The disconnects between what teachers say they do and what they actually do: A study of the selection of Englishes in ELICOS classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the apparent disconnects between teachers' perceptions of how they address the role of Australian English in the ELICOS classroom and what the evidence from interviews suggest that they actually do. Through data sets from a broader teacher survey (n = 21) and follow-up interviews with teachers (n = 6), perceptions of classroom practice in relation to Australian English and other Englishes were explored. Being qualitative in nature, the text responses from teachers were analysed using thematic analysis. A theme and sub-themes were identified and aligned with the guiding research question. The results of the thematic analysis suggest that teachers are not necessarily explicitly aware of some of the decision-making they are carrying out daily in their classrooms. Although in many cases, they were making sophisticated judgements on the use of varieties of English and colloquialisms in their classrooms, they sometimes did not seem to have an active awareness of their decision-making. The current study provides implications for the professional learning of teachers and how reflexivity may be brought into their practice.

Keywords: teacher agency, teacher cognition, professional learning

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INTRODUCTION

The English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sector in Australia has a distinct identity and has been an essential part of the growth of the Australian International Education sector. According to Davis and Mackintosh (2011), it provides pathways for students to further study in Higher Education and the vocational sector, as well as the stand-alone provision of English language learning for tourism and employment. The sector had an initial focus in the 1980s on full-fee paying English language learners, but has now become an integral part of the pathways for international students in Australia. There appears to be limited current research available about the varieties of English that are used in ELICOS classrooms and how teachers decide to select the materials that they use to teach. Tonsuncuoğlu and Kırmızı (2019), noted that most English language course books used American English or British English.

General research issues in the ELICOS sector include areas such as corrective feedback (Liu, 2022), fluency feedback, assessment issues and student motivation. Other recent areas of interest include the move to online learning and its impact on students and teachers (Starford, 2021). This is highly relevant in the context of the current global pandemic which has reduced face-to-face activities across a wide range of human interactions including teaching. There is limited previous research about the specifics of teacher decision-making across the selection of different varieties of English. Riazi (2022) also noted only a very small number of action research projects published in TESOL and advocates for more research to be carried out and published by teachers themselves. This was part of my motivation to publish of this paper.

The questions of why teachers do what they do in their classrooms and how they make decisions are not just asked in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) classroom but across the whole education sector. For example, van der Steen, van Schilt-Mol, van der Vleuten and Joosten-ten Brinke (2022) considered how formative assessment activities were aligned with other aspects of the curriculum and how teachers made decisions based on the activities employed. Wherfel, Monda-Amaya and Shriner (2022) analysed how data-based decision-making drove practices in the general education sector. Consideration of teacher cognition is related to their thought processes, beliefs and knowledge (Mardle & Walker, 2018). This in turn influences how they teach and why they do what they do in their classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review for this study focuses on the theoretical framework for teacher cognition and how this informed the design and analysis of the results of this study. The concept of teacher cognition itself is considered. A brief consideration is made of the different varieties of English and how Australian English specifically sits in this family of language varieties. This is relevant to the ELICOS sector as teachers need to make decisions, either consciously or unconsciously about the varieties of English that they bring into their classrooms. The variety that they themselves use day-to-day will be a factor in this, as well as the published and unpublished resources that they use in their teaching. The theoretical framework around teacher cognition will also be discussed.

Theoretical framework for the study

Much previous research carried out on teacher cognition and decision-making is built around Borg's schematic conceptualisation of teaching framework (2006). This framework describes the place of teacher cognition in the context of the school and the classroom. Factors such as the teacher's educational background play a part, as do the teachers' contexts in terms of the education curriculum, goals and policies. Borg's framework provides advice to researchers about the methodological options they have when undertaking language cognition research. In the case of this study, "Self-report instruments" (2006, p.332) are employed in the form of questionnaires and interviews. These instruments position the classroom as part of the context and not just an external factor. Borg then goes further into the elements and processes in language teacher cognition and presents these in terms of contextual factors "around and inside the classroom" (p.333) as well as unconscious decision-making or practice informed by conscious reflection. In the next section, the concept of teacher cognition is explored in more detail, especially as it relates to language teaching contexts.

Teacher cognition

Teacher cognition is a theoretical concept that is related to the thought processes, beliefs and knowledge of teachers. Borg (2006) considers that this cognition relates to thinking, attitudes, and decision-making in relation to materials, activities, assessments, and many other aspects of their practice. In an ESL context, Chmarkh (2021) notes that teacher cognitions are "complex, multifaceted, recursive and sometimes impenetrable" (p. 498). Another aspect of decision-making is the role that emotions may play and there is research suggesting the

importance of emotions in the pedagogical practices of language teachers. Benesch (2018) found that there was a conflict between feeling obliged to do something and uncertainty about what to do. She recommended that teacher education programs should explicitly increase teachers' awareness of these issues. Cheung and Hennebry-Leung (2020) found that emotions are an important part of teacher cognition. The authors adopted a three-level framework of teacher emotions, namely intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup to explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices. In a Malaysian ESL context, Philip, Hua and Jandar (2019) reported on a "lack of congruence" (p. 174) between what a teacher in their study said and what he actually did. They speculate that this could be explained by actual classroom practices being influenced by the context of teaching time available, students' abilities or education policies in place.

Although Borg (2019) observes that teacher cognition has been a focus of empirical and practical research in language education since the 1990s, other authors note that this aspect of teaching has been largely ignored (Shi, 2021). Previous studies on teacher cognition have been completed through the lens of testing (Chappell, Bodis & Jackson, 2015) which found that teachers did not have standardised approaches to test preparation in their classrooms.

Considerations of teacher decision-making are important in the language classroom when different varieties of a language are available for teachers to use, or to choose not to use. This is highly relevant to all teachers working in the ELICOS sector, especially as Australian English is not as widely spoken as the two dominant standard varieties of English, British and American English. This consideration led to the guiding question for this study which is given below.

Teacher decision-making

The classroom is a complex social environment that offers a challenging place for teachers to make decisions. Decision-making itself has been defined by Harris (2015) as identifying an issue, collecting relevant information, and evaluating options before deciding how to act. Previous literature reviews have found that the research carried out to date has not always reflected the actual complexity found in real classrooms, for example, in Blackley, Redmond and Peel (2021). They found that the majority of previous studies involved college students in laboratory experiments, and they were responding to hypothetical scenarios. This resulted in a lack of realism. Their paper also found that there is an intersection between "cognition, affect and decision-making" (p. 549) and the process of decision-

making involves either classical rational decision-making or intuitive decision-making. The consequences of this for the ELICOS sector is that teachers can change long-formed habits through a reflective framework based on classroom observations. Teachers make decisions about varieties of English which are discussed in the next section.

Varieties of English

The English language started its life as a minor European language spoken on a small island on the edge of the continent and has developed over a long period of time to the Modern English that we know today (Crystal, 2004). Within this Modern English, there is a whole family of Englishes, for the most part that are mutually intelligible, which are named as World Englishes. Mahboob and Szenes (2010) note that these varieties are generally named according to the nation state where they are spoken, for example, British English. However, this can be problematic as sovereign borders may not be the best way to define these varieties. A pioneer in this area, Kachru (1985) established the concept of World Englishes to indicate the way English could no longer be considered a single language. Later Kachru and Nelson (1995) referenced the speaker of English into three circles, namely Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle.

Before the invasion and colonisation of Australia in 1788 by the British, there were over 300 languages spoken on the continent by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Simpson & Wrigglesworth, 2019). After invasion, British varieties of English were dominant and Government policies, such as the White Australia policy and restrictions on migration by nationality, ensured that this continued. The speaking of languages other than English was actively discouraged and assimilation to mainstream culture was expected (Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017). Over time, a distinct variety of English emerged in Australia with a standard acceptable variety known as Australian English being recognised (Kirkpatrick, 2007). The literature now suggests that Australian English is a homogenous variety of the language with limited regional variation (Przewozny & Viollain, 2016).

In a multicultural country like Australia, there is a need for all users of English to be familiar with a range of different accents and varieties of English. This is the case for both L1 and L2 speakers of English. The current study, therefore, investigates how teachers in Australian ELICOS classrooms make decisions about the Englishes that they use and whether they are making active decisions or

underestimating their agency. This is an important consideration for all ELICOS teachers – are they considering how which varieties of English they teach in an active way? How do they make those decisions?

Guiding question

The guiding question for this study is:

How do English teachers decide on the varieties of English they use in their classrooms and is this an active decision?

METHODOLOGY

The research approach

As this was a small-scale study, it was determined that quantitative methodologies would not be utilised since broad generalisations were not being sought. Instead, the aim was to ask questions of individuals and increase the understanding of why teachers are doing what they do in classrooms with regards to their selection of resources and use of different varieties of English. Hence, a qualitative methodology, predominantly using interviewing, was employed to "give voices to participants and it probes the issues that lie beneath the surface of presenting behaviours and actions" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 219). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) observe that qualitative research uses words as data in place of the numbers used in quantitative research. The design also broadly fits in with an explanatory mixed methods design as the results of the survey were used to inform the subsequent qualitative design and data collection (Creswell, 2014).

Participant selection

Contact was made with a selection of educational institutions and a peak body for EAL teachers. Agreement was sought to send a link to an online survey to all their ELICOS teaching staff. A positive response was received from all these organisations, so a link and set email text was provided to each contact to forward onto their teaching teams. A total of twenty-one useable surveys were received from participants. The initial teacher survey invited participants to volunteer for the second phase of the study which was a one-on-one interview with the researcher. Seven teachers who had participated in the survey volunteered to proceed with an interview. Of these seven volunteers, six actually completed an

interview. Specific demographic data was not obtained for the participants due to the small sample group. All of the teachers interviewed were experienced teachers of English to students in Tasmania in face-to-face contexts.

The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tasmania with scope for the researcher to prepare journal papers using the datasets generated. The ethics issues described by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) include informed consent, beneficence and anonymity. Consent was obtained directly from participants and they were advised that they could terminate their participation in the study at any time without any penalty. All responses to the survey and transcripts have been anonymised and pseudonyms assigned to each participant. The participant key to the pseudonyms was destroyed shortly after coding was completed. The research offered teachers the opportunity to reflect on their practice and to assist in filling the identified research gaps in this area of teaching.

Administration of the survey and interviews

The online teacher survey was administered through the Qualtrics tool online. For the purposes of this study, there is one rating question and four short answer responses of relevance to the guiding question. A clickable link was sent to administrators at each participating institution and this was sent to English teachers with a participant information sheet attached. The survey was forwarded to around sixty individuals; it is not possible to determine an exact number as some teachers work in multiple places and are also peak body members, resulting in some overlap. The full questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

The teacher interviews were undertaken using the Zoom web-conferencing software. Some guiding questions were provided in advance, and these were used by the researcher to run the interviews. The guiding questions are provided in Appendix 2. Each participant in the interviews was required to lodge a consent form before commencement. Each interview was recorded and a transcript was generated using voice recognition software. These transcripts were then manually refined by the researcher.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the interviews was coded using a process of thematic analysis. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), thematic analysis is "the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data" (p. 2). The

researchers Braun and Clarke are proponents of this method of analysing qualitative data and they suggest that this is the first qualitative data analysis method that researchers should learn (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is because it provides a set of core skills in coding that can then be employed in the future. In later research, they note that thematic analysis is highly flexible as it does not describe how data should be collected nor is it aligned to a particular theoretical framework (Braun and Clarke, 2013). The data was coded according to the guiding question using a complete coding process whereby everything of interest and relevance to this question was coded. It was determined that software would not be used in the analysis so the resulting immersion in the data could lead to richer connection with its nuances. The interview transcripts were systematically read, and items found to be relevant to the guiding question were coded. This was administered using Microsoft Word and its highlighting and commenting features. The resulting themes were then synthesised into more concise formats. This resulted in an overall coding that is "inclusive, thorough and systematic" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 210).

The major themes and sub-themes from the teacher interviews are summarised in Figure 1. The themes are shown in the black boxes and links have been established with the sub-themes shown in the white boxes.
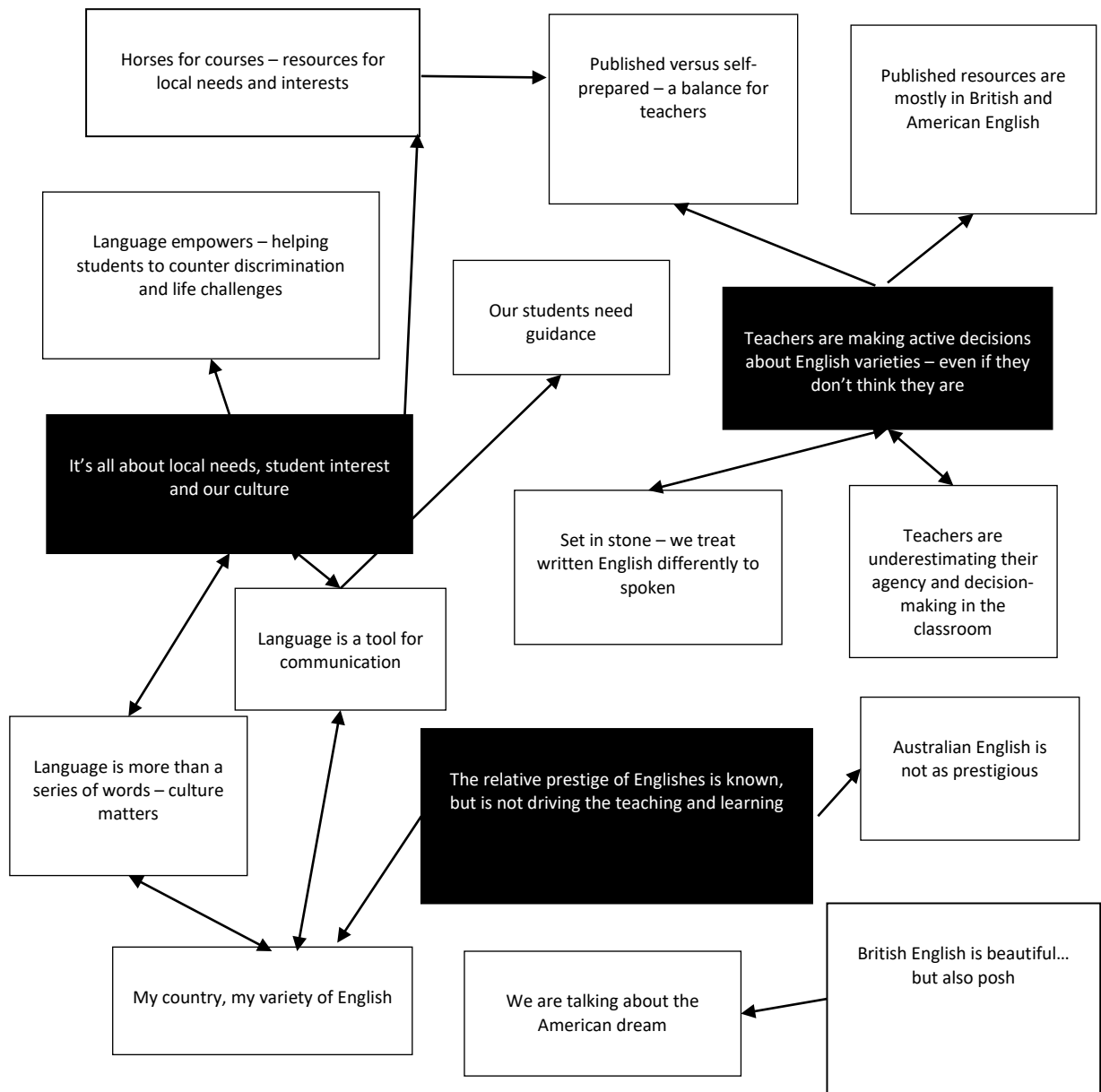
Figure 1

Major themes and sub-themes from the teacher interviews

RESULTS

In general, teachers reported in the initial survey that they did not believe they make active decisions about the English varieties used in their classrooms. However, the results of the subsequent follow up interviews suggested the opposite – that they were indeed making decisions about the selection of English varieties as a part of their teaching strategies. This decision-making did seem to be unconscious.

Results based on the teacher survey

The teacher survey showed that not all teachers felt that they make active decisions about the varieties of English used in their classrooms. The first four survey questions were background questions to collect some broad characteristics of the survey respondents (n = 21). As the overall study is qualitative, no specific biographical data such as age or gender was collected as there is no intention to draw conclusions about how different groups of teachers respond. All but one of the teachers reported having a variety of English as their first language. One teacher had a Slavic language as their first language. All twenty-one of the participants stated that they used Standard Australian English in their everyday life which is not unexpected given that they are all residents of Tasmania. Four teachers also noted use of British English, and one used American English as well. All twenty-one teachers had lived and worked in Australia with a wide range of other countries reported across the globe. Over three quarters of the participating teachers only taught adults with the remainder teaching both adults and children, with one teacher only working with children. For the purposes of this paper, only one of the statements presented to the teachers for rating on a Likert scale is relevant. This was a question about their classroom decision-making in relation to the varieties of English chosen. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1

Response to statement below on the teacher survey

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have made an active decision on how much of each variety of English I include in my classroom activities.	4 (19.05%)	5 (23.81%)	3 (14.29%)	6 (28.57%)	3 (14.29%)

As can be seen, there was quite a mixed set of responses to this statement. The participants who either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed were equally balanced by those who either somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests that teachers are not all making active decisions about the varieties of English that they are using.

The results from the free text questions asked in the survey revealed widely different views amongst teachers on how and why they were treating the different varieties of English in the classroom. When asked for a definition of Standard Australian English, some teachers even advised that they had not ever heard this phrase used. In contrast to the result from the Likert scale question above, all the teachers who responded to the follow up questions were able to describe in some detail how they brought different varieties of English to their classroom, providing evidence that they were in fact making active decisions, perhaps without being explicitly aware of what they were doing. The responses are included in Appendix 3.

Results based on the teacher interviews

The design of the guiding questions for the interviews was informed by the results from the questionnaires. The interviews were designed to provide more detail from the volunteer participants to explore the issues in more depth. The coding of the transcript from the teacher interviews completed (*n* = 6) provided evidence of

one major theme in relation to the guiding question for this paper. It was found that there was a significant difference between the teachers' perceptions of how active their decision-making about English varieties was, compared to the evidence gleaned from the transcript. This reinforced the earlier finding from the teacher survey responses where teachers were not necessarily in agreement that they made active decisions on English varieties in the classroom, but their subsequent free text responses suggested that they, in fact, were making such decisions. This theme can be summarised as Teachers are underestimating their agency and decision-making in the classroom. This was then broken down into three sub-themes which will each be explored in further detail below:

1. **Sub-theme 1:** Major disconnects exist between what teachers say and what they do – in interviews, they report that they are not considering varieties, but the evidence of what they do suggests the opposite

2. **Sub-theme 2:** Teachers are making clear judgments on how much Australian English to use versus other varieties

3. **Sub-theme 3:** Some quite sophisticated socio-linguistic discussions are held with students about the nuances of the different varieties of English

Sub-theme 1: Major disconnects exist between what teachers say and what they do – in interviews, they report that they are not considering varieties, but the evidence of what they do suggests the opposite

During the teacher interviews, participating teachers were asked how they considered the different varieties of English and their strategies on how they would select resources and bring in the Englishes to their teaching. All the teachers initially reported a lack of consideration of the varieties of English beyond the use of Australian English. They noted that they were meeting student needs for localised English. The following two comments from teachers were typical of what was heard, "I would not bring in other varieties I tend not to - I tend to focus on just Australian English" (Terry, teacher) and "Different terminologies and accents… but that doesn't impact on what I actually teach - I'm always using Australian English to teach" (Chen, teacher).

However, as the interviews proceeded and the teachers were asked more follow-up questions about the Englishes used in their classrooms, it became clear that the picture was more complicated that these initial comments would suggest. Teachers were making decisions and judgments on a daily basis about the Englishes that

they were using, but they appeared to take this for granted and may not even have been conscious of what they were doing. For example, a teacher who had strongly stated at the start of the interview that they only used Australian English because their students were living in Tasmania, later on in the interview said:

> Sometimes I actually do refer to English as Englishes with students… I would talk about multiple Englishes and philosophically I probably lean towards more blending languages, because ultimately, it's about developing their capacity to communicate effectively (Morgan, teacher)

All of the teachers discussed how they dealt with the spelling differences across the different Englishes and assisted students with how to navigate these in their written work and when dealing with assessors in their mainstream courses who may correct spelling to the Australian standard or not.

Sub-theme 2: *Teachers are making clear judgments on how much Australian English to use versus other varieties*

Teachers also found that they were providing significant guidance to their students about Englishes and they are asked about acceptable forms of English in Australia. They seemed to be making considerable judgments on when to highlight differences, when to focus on Australian English and which aspects of Australian English to explicitly teach. This again directly contradicted their general perceptions that they were not making choices about the Englishes that they were teaching. Based on the interviews carried out, it would seem that teachers may underestimate what they are doing in the classroom, or perhaps it is a process of thinking that has become automatic or so much part of their classroom practice, that they are no longer actively aware of it. One teacher who had advised earlier in the interview that they did not particularly focus on teaching strategies between different Englishes, subsequently advised that they provide practical tips to their students about using word processing spell check software:

> And then practical things like letting them know that if they're using a word with spellcheck there's a way to switch that to English, you know it defaults often American, but if you switch it to English - that is a bit of a handy hint as well (Morgan, teacher)

Again, this seems to suggest that this teacher may not recognise that their teaching practices in the classroom are assisting students to navigate the different varieties of English. It just seems to them like something commonplace and unremarkable.

As this was not a focus of the research questions for the broader initial study, I cannot further analyse why this might be the case, but I can speculate more experienced teachers may be so used to this type of decision-making that it becomes invisible to them. This could be an interesting focus for future research.

Sub-theme 3: *Some quite sophisticated socio-linguistic discussions are held with students about the nuances of the different varieties of English*

Some of the teachers interviewed initially defined their language teaching as simply providing students with enough language to be able to communicate on a day-to-day basis in their school or workplace settings. But later on in the interviews, there was evidence of some quite complex and detailed teaching involving religious nuances, social class, spelling, age and gendered differences in language and the nuances of spoken versus written communication. For example, a teacher spoke about their work in an academic classroom where they also provided cultural assistance as well:

> And I found that it is sort of an equal balance in what they need - it's sort of half academic and half social or cultural, so I cover a lot more social matters or social language like idioms, for example, and I found myself even chatting about what can you do if you're a Muslim woman who doesn't shake a man's hand - what if he offers you his hand? Students come to me with all sorts of questions to tackle, how do I bring food to share, what kind of language to use and so on. Today I've just been putting together something on sarcasm. (Kasey, teacher)

In summary, it was found that teachers seemed to be underestimating the complexity of their decision-making in the classroom. They seemed to be unaware of the sophistication of their thought processes and treated these as commonplace and unremarkable. There appeared to be a disconnect between what the teachers say they do, and then the strategies that they are actually employing.

In terms of the research question, "How do English teachers decide on the varieties of English they use in their classrooms and is this an active decision?", it was determined that teachers are providing students with the English that they perceive that they will need in their classrooms, social and workplace interactions in Australia. However, as the interviews unfolded, it was discovered that more sophisticated thought processes were at play, with teachers making quite sophisticated judgments about multicultural interactions and religious nuances for example. It also appeared that this decision-making was not considered by the

teachers as particularly active – it was just remarked upon as part of their classroom practice. However, based on the evidence gained from the interviews, the teachers did appear to be unconsciously making quite significant consideration of the varieties of English employed in their classrooms.

DISCUSSION

The survey and interview responses have implications for teachers' initial education and ongoing professional learning. The concept of reflective practice could be explored further. Additional data would need to be collected to further investigate teachers' self-efficacy.

An unexpected observation

During the data analysis for the study, as the transcripts and survey responses were being coded, an unexpected theme of the disconnectedness between what teachers said they do and what they appeared to do, began to emerge. The researcher noticed that teachers seemed to initially either ignore or discount the decision-making and considerations that they were making about English varieties, but then when asked to expand further, they generally provided evidence of highly active decision-making and sophisticated understandings of socio-linguistic nuances of language use which they were able to bring into their classroom teaching. The researcher therefore reanalysed the datasets through the lens of a new guiding question relating to what teachers say they do and what the evidence suggests that they actually do. This is a significant area not only for ELICOS teachers, but the teaching sector as a whole. The concept of teachers reflecting on their practice and making conscious active decisions about what they do in classrooms is important for teacher initial education and also ongoing professional learning. Borg's framework (2016) discusses how some decision-making in the classroom is unconscious and some is informed by conscious reflection.

Teacher agency

The findings of the current study suggest that teachers are not aware of making active decisions about their teaching, perhaps due to a lack of explicit reflection about their day-to-day practice. Agency has been researched and has been broadly defined by Leijen, Pedaste and Lepp (2020) as active participation in the forming of realities which are critical for effective functioning, particularly in the workplace. Not only must agentic individuals make sound judgments, they must

also be able to evaluate the success or otherwise of their actions, in line with the objectives and motive when they acted (Ghamoushi, Zenouzagh, & Hashamdar, 2022). Many studies have found that teachers' agency can be significantly increased through reflective practice (Jones & Charteris, 2017; Reichenberg, 2022; Ruan, 2018). This seems to be an important consideration regarding teachers' professional learning. Molla and Nolan (2020) noted that reflexivity is "the act of questioning taken for granted assumptions that underlie action and inaction" (p. 70). The results of the interviews with teachers implies that further work needs to be done by and with teachers to increase the level of reflexivity within their practice. Unfortunately, it was out of the scope of the data collection for this study to consider why there is this lack of awareness. It could be speculated that this might be due to a lack of open or pedagogical debates about the roles of the different Englishes in Australia? It may also be due to an assumption that Australian English is the dominant variety in the country, so little active consideration is being made by teachers about the roles of the other varieties. This would be a fruitful area for future research. Moonthiya (2022) considered how the self-efficacy of English language teachers impacted on their practice. Further specific studies on teacher agency amongst English language teachers would be useful.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current study uncovered that the TESOL teacher participants were underestimating their agency in the classroom and the nuances that they bring into their teaching practice. Some of the teachers surveyed and interviewed claimed to not be making considerations of which varieties of English they employed in the classroom, but then would provide clear and sensible strategies for how they were teaching. Teachers were found to be intuitive in their practice and are perhaps not taking the time to reflect on their decision-making. Teachers were also spending considerable time self-preparing resources in order to bring in the Englishes that they felt were appropriate in their classrooms. This could be a focus for managers and heads of schools of English institutions, to bring together teachers as part of their Professional Learning to share this knowledge and these resources explicitly. In fact, Edwards (2015) found that agency can be trained.

Due to limited time and lack of external funding, the project was completed in one state with a small number of participants. This led to a major limitation of this study, namely its small sample size and selection of participants from one state

without any randomisation. This means that the overall results may not be able to be applied in general terms to teachers of English in Australia. Queirós, Faria, and Almeida (2017) found that interviews may not result in data that can be used to generalise situations. Due to a relatively small population of teachers of English to international students in Tasmania, no attempt was made to select a randomised sample of survey or interview respondents. The survey link was simply sent out to all institutions who were willing to share it with their English teachers. Teachers were then asked to volunteer at the end of the survey to participate in an interview if they wished to. Hence, there was no statistically valid selection process. However, Braun and Clarke (2013) note that qualitative research has a 'ecological validity' resulting from its connection to the relationship between the 'real world' and the research in question.

The finding that language teachers underestimated their decision-making and agency in the classroom could be an interesting area for future research. Teacher cognition and agency have been considered in some studies relating to language teachers (Benesch, 2018; Borg, 2019; Shi, 2021), but there would be scope for more research to be carried out. In particular, it would be relevant to explore whether teachers are self-reflecting in their early careers but may then become less explicitly reflective as their practice becomes an intuitive part of their teaching. Further statistical analysis could also be carried out to determine if and how the demographics and educational backgrounds of teachers play a part in their ability and desire to reflect on their practice. In addition, I suggest that some actual observations in ELICOS classrooms would be useful ways to gain more insights into the practice of teachers.

As a teacher myself, I believe that it can be easy to start taking for granted the work that teachers do every day to prepare to teach and to improve their practice. This article has prompted conversations and further self-reflection amongst teaching professionals. It is important for all teachers, not just language teachers, to explicitly recognise their practice and not let it become lost in day-to-day work.

AUTHOR

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Thank you for completing the questionnaire.

1. Which statement describes the type of teaching that you do?

    - Teaching English to children

    - Teaching English to adults

    - Teaching English to both adults and children

2. What is your first language?

   - English

   - Other – text box to define

3. Which variety or varieties of English do you personally use in your everyday life?

   - Standard Australian English

   - Aboriginal Australian English

   - Standard American English

   - British English

   - Other – text box to define

4. Have you studied, worked or lived in countries other than Australia? Y/N

5. If so, please indicate which countries

   - New Zealand

   - United Kingdom and Ireland

   - United States of America

   - South Africa

   - Western Europe (except UK and Ireland)

   - Eastern Europe

   - South Korea

   - Japan

- China

- Other – text box to define

Please indicate your agreement, disagreement or neutral view on the following statements.

The abbreviations in the questionnaire are:

- SA = strongly agree (5)

- A = agree (4)

- N = neither agree or disagree; neutral (3)

- D = disagree (2)

- SA = strongly disagree (1)

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
I use several varieties of English in my teaching	5	4	3	2	1
Most published resources for teaching English are predominantly in either British or American English	5	4	3	2	1
I can easily access published resources in Standard Australian English to use in my classroom	5	4	3	2	1
I have made an active decision on how much of each variety of English I include in my classroom activities	5	4	3	2	1
I prepare my own teaching resources to bring Australian English into my classroom	5	4	3	2	1
I modify my own use of English in the classroom to bring in sounds, grammar and vocabulary from other varieties of English that I would not use in my everyday life	5	4	3	2	1

Given that Standard Australian English is only spoken by a small number of native speakers, students who do not intend to settle in Australia are better to focus on a more widely used variety of English	5	4	3	2	1
My students expect to hear Australian English in the classroom	5	4	3	2	1
My students expect to be exposed to other varieties of standard English in the classroom	5	4	3	2	1
My students generally have a clear preference on which variety of English they wish to focus on	5	4	3	2	1
Most of my students recognise that there is a standard variety of Australian English	5	4	3	2	1
Australian English has a lower prestige than American or British English	5	4	3	2	1
American English is the most significant variety of English for students to learn due to the global power of the United States of America	5	4	3	2	1
Students should only focus on one variety of English or they may become confused	5	4	3	2	1

Open Ended Responses

Please provide a response to the following questions

Which varieties of English do you use in your teaching? Why do you select those varieties?	
How do you bring Standard Australian	

English into your classroom? If you don't, why not?	
How do you think your students view the varieties of English around the globe? Do their preferences stem from perceptions in their own countries?	
Do you teach Australian slang explicitly to students? Why/why not?	
Do your own language and cultural background impact on the varieties of English that you bring into your classrooms? If so, how? If not, why not?	

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix 2: Teacher interview guiding questions

Teacher interviews

Thank you for generously agreeing to take part in this interview.

Our interview today will explore your views and perceptions of the use of Australian English in your classrooms. If, at any time you would like to cease the interview, please let me know and we stop immediately. As previously discussed, this interview is being recorded and will be transcribed. I will provide you with a copy of the transcript of your interview, and you could remove aspect of the transcript, or to request a withdrawal of your interview transcript from the total data set.

1.   Please describe your teaching context.
2.   What varieties of English are you most familiar with? Which do you use in your everyday life on a regular basis?
3.   How would you characterise the different varieties of English in terms of relative prestige? What factors give individual varieties more or less prestige than the others? Does this impact on the English varieties you use in your teaching?
4.   How do you select the resources you use to teach? Are they mostly published or self-prepared?
5.   What do you do if a student uses a different spelling or pronunciation of English words that are not considered correct in Australian English but are correct in a different variety?
6.   Do you have any further comments or observations on Australian English?

Appendix 3: Responses to the question - How do you bring Standard Australian English into your classroom? If you don't, why not?

Through audiovisual content that is locally produced and relevant, speaking and listening with a wide range of people in the school and community, books, and a wide range of text within the environment such as signs and community messages. I often create resources to extend on these kinds of resources and engage students in exploring more deeply. Recently I used an Australian childrens book about a family trip around Australia, making it more engaging and accessible by creating a

video story with sounds to support the story. I then created a set of Australian places playing cards for students to play games that help them to practice place names and also improve knowledge of Australian states, capitals and towns. Very time consuming by though.

I write my own curriculum (I am contracted by a school to do this). There is some absolute rubbish out there for Aus specific curriculum. I find it easier to just write my own.

I use what I'm familiar with and try to note differences as required

I place a significant emphasis on pronunciation and the general flow of the Australian language. I make sure commonly used slang play a major role.

In every day conversation, reading materials, library visits, vocabulary activities, and online resources.

I use my own material

The <centre> delivers EAP courses so main focus is on preparing students for academic life through exposure to academic and general English, not Australian English

I try to use and highlight as many commonly used Austrlaian idiom as posible. for example

Constantly, by contrasting material used for teaching with how it would be phrased/pronounced, etc. in Australian English. Australian English listening material.

Make my own resources like recordings

Teaching idioms, colloquialisms, slang, teaching the accent used here and how it differs to other English

I have been involved in making materials for our course and we chose to use authentic Australian sources - newspapers, videos etc. This gives teachers the opportunity to draw student's attention to Australian phrases/ pronunciation etc. Often Australian sources will include people speaking with an accent and I think this is a good opportunity to point out to students that as a multicultural country

many Australians do speak with an accent.

Small talk dialogues in the workplace Australian slang vocab activities

Through TV, audio recordings....I don't ever make a big deal out of who they are listening to.

Impromptu and mainly as a response to a topic, receptive skill text or direct enquiries from students.

I often focus on local idiom and pronunciation.

Preparing my own lesson content   Adjusting non SAE texts   Teaching SAE equivalents when necessary   Using Australian produced texts and other media

I bring it in with newspapers, clips from TV news and shows