saito's father found out that his son died from beatings suffered in the stable.

Cont. Appendix A.

From your past experience in Reading classes, how often were the following types of questions asked about such a paragraph?

講師はどれくらいの頻度で以下のような質問は授業中にしますか？

11. What opinions do you have of the sumo federation?

相撲団体についてあなたの意見について聞かれることはどれくらいあると思いますか？

a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Neverほとんどない

12. What did Yamamoto tell Saito's father?

山本氏は斉藤さんの父に何を伝えたか？このような質問はどれくらいあると思いますか？

a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Neverほとんどない

13. What did Saito actually die of?

実際に斉藤さんの死はなんでしたか？このような質問はどれくらい聞かれると思いますか？

a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Neverほとんどない

14. What do you think were Yamamoto's motives?

山本氏の動機は何でしたか？このような質問はどれくらい聞かれると思いますか？

a. Common 頻繁 b. Not Common あまりない c. Neverほとんどない

End of Questionnaire

Thank you

Appendix B

Data from Study on Students' Experiences of Reading Class

A total of 19 students participated in the study. Figures in italics represent the absolute number of responses while figures in bold represent the percentages.

Items on Class Activity Types

| | Activity | Common | Not Common | Never |
|----|---|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Checking dictionary for new words | <i>13</i> 68.4% | <i>6</i> 31.6% | <i>0</i> 0% |
| 2 | Talking about social issues related to the contents | <i>2</i> 10.5% | <i>15</i> 79.0% | <i>2</i> 10.5% |
| 3 | Debating social issues related to the contents | <i>1</i> 5.3% | <i>14</i> 73.7% | <i>4</i> 21.0% |
| 4 | Reading Aloud to aid comprehension | <i>12</i> 63.2% | <i>7</i> 36.8% | <i>0</i> 0% |
| 5 | Retelling contents to a friend | <i>5</i> 26.3% | <i>13</i> 68.4% | <i>1</i> 5.3% |
| 6 | Questioning a character's motives | <i>7</i> 36.8% | <i>10</i> 52.6% | <i>2</i> 10.5% |
| 7 | True False exercises | <i>8</i> 42.1% | <i>11</i> 57.9% | <i>0</i> 0% |
| 8 | Summarising contents | <i>16</i> 84.2% | <i>3</i> 15.8% | <i>0</i> 0% |
| 9 | Questioning author's motives | <i>0</i> 0% | <i>16</i> 84.2% | <i>3</i> 15.8% |
| 10 | Discussing students' opinions on the content | <i>4</i> 21.1% | <i>15</i> 78.9% | <i>0</i> 0% |

Items on Question Types

| | Question | Common | Not Common | Never |
|----|---|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 11 | What opinions do you have of the sumo federation? | <i>6</i> 31.6% | <i>5</i> 26.3% | <i>8</i> 42.1% |
| 12 | What did Yamamoto tell Saito's father? | <i>11</i> 57.9% | <i>7</i> 36.8% | <i>1</i> 5.3% |
| 13 | What did Saito actually die of? | <i>15</i> 78.9% | <i>3</i> 15.8% | <i>1</i> 5.3% |
| 14 | What do you think were Yamamoto's motives? | <i>7</i> 36.8% | <i>12</i> 63.2% | <i>0</i> 0% |

*Cont. Appendix B***Percentages on 'traditional' content-focussed reading activities (items 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 13)**

| | Common | Not Common | Never |
|---|--------|------------|-------|
| Average of Percentages from items 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 13 on content-focussed reading activities | 60.1% | 37.6% | 2.3% |

Percentages on reading activities requiring critique (2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 14)

| | Common | Not Common | Never |
|---|--------|------------|-------|
| Average of Percentages from items 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 14 on critique-focussed reading activities | 20.3% | 65.4% | 14.3% |

An Investigation of Literature Teaching Methodologies at a Higher Educational Institution in Oman

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Abstract

This paper reports on a research study that aimed to investigate literature teaching approaches used by English Department faculty at a higher educational institution in Oman. The results revealed four different profiles of literature instruction. Most preferred by students was a profile that used a combination of methods or an integrated approach, a finding echoing previous research findings (Wang, 2009; Divsar & Tahriri, 2009).

Keywords: Literature, teaching methods, approaches, models, interpretation, advantages of literature teaching, profiles

Introduction

It has been argued that using literature in the EFL/ESL context has many advantages. Quite obviously, it engages learners emotionally, morally and intellectually, and carries in its language multiple communication means, of which imagery, allegory, symbolism, metaphor and narrative are only a few. It not only models the very finest examples of English usage but, such is its diversity in terms of accessibility, it can also motivate, encourage and guide students at all levels of communicative competence and achievement (Langer, 1990; Lazar, 1993; Al-Mahrooqi & Sultana, 2008; Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2010).

Furthermore, as a verbal art found in all human societies, and as the fullest possible record of mankind's values, survival struggles and achievements, literature is indispensable for teaching target language culture, providing as it does an endless store of authentic material. Despite modern skepticism, there are, after all, universal elements in human experience about which literature can offer unrivalled teaching. And in an age when education's erotics have yielded largely to its hermaneutics, can any other kind of texts (oral or written) give learners greater pleasure when engaging with them?

With its endless capturing of diverse viewpoints, literature can also teach learners critical independence - how to discern the true from the false, how to examine one's own values and beliefs alongside those of others. Indeed, says Schaferman (1991), it teaches them how to think instead of what to think. For her part, Judith Langer (1990) states that while learners are reading literature they might well go beyond the particular situation, associating with it their own experiences or those of people they know, thus encouraging creativity and the imaginative identification on which human harmony crucially depends.

However, to bring about all these benefits in the language classroom, the literature teacher has to be equipped with interactive skills and methodologies that utilize learners' experiences and prior knowledge and usher them into a new world of

fantasy where they learn about the real world vicariously. It is unfortunate though that not all instructors are equipped or prepared to teach literature interactively, and an approach lacking interaction can be counterproductive as it can lead to negative attitudes towards English and towards literature (Al-Mahrooqi, 2003). It is, therefore, important to explore the teaching methodology issue thoroughly, sensitively and from diverse perspectives. However, there is a dearth of research in this area, especially research that investigates “student views on literature teaching methodology in advanced-level tertiary EFL settings (Fogal, 2010, para.5). The present study aims to fill that gap by way of investigating literature teaching methodology at Sultan Qaboos University from a student perspective.

Background

A radical shift has taken place in English Studies over the past fifty years. From a situation in which literature provided the discipline’s core and non-native speakers learnt the language through literary study and a scattering of language drills, the contemporary scene shows literature, now pushed to the margins (Qiping & Shubo, 2002), desperate to prove it has any use for the language learner at all (Poon, 2010). This arises in part from the extraordinary growth in recent decades of theoretical and applied linguistics. Applied linguists, and practitioners who advocate a communicative approach, fail to see the value of literature as a tool that can foster communication and introduce learners to such discourse types as the expressive (e.g. letters), the transactional (e.g. advertising), and the poetic (i.e. poetry, short stories, novels and drama) (Kinneavy, 1971). They view literature as inaccessible and complex (Divsar & Tahriiri, 2009; Picken, 2005; Or, 1995) and maybe detrimental to language learning (Akyel & Yalcin, 1990).

This view could be the result of a number of factors, chief among which is teaching methodology. Evidence shows that many literature teachers still cling to traditional teacher-centered approaches which do not appeal to learners. This has been found to be true especially in ESL/EFL contexts (Fogal, 2010) at a time when the pragmatic use of English is espoused to suit the ‘practical’ needs of the job market and society at large in this era of globalization (Qiping & Shubo, 2002).

Literature Teaching Methods

Different literature teaching methodologies exist in the field. However, there are four main approaches. These are:

- The language-based approach. This takes a reductive approach to literature by focusing on deconstructing the literary text into its linguistic features, such as dissecting it for literal and figurative language. Hence, literature is only used as a means to teach discrete language aspects. Unfortunately, research has shown that this is the most popular approach in the EFL/ESL classroom (Carter & Long, 1991).
- The culture-based approach. This emphasizes the text, exploring its social, historical, political and literary context. Focus is on text interpretation, which is a teacher-centered and not a student-centered task. New criticism is an example of such an approach.
- The personal growth approach. This contains characteristics from the above two approaches as it blends a focus on language with a focus on context and textual meaning or interpretation. In this model, learners are encouraged to

participate and to express their feelings and opinions and to draw associations between the text's characters and events and their own lives (ibid). Thus, it develops learners' ideas and leads to their personal growth. Hence, its very name. Reader response exemplifies such an approach (Rosenblatt, 1980, 1982, 1985a, 1985b, 1995, 1994).

- The integrated approach. Divsar and Tahriri (2009) describe this as “a linguistic approach which utilizes some of the strategies used in stylistic analysis, exploring texts, literary and non-literary, from the perspective of style and its relationship to content and form (p. 108). They go on to say that this approach analyses in detail the stylistic features of a text to show what it means and “how it suggests what it means” (p. 108). They mention three types of considerations observed by teachers using this approach: linguistic considerations, cultural considerations and communicative considerations. In this way the integrated approach marries literature to communication and so makes texts and lessons interactive, practical and communicative.

The Status of Literature Teaching in the L1, L2 and FL Classroom

Though gaining momentum, using interactive approaches in the literature classroom is still not the norm. In fact, research indicates that the application of reader response theories within the ESL/EFL context is sadly lacking. ESL/EFL learners could benefit enormously from reader response approaches because they are in alignment with communicative approach principles and student-centered methodologies, which all place emphasis on the learner and his/her experiences.

Research on teacher practices and their own theories of reading has found that these have changed little since the 1960s (Applebee, 1989, 1992). Literature teachers continue to focus on the close reading of authentic literary pieces, believing that they are organic wholes (Ibid). They also tend to focus on how various aspects of texts, including characters, settings, theme, plot and aspects of language, fit together to form the big picture of the story or work. About such practices, Leila Christenbury (2000) writes:

Many teachers reared in New Criticism in undergraduate or graduate training learned to love the close reading of poetry and prose. In this reading we adhered to a consideration of literature as a relatively isolated object to be discussed and analyzed - almost as one would turn a hard object such as a diamond and consider it from all points of view. The diamond itself would not be altered by the turning and handling; it would retain its entire integrity as an object. Thus, New Criticism, as defined in John Crowe Ransom's 1941 book of the same name, was literature without the influence of the reader, the historical context, or the personal history of the author (p. 48).

In an attempt to study teacher theories and their effect on practice, Zancanella (cited in Beach, 1993) studied five junior high school teachers' theories of reading. The study found that teachers' own theories influence their methods of teaching. To illustrate this, one of the five teachers studied held that understanding literature involves treating the text as a constructed object and so focused students' attention on

understanding the literary techniques or elements constituting the constructed object. For him the text is a puzzle to be solved, a mystery to be unraveled by unfolding all the layers of the text's elements. Therefore, his instruction was based on asking students questions about the different elements of the work and asking them for evidence to support their answers. Sometimes, he would adjust or extend the answer to fit the right interpretation.

Among the five teachers in Zancanella's study, there was one who believed in the value of readers' vicarious participation and involvement in the world of the text. She felt it important to make students knowledgeable about how other people think and feel, including, of course, characters in a story. Thus, she encouraged her students to talk about their own experiences with texts and their own life experiences. Thus, this teacher was reader-centered rather than text-centered, which was apparent in her practice.

Similar findings were reported by Newell, MacAdams and Spears-Burton (1987; cited in Beach, 1993). In their study, they analyzed three high school teachers' theories of literature instruction. They found that these teachers' ways were markedly different and were a reflection of their beliefs about the role of literature. The teacher whose theoretical stance emphasized imparting knowledge about literature was text-centered and employed formal analysis of the text. By contrast, the two teachers who asserted that they believed in using literature to write about experience were more likely to focus on student responses and to emphasize the expression of personal responses.

One reason that teachers' practices tend to be traditional and uninformed by new developments in the field of teaching literature is that often theories are not translated into practice soon after they appear. The process takes time and effort. Literature teachers thus need to explore new possibilities for improving ways of teaching. One useful text that shows how reader response theories can be implemented is *Reader Response in the Secondary and College Classroom* edited by Nicolas J. Karolides (2000). Because it is important for teachers to be aware of how their own beliefs about reading and their own theories about it affect and shape their practice, they may find it useful to make explicit the response theories underlying how they themselves respond to texts.

As is the case with English as a first language teachers (L1), a number of ESL teachers, if not the majority, have focused on the interpretation of the information present in the literary texts. ESL students are usually convinced that their interpretations are not good or at least not adequate and that the teacher's interpretation is the one omniscient one. Usually, ESL teachers are the ones who guide students to such a conclusion because, even in their attempts to involve students in the discussions of the text, they lead them to their personal interpretation of it. Such a practice on the part of the teacher implies to the students that what they feel or think about a work of literature is inferior in quality to that of the teacher.

The product of such an emphasis on interpretation is that students learn that interpretation is the major way of interaction with the text. Associations that learners draw with events or characters and people in their own lives are downplayed in the act of forming meaning through the reading transaction (Scalone, 1998). According to Duke (1982), teachers frequently tend to emphasize the efferent stance on reading. Their concern lies with the recall of information presented in the text. For them, there is only a single correct interpretation and that is the one residing inside the text. Graham and Probst (1982) cite Scholes' description of a literature teacher at work saying:

In the name of improved interpretation, reading was turned into a mystery and the literature classroom into a chapel where the priestly instructor...astounded the faithful with miracles of interpretation (p. 31).

In the EFL/ESL field, research has focused on eliciting student opinions about a certain methodology (Matsuura, Chiba & Hilderbrandt, 2001; Wang, 2009) or on comparing one methodology and another, or several methodologies that employed different activities (Green, 1993; Fogal, 2010). Findings show that methods that engage the learners' culture and background knowledge and consider their personal and emotional response to literature are favored by students and bring about better results (Divsar & Tahriri, 2009).

The Study

The study aimed to find out what teaching methods are used in literature classes taught at Sultan Qaboos University from the point of view of students taking them. It also aimed to investigate students' feelings and opinions about these methods in order to see if they have any relationship with their attitudes towards literature.

The Instrument

The main tool used to gather data was a semi-structured interview where the researcher asked each participant to tell her about how literature was taught in the courses she took at SQU; and how student experiences and background knowledge, vocabulary and grammar were handled in these courses. The researcher used this instrument to maintain informality and objectivity at the same time. Each participant was met alone at her own convenience. The length of the interview depended on the amount of information each participant was willing to share. Therefore, the time ranged between 30 to 40 minutes. Because the interviews were conducted in the dorm where the students lived, and at a time that they chose, they yielded much data, giving the researcher an adequate insight into what was taking place in many literature classes at SQU.

The Participants

The sample in this study included twenty-three Omani female students majoring in English Arts and English Education. They were in their third academic year, even though a few had studied one non-credit semester in the English Foundation program at SQU's Language Center. The participants were exposed to literature through the credit courses they took at the Language Centre and in the College of Arts' Department of English. The number of literature courses they took ranged from three to five, and they were taught by different instructors. Only female students volunteered to participate in the study.

The Analysis

All interviews were transcribed to allow careful analysis of participants' answers and comments. The transcribed data was then read carefully as a whole and main themes (types of teaching methodology) were extracted. Then the data was re-

examined to place the answers into thematic categories. The findings are displayed in the next section.

The Findings

When the participants spoke of their English literature classes and their experiences in them, almost all believed that their enjoyment and engagement hinged upon the teacher. Four profiles of literature teachers emerged from the participants' comments. The major profile most frequently mentioned was the teacher who imparted knowledge to students and astounded them with interpretations. The method of such a teacher was to start the class by plunging herself and the students into an interpretation of every element of the story. She would read a part or an excerpt of the story and then explain it to the students. The role of the students was merely to receive her interpretation dutifully and to keep listening. The students did not get a chance to speak in class or to engage in discussion. Therefore, the participants indicated that they were not motivated to even read the story before class because they knew that their reading in advance was purposeless or pointless. Some participants even indicated that they were sometimes late for class or absent because they knew how the lecture would go and that the teacher would "go on speaking and lecturing for herself." From such a teacher the participants indicated they learned the least.

The second profile that emerged was the literature teacher as a language teacher. Some students indicated that some of their reading teachers merely focused on vocabulary instruction. The students would read the story, answer some questions and discuss vocabulary. Each week, the students got a list of vocabulary that they had to commit to memory for their next quiz. Students felt overwhelmed by these lists and felt that they could not retain the words in their memory because they hardly ever had the chance to use them. Although participants felt a dire need to know more vocabulary, they felt that instruction on vocabulary and vocabulary lists did not always translate into active knowledge and use of the words. The quality and amount of exposure to the new words they learned in their classes and read in their lists were inadequate to sustain their retention.

Participants also indicated that literature classes that focused on vocabulary did this at the expense of getting meaning from the story. Consequently, students were not involved in the process of constructing meaning or of negotiating it inside the classroom. They perceived many of the stories that they took with such a language teacher as pointless and as not related to their culture. "The Story of an Hour" was given by one participant as an example of a story that she thought of as useless to her and pointless to be taught. When the researcher asked her about how she understood the story, it turned out that all she grasped of it was that "it was about a woman who was told that her husband died but then she died." When the researcher engaged her in a discussion and explained to her some elements of the story, the participant remarked that her teacher never went into discussing the story, contenting himself with just reading the events and explaining the vocabulary.

The third profile of the literature teacher was the analyzer. Two versions of the analyzer appeared to emerge from the participants' description. The first was the instructor who did not involve either the culture of students or the text in his interpretations or discussions. This teacher would dissect the story into its literary elements - characters, plot, climax, resolution, narrator, setting, point of view and so on. Many participants (e.g. participant 16) indicated that this type of teacher did not always "make an effort to introduce the writer, his ethnicity and background in order to

connect the writer with what he wrote.” Therefore, the participants felt that their attempts at interpretation proved sometimes faulty because they lacked information on the background of the writer or the story. The literature teacher as analyzer did involve students in class. However, often there was one meaning he was in search of. No matter how hard the students tried to arrive at that correct meaning, their efforts usually failed.

The other version of the analyzer was the instructor who involved culture in his literature classes. Unfortunately, and to the great dismay and disappointment of the participants, this type of teacher just criticized Arabic and Islamic culture, giving no chance to the students to answer his criticism. Not only that but this type of teacher also espoused the superiority of the West over the East, which not only frustrated but also humiliated the students. An example of such a teacher was one who knew very little about the Koran but still criticized its instruction. Another example was the teacher who thought that all Arabic writings were worthless and discussed no worthy topics or dealt with no important issues. Since most literature teachers are foreigners, Omani students felt outraged at the biased comments made by a few of them. They repudiated their attempt to cast doubt and criticism on Arabic and Islamic culture while trying to demonstrate the superiority and supremacy of Western societies and cultures. Participants who commented on these foreign professors felt much pain and rejection toward the classes and attitudes of these professors. They also indicated that they were not allowed to argue their own positions and opinions and thus they had to grudgingly listen and take things in. The students also felt frightened to disclose their opinions if they were ever allowed to speak because they felt they were vulnerable to the power of the professor who had the authority to reduce their grade. Needless to say, the participants were not motivated to read or speak in the classes of such a teacher.

The fourth profile of the literature teacher that emerged from the interviews was the teacher who used a combination of methods. The class of this teacher was varied and stimulating. While he analyzed, he involved the students in the analysis. He tried to understand their culture and did not discount their interpretations. He asked them about their personal experiences and about how they reacted to the story or felt about it. This teacher compared cultures sometimes, but never made value judgments about the superiority of one culture over another. The participants celebrated this type of teacher for making the effort to involve them and for taking an interest in their own knowledge and cultural experiences. For the class of this type of teacher, the students said they prepared by reading the stories or poems ahead of time and even by searching the Internet to find more information on the literary text they would be taking in class. Because they were always involved, students were alert and paid due attention to what was discussed or said in class.

Conclusion

As can be seen from the findings, four different styles of literature teaching have emerged from the data. However, the most preferred by the students was clearly the last, which used a combination of methods and involved students' culture and background knowledge in class discussions and in comparing, without passing value judgments, the text's culture with their culture. The teacher using this approach valued these learners as cultural beings with valid experiences and perspectives on life. While s/he encouraged comparison between cultures, s/he was not biased against the students' culture. Students reported being very enthusiastic in the class of the teacher who employed this methodology. Therefore, the findings of this research echo those of

previous research that an integrated approach is one that works best and that learners most prefer. These findings carry implications for the literature classroom. Using reader-considerate methods (which can also be called student-centered), literature classes can serve better educational, communicative and humane functions and can be a venue for creating and negotiating meaning rather merely a venue for vocabulary and grammar discussion or textual interpretation. Literature classes can inspire students and help them develop morally, psychologically, socially and intellectually. But such cannot be achieved if the humanity of the students and their experiences are not given the highest regard in these classes. Hence, the need to use reader-considerate approaches and other student-centered strategies (e.g. reader response) in the literature classroom.

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Recalling Foreign Vocabulary Words among Learners of ESL

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Abstract

The present study replicated the experiment of Carpenter and Olson (2012) where the effect of picture and English word translation on recall of foreign words (Swahili) was investigated among bilingual learners whose second language is English. A 2 X 2 experiment was designed where Swahili words were presented involving four conditions: (1) picture with English word, (2) picture with the Swahili word, (3) no picture and only English-Swahili word pairs, and (4) no picture and only Swahili words. The results showed that the main effect of word translation was significant where Swahili words were recalled better when paired with an English translation, $F(1, 59)=121.69, p<.001, \eta=0.83$. The effect of pictures was not significant which did not support the picture superiority effect. The present study highlights the extension of the word association model for a foreign language and L2 link.

Key words: word recall, learning foreign words, ESL

Introduction

There are several studies indicating ways to teach foreign words to learners. An example of a widely used approach would include teachers teaching grammar-translation approach by which language is learned through rule memorization and through repetition (Beacher & Thuy, 2011). For beginner students learning a foreign language, the foreign word is taught by illustrating the words through pictures and diagrams (Griva, Semoglou, & Geladari, 2010). The use of pictures to facilitate better recall of words is supported in the picture superiority effect of Paivio and Csapo (1973). In picture superiority effect, concepts are much more likely to be remembered experimentally if they are presented as picture rather than as words (Nelson, Reed, & Walling, 1976; Paivio, 1971; Paivio, 1976).

There are several experiments that support the picture superiority effect. For example, in a study by Deason, Hussey, Budson, and Ally (2012) that among older adults with probable amnesic mild cognitive impairment, hit rates of recall was more superior for words with pictures. In another study by Hockley and Bancroft (2011), they still demonstrated that the picture superiority for associative recognition is still observed when subjects have correctly identified the individual items of each pair as old. In another study by Stewart, Stewart, Tyson, Vinci, and Fioti (2004), they found that picture superiority effect was even more powerful than serial position effect in group recall tasks.

However, another set of studies indicate that there are no significant difference in the recall of words with pictures and English translations. For example, Lotto and de Groot (1998) contrasted word learning and picture learning. In word learning, participants were

shown the foreign word (Dutch) with the translation (Italian) called as the Dutch-Italian word pair. The picture learning presented the foreign word (Dutch) with a corresponding picture (picture-word stimuli). The participants are all Italian. The result showed that word learning was higher on test scores than picture learning. Their results did not support the picture superiority effect. They further explained that an L1-L2 matching provides a better opportunity for acquiring L2 words than picture-L2 matching. Their findings support the word association model (Chen, 1990) where words are represented in separate stores: The lexical representation stores the word forms while the conceptual representation stores the meaning. Two languages are represented in two separate lexicons. Furthermore, the word association model proposes that form representations of the L2 are connected directly to the L1 making L2 easily accessible. The better performance in the L1 L2 pair are explained by the direct connection of the two representations gaining easy access to the L2. This postulate is tested in the present study where foreign words are matched with the L2 among bilinguals. However, the word association model proposes an L1 and L2 connection and not between an L2 and foreign language (FL) among bilinguals.

Given the findings of the picture superiority effect, one notable study by Carpenter and Olson (2012) tested whether new words in a foreign language are learned better from pictures than from native language translations. They used Swahili words in their experiment as the foreign language. They conducted four experiments in their study and saw the apparent lack of picture superiority effects in foreign language vocabulary learning. In Experiment 1, they manipulated Swahili words encoded with pictures vs. English translations, and free recall of pictures vs. English translations, or cued recall of Swahili words from pictures vs. English translations. They found that free recall of English words were higher than cued recall of Swahili. Experiment 1 saw that the presence of picture did not help in the recall of Swahili words. In experiment 2, picture with the Swahili word and pictures with both English and Swahili words were compared across three phases of testing. It was seen that across the three phases of testing, the overconfidence in learning pictures with Swahili words was reduced. However, recall of Swahili words with pictures became better as compared to Experiment 1. In Experiment 3, the researchers removed picture superiority effect in the manipulation and overconfidence was also controlled through instruction (one group was given a warning and another group was not). They found that the group that was given no warning had overconfidence in learning picture-Swahili pairs than for the English-Swahili pairs. In Experiment 4, the same manipulations was done in the first two experiment but measures were added on the ease-of-processing heuristics: (1) Ratings on how easy it was to study the Swahili word from either the picture or English translation, (2) rating how easy it was to understand the Swahili word from the picture or English translation, and (3) rating on how easy it was to link the Swahili word to the picture or English translation. The result in experiment 4 showed that picture-Swahili pairs were consistently rated as significantly easier to study, easier to understand, and easier to link. The studies were consistent that pictures paired with Swahili words were not better recalled however, participants showed overconfidence in learning them to be better.

The Present Study

The present study is a replication of the experiment of Carpenter and Olson (2012) where two main effects and their interaction are investigated: The effect of word superiority and word association. This study only manipulated as presence and absence of picture to

test picture superiority effect. On the other hand, word association was manipulated where English-Swahili words were presented and only Swahili words with no translation to see the effect of the word association model proposed by Chen (1990).

The study included the absence of word superiority of two conditions in the interaction effect to test how potent the picture superiority effect is when its counterpart has the absence of picture. In the same way, word association effect was tested on its main effect when the other condition does not have a presence of association. Unlike in previous studies where the other variation of the experimental conditions also has an association.

Previous studies used English words as the participants' native language. In the present study, English words are the second language of the participants and the Swahili words are foreign and unknown. The experiment intends to investigate whether the same pattern of performance in recall will occur when word association is not between L1-L2 but rather L2-FL.

In the present study the measure is limited in the free recall of Swahili words because it was deemed to be a more optimum dependent variable than cued recall.

Method

Research Design

A 2 x 2 factorial design was used in the present study. Picture taste association was varied for groups with presence and absence of pictures. On the other hand, word association was varied on presenting Swahili-English word pairs (L1-FL) and only Swahili words. The dependent variable is free recall of Swahili words.

Participants

The participants in the study were 60 Filipino high school students (16 years old in their senior year in high school). These students are studying in a private school in the National Capital Region in the Philippines. They were rated from average to high in their English skills based on their English teachers marking for the current quarter for the school year. These participants are both competent in speaking and writing in Filipino (L1) and English (L2).

Materials

The study made use of a list of the 42 single syllable English nouns that were between three to seven letters taken from the original study of Carpenter and Olson (2012). The word frequency ratings are over 30 and concreteness ratings were over 500. The Swahili translation for each word was obtained from the original list in the experiment of Carpenter and Olson (2012). The 42 pairs of English-Swahili words were also matched with pictures for the group undergoing picture superiority effect. The pictures were colored mixed with drawings and realistic figures.

A test was given to the participants to enumerate the Swahili words that they have recalled. Higher scores reflect higher recall of Swahili words.

Procedure

The participants at the beginning of the experiment were informed that they would be learning Swahili words. They were encouraged to try their best to learn the Swahili words and later their memory for the words will be tested. The Swahili words with their corresponding pictures were presented in a computer flashed in a wide screen. The participants were divided into four groups having its own condition. The first condition involved the participants to view a picture with the corresponding English word and later on recalled the English word. Condition 2 involved participants viewing picture with the corresponding Swahili word and later on recalled the Swahili word. Condition 3 involved the participants to study only English-Swahili word pairs with no picture. Condition 4 involved participants to study only with Swahili words with no picture. The picture and English translations were presented at the center of the computer screen. The participants were tested on their recall in a sheet of paper after studying the stimuli.

Results

The main and interaction effects of word superiority and word associations were tested using a 2 Way Analysis of Variance. The means were later compared to show which condition showed higher recall.

Table 1
Two Way ANOVA Summary Table

| Source of Variation | df | SS | MS | F |
|--|----|---------|---------|-----------|
| Picture superiority effect | 1 | 3.26 | 3.26 | 0.38 |
| Word association | 1 | 1058.40 | 1058.40 | 121.69*** |
| Picture superiority x word association | 1 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Error | 56 | 487.07 | 8.70 | |
| Total | 59 | 1548.73 | | |

*** $p < .001$

The results of the Two-Way ANOVA showed that only the main effect of word association was significant. The main effects of picture superiority and the interaction between picture superiority and word association was not significant.

When the means were assessed, the recall for Swahili words was significantly higher when the stimulus presented to the participants involved Swahili-English pairs ($M=11.77$, $SD=3.17$) than when Swahili words alone were presented ($M=3.37$, $SD=2.62$). The effect size for word association ($\eta=.83$) was large while a small effect size was obtained for word superiority effect ($\eta=.04$).

Discussion

The findings of the study highlight the effect of word associations involving translated foreign words in the performance on recall tests. The study also supports the lack of picture superiority effect on recall of foreign words. More specifically, the study

showed to have higher recall of foreign words when participants are shown an English word with the Swahili translation.

The main findings supporting the word association of L2-FL was consistent with the word association model espoused by Chen (1990). The difference in the word association in the present study is that it involves a foreign language associate (FL) while Chen's model is an L1-L2 pair. However, the same postulate applies as supported by the results of the study. FL is easily accessed when it is directly connected to ones L2. In case of the present study L2 would be the English language.

Given the findings in the present study, the word association could be expanded for the link between L2 and FL. When individuals have high levels of mastery on their L2, they are able to gain better access to a word associate to their L2 as in the case of a foreign language.

The findings of the present study will have implications to other bilingual models. For example, Kroll and Stewart's (1994) revised hierarchical model explaining that, as new foreign words are learned, their meanings are at first more strongly represented by native language translations than by underlying concepts. This proposition is partly true because one's second language might be as strong in terms of proficiency as ones native language where L2 can also facilitate learning and foreign language.

Insights on the present study for the L2-FL link directs future researchers to further build and understand how they operate especially among bilingual learners.

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Classroom Practice: World Englishes and Revision in Academic Writing Instruction

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Academic writing - and academic writing instruction, for that matter - usually revolves around the fulfillment of linguistic and stylistic expectations set (though implicitly) by the target speech community. Most especially in the academic writing classroom, linguistic norms and stylistic patterns are primary concerns for both the teacher and his/her students. And at the very specific stage of revision in the writing process, students may be assisted in being able to develop their metalinguistic and sociolinguistic awareness.

In the English academic writing courses that I teach, this stage in the writing process allows me to introduce to my students the world Englishes paradigm. Though the introduction of the paradigm is not among the defined content of the course in the university where I teach, I deem it of great importance to raise the consciousness of students on the current phenomenon of the spread of English as well as the phenomenon's implications for English language use. To further demonstrate the importance of this pedagogical idea, it has to be noted here that my student composition is usually Filipinos but there is occasional representation from Japan and South Korea and that they bring with them the traditional linguistic insecurity typical of non-Anglo-American users of English: They always have this conscious effort to speak and write the way the Americans and the British do, most especially in the case of Filipinos whose exonormative standard is American English. But not surprisingly, their linguistic conservatism, a natural manifestation of linguistic insecurity, does not necessarily equate to accuracy in their language use (cf. Borlongan, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c on Philippine English developing its own norms). There will always be deviations, variations, and innovations that will surface in their papers. In light of the world Englishes paradigm, the students must be made made aware of these deviations, variations, and innovations and how they should be treated. Hence, this pedagogical idea.

The steps that I take in introducing the world Englishes paradigm in my English academic writing courses are as follows: First, I assign them to read outside of the class session a particularly theoretical article on world Englishes (but an article suitable to their reading proficiency level). I mention the recent article by Professors Yamuna Kachru and Larry Smith entitled *The Karmic Cycle of World Englishes: Some Futuristic Constructs* published in the journal *World Englishes* (2009) as an example of a suitable article for this pedagogical idea/classroom practice, at an advanced academic writing class at the university level. The article serves as a starting point for the discussion in the following meeting. The discussion may start in small groups with different guide questions per group. And then, each group presents their discussion summary to the other members of the class. The group presentation is followed by an integration facilitated by me. I then give my own

presentation on the linguistics of world Englishes and the linguistic features of variety represented in class. At the end of my presentation, I remind them that these features are not errors – not even deviations – but variations in the use of English around the world and that institutionalized varieties (like Philippine English) and their linguistic features are at par with older Englishes such as American and British Englishes. The discussion of linguistic features of some Englishes also helps in improving intelligibility of other Englishes. Connecting this to the stage of revision in the writing process, I remind the students, when doing peer editing revision, to be prudent in what to give feedback on.

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About the Author

Ariane Macalinga Borlongan earned his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics via a competitive straight program at age 23 from De La Salle University (DLSU). His dissertation entitled *A Grammar of the Verb in Philippine English* won him the distinction Outstanding Dissertation from the Department of English and Applied Linguistics (DEAL), DLSU. He is the compiler of the Philippine parallel to the Brown University Standard Corpus of American English (Phil-Brown), which is the first and one of its kind in world Englishes and also from which recent and pioneering work on the diachronic analysis of Philippine English stems from. He is presently Assistant Professor in DEAL, DLSU. His research has focused on Philippine English and world Englishes, English linguistics, sociolinguistics, and educational leadership and management.