University of Sydney Journal of TESOL

Volume 1, 2022

Judy Fernandez and Adam Steinhoff

Editors

Published by

The University of Sydney TESOL Research Collaboration
Sydney School of Education and Social Work
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
The University of Sydney

https://journal-of-tesol.sydney.edu.au/

ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

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About University of Sydney Journal of TESOL

University of Sydney Journal of TESOL is a peer-reviewed, on-line journal with open access. Like its forerunner, *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, it is published by the TESOL Research Network in the Sydney School of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney, Australia.

This renewed journal is dedicated to providing a space for both scholars and practitioners to share theory, research and practice in TESOL and TESOL-related areas. We aim to foster a community in which the voices of scholars, postgraduate students, teacher trainers, teachers, and other practitioners can be heard.

The journal accepts for submission the following types of contributions:

- Reporting of original research
- Discussions (e.g. literature reviews about theory or methodology, critical discussions, presentation of new ideas about theory or methodology)
- Teaching practice (e.g. innovative teaching or teacher training ideas and experiences)
- Interviews with experts (e.g. scholars or teaching professionals)
- Book reviews

The journal provides a space in which ideas, findings and practices can be shared in creative ways. Contributions in any of the above categories are welcomed in traditional text form, multimodal forms (e.g. videos, digital stories, zines) or a combination of traditional and multimodal forms (e.g. a text that includes a video or a PowerPoint presentation).

The journal welcomes contributions from a wide range of TESOL and TESOL-related areas. To give some examples:

- Bilingualism/bilingual education
- Classroom practices

- Discourse/pragmatics
- English for specific purposes
- Intercultural communication
- Language testing and assessment
- Language policy and planning
- On-line teaching and learning
- Second language acquisition
- Teacher training

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Editorial

Judy Fernandez and Adam Steinhoff[1]

The University of Sydney

It is our very great pleasure to welcome you to the first issue of *University of Sydney Journal of TESOL* which, like its predecessor *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL,* is published by the TESOL Research Collaboration in The Sydney School of Education and Social Work at The University of Sydney.

This reinvigorated journal provides a space in which both scholars and practitioners in TESOL and related areas can share theory, research and practice. We aim to foster a community of practice in which the voices of scholars, postgraduate students, teacher trainers, teachers, and other practitioners are heard. We accept contributions from a variety of genres, and also strongly encourages non-traditional contributions that, for example, incorporate multi-modal elements.

Our first issue contains three empirical studies. The first paper by Xiaoshuang Liu examines two factors of possible influence on the effectiveness of indirect feedback: learners' proficiency levels and error types. Pedagogical implications include teachers considering their learners' characteristics when providing error correction and the importance of explicitly teaching revising strategies in second and foreign language writing classes. In the second paper, Itsaraphap Moonthiya, reports on an investigation into the self-efficacy beliefs of early career non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) enrolled in a Master of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program at an Australian university. This study reinforces the important role that self-regulation strategies play in assisting NNESTs to view unsuccessful experiences and negative feedback as opportunities to develop professionally. The third paper by Oksana Razoumova

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

and Martin Andrew examines nine maxims that inform teaching. These maxims are examined within the context of a teaching practicum. Findings from this study are of importance to teacher educators in shaping the content to be included in preparation of their courses for training teachers.

The issue includes one theoretical review by Rosmawati, who examines Complex Dynamic Systems Theory and second language development, and one methodological review by Mehdi Riazi about key issues relating to action research, in which recommendations are made for TESOL practitioners aspiring to conduct action research in their own classrooms.

There are also four papers devoted to teaching practice. Jack Richards's paper on professional development recommends valuable initiatives that teachers can take in order to take charge of their own teaching careers. Next, Wei Wang presents a beautifully illustrated picture book that is intended to introduce the past tense in English to young learners. The picture book is a valuable resource for both English teachers and parents. The third paper in this section by Rozan Kuryyim is based on a professional development workshop for student teachers on classroom management skills and provides tips and strategies for teachers to manage their classrooms effectively. The final paper is by Yen-liang Lu, who develops strategies that integrate Party Card Games (PCG), self-determination theory and communicative language teaching (CLT).

In this issue, Professor Brian Paltridge of the University of Sydney, who is well-known for his work in the areas of genre and discourse, is interviewed about his early academic life, his teaching, and his research. Readers of this interview would benefit from his tips and insights into dissertation writing.

The issue closes with Jian E-Peng's review of the book, *Doing a master's dissertation in TESOL and Applied Linguistics*, by Lindy Woodrow.

We extend our appreciation to all the authors for their contributions, and also to our Editorial Board for the invaluable feedback they have provided. We hope that you enjoy this first issue, and that you may also be inspired to contribute to future issues of our journal.

Revising in a second language in response to indirect writing feedback

Xiaoshuang Liu[1]

The University of Sydney

ABSTRACT

Although extensive research has been conducted in the field of corrective feedback in second and foreign language writing instruction, research about the factors that may impact the effectiveness of corrective feedback is still underdeveloped. The study reported in this paper examines two factors of possible influence on the effectiveness of indirect feedback: learners' proficiency levels and error types. In addition, students' revising strategies are examined to better understand their responses to indirect feedback. Results showed that the students with higher proficiency levels were able to correct their errors more accurately than their lower proficiency counterparts. It was also found that regardless of proficiency level, the students were best at correcting grammar errors and had the most difficulties with sentence construction errors. In terms of the revising strategies, results showed that the students relied heavily on their metalinguistic knowledge and only occasionally consulted external sources. The study highlights the importance of teachers considering their learners' characteristics when providing error correction. It also highlights the value of teaching revising strategies in skills in second and foreign language writing classes.

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

Introduction

Written corrective feedback, which involves teachers identifying learners' errors in their texts, is a common pedagogical strategy in second language (L2) writing instruction (Kang & Han, 2015). Teachers often feel obligated to provide corrective feedback, as most learners express strong expectations for teachers to point out their errors (Ferris, 2011). As a result, teachers tend to spend a great amount of time and energy marking students' texts. However, it is sometimes disappointing for teachers when they realise that learners do not always benefit from their feedback and that errors often persist after this feedback.

The role that written corrective feedback plays in L2 writing has been an issue of interest for researchers in the past decades. Although controversial, more recent empirical studies have shown the effectiveness of error correction on learners' writing (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010), and it is currently generally believed that the treatment of errors can be beneficial for learners when it is provided under the right conditions (Ferris, 2011). In recent years, research has tended to focus on the most effective ways to provide writing feedback.

The contrast between direct and indirect corrective feedback has been repeatedly emphasized. Direct feedback involves teachers providing the correct forms of learners' errors (Ferris, 2003). In contrast, when providing indirect feedback, teachers identify learners' errors by underlining and circling or using error codes, rather than providing the actual corrections. Some researchers believe in the advantages of indirect feedback over direct feedback. First, studies show that learners who are provided with indirect feedback acquire certain grammar features more accurately in both the short and long term (e.g., Sadat, Zarifi, Sadat, & Malekzadeh, 2015). Second, it has been suggested that compared with direct feedback, indirect feedback enables learners to be more cognitively engaged in revision and has the potential to improve learners' problem-solving skills (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Third, it has been said that indirect feedback inherently prevents teachers from misinterpreting learners' original thoughts (Ferris, 2011) and that compared with direct feedback, indirect feedback requires less time for teachers (Park, Song, & Shin, 2016).

However, on the other hand, it has also been argued that indirect feedback may not be effective in some circumstances, such as when learners are not sufficiently proficient in English, or when certain types of errors are involved (Bitchener &

Ferris, 2012). Previous research has given limited attention to mediating factors such as these that may impact the effectiveness of indirect writing feedback. Therefore, the current study seeks to fill this research gap by examining two factors of possible influence on the effectiveness of indirect feedback: (1) English language proficiency, and (2) error types. The study investigates whether learners' English proficiency levels influence the accuracy of corrections made in response to indirect corrective feedback and whether error types influence the accuracy of corrections made in response to indirect corrective feedback. The study also explores how students from higher and lower proficiency groups correct their errors when provided with indirect feedback. By doing so, learners' actual engagement with indirect feedback is examined, which will offer a more comprehensive understanding of learners' revisions in response to indirect corrective feedback.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effectiveness of written corrective feedback

In the past decades, much of the research on feedback in second language writing has focussed on error correction. Early researchers doubted the effectiveness of error correction for increasing learners' writing proficiency (e.g., Connors & Lunsford, 1993; Zamel, 1985). The controversy reached its zenith in Truscott's (1996) review article, in which he questioned the effects of error correction and claimed that "grammar correction has no place in writing and should be abandoned" (p. 328). Truscott's (1996) strong claims about the inefficacy of error correction led to researchers' increased interest in this area and numerous empirical studies have been done over the years to examine the effectiveness of error correction (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2010).

Many recent studies have shown that error correction can be beneficial to learners' writing development (e.g., van Beuningen, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2012). Research has shown that written corrective feedback not only helps students edit and revise their existing texts (e.g., Truscott & Hsu, 2008), but also has long-term effects on students' writing accuracy (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). Another argument of researchers in favour of corrective feedback is that students believe strongly in the value of written corrective feedback (Zumbrunn, Marrs, & Mewborn, 2016).

Direct versus indirect feedback

Among the extensive research on the effectiveness of varying types of written corrective feedback, direct and indirect feedback have been areas of ongoing disagreement. On the one hand, some research suggests that providing direct feedback is a more efficient way of developing learners' writing skills (van Beuningen et. al, 2012). On the other hand, some empirical studies have demonstrated that learners who receive indirect feedback outperform their counterparts who receive direct feedback (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Sadat, Zarifi, Sadat, & Malekzadeh, 2015). For example, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) found that students' self-editing skills and the ability to monitor their own writing can be cultivated by the provision of indirect feedback.

Further, although some studies found that there was no significant difference between direct and indirect feedback (e.g. Chandler, 2003), the use of the latter was recommended since it requires less of teachers' time than direct feedback (Park et. al, 2016). In recent studies that compare the effects of direct and indirect feedback, some researchers found that although direct feedback helped students write more accurately in the short term, indirect feedback appears to have more efficacy in the long term (van Beuningen et al., 2012).

According to Ferris (2010), the interpretation of findings from studies comparing direct and indirect feedback could be a reflection of different starting points of two research areas: second language acquisition (SLA) and L2 writing studies. She suggested that SLA researchers focus on learners' acquisition of target language forms or structures. Therefore, they are more likely to be in favour of direct feedback because of its beneficial effects on accuracy. However, L2 writing researchers are interested not only in learners' writing accuracy in the short term, but also in their improvement in the use of writing strategies over time. Thus, L2 writing researchers tend to support the use of indirect writing feedback, because of its greater efficacy over time. However, Ferris (2010) suggested that research from both perspectives fails to adequately address the interactional effects of direct and indirect feedback with other variables. Therefore, the current study aims to contribute to existing research by further exploring the effectiveness of indirect writing feedback from a L2 writing perspective with two possible influential factors examined.

Writing proficiency

It has been suggested that learners' writing proficiency is a mediating factor that should be taken into account when examining the effects of different types of writing feedback (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Kang & Han, 2015). According to Kang and Han (2015), "rather than operating alone to temper the effects of written corrective feedback, the type of feedback variable might do so in tandem with other factors such as learners' proficiency in the target language" (p. 10). Although extensive research has been carried out on the efficacy of different types of writing feedback, our understanding of the relationships between learners' proficiency levels is underdeveloped (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Kang & Han, 2015). For this reason, the current study examines the relationship between the effectiveness of indirect feedback and learners' writing proficiency. It has been hypothesised that indirect feedback may be more effective for learners with higher proficiency levels (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferris, 2011). The reason may be that more advanced learners have a better command of the language, and so are more likely able to self-correct (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005).

To date, only a couple of studies have been carried out to examine the effects of indirect feedback on learners of different proficiency levels (e.g., Park et al., 2016; Yoo, 2014). Park et al. (2016) investigated 40 Korean-as-a-foreign-language students in the United States. Among the students, 19 were beginners and 21 were at the intermediate level. The instructor provided unfocused indirect feedback by underlining errors in learners' texts. After that, errors were categorised into four groups, namely tense and conjugation, orthographic errors, particle errors and lexical errors. Results showed that although higher proficiency Korean learners tended to have higher correction rates than lower proficiency learners, they were only significantly better able to self-correct errors involving Korean particles. However, no tests were conducted to examine whether there was a significant difference between the two groups on the correction rate of overall errors.

In Yoo's (2014) study, 11 English learners in a Korean university were divided into three proficiency groups (low, middle and high) based on their TOEIC scores. The researcher provided uncoded indirect feedback concerning learners' use of indefinite articles. Results showed that the correction rate of the indefinite article errors of the high-proficiency learners was much higher than their counterparts in the other two lower proficiency groups. However, no tests were conducted to examine whether the differences reached statistical significance.

The current study aims to build on these studies by conducting statistical testing to investigate whether any differences exist in learners of different proficiency levels when they are provided with indirect feedback. Therefore, it will further test the hypothesis that indirect feedback may be more effective for higher proficiency learners.

Error types

The type of error is another variable that could have an impact on the effectiveness of indirect corrective feedback (Ferris, 2006; Liu, 2016; Truscott, 1996). According to Truscott (1996), correcting different types of errors, such as morphological, syntactic and lexical errors, requires distinct domains of linguistic knowledge, and this linguistic knowledge may have various acquisition sequences. Therefore, it is possible that some error types are more responsive to indirect feedback. However, little is known about the mediating effects of error types on the effectiveness of indirect feedback (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

Some studies that have investigated the effectiveness of corrective feedback only focussed on one or two target error categories (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Sheen, Wright, & Moldawa, 2009). For example, in the series of studies conducted by Bitchener and Knoch (2008, 2010), there was only one target structure, which was the use of articles. The researchers only focussed on the use of the indefinite article 'a' and the definite article 'the'. Other studies examined various types of errors, but researchers differed in the ways in which they classify errors (e.g., Ferris, 2006; Park et al., 2016; van Beuningen et al., 2012). For instance, Ferris (2006) focussed on 15 types of errors and grouped these into treatable and untreatable errors, while van Beuningen et al. (2012) examined nine types of errors and grouped these into grammatical and non-grammatical errors. The current study will examine eight types of errors and aims to build on previous studies by exploring another way to group various types of errors.

Revising Strategies

Revising strategies refer to the strategies students use to revise their errors after receiving feedback from teachers. Although extensive research has examined how to provide the most effective writing feedback from the teacher's side, only a few studies have investigated how feedback is processed and applied by student writers.

In order to understand learners' thoughts and engagement with writing feedback, think aloud and retrospective interviews are common methods employed by researchers (e.g. Ferris, Eckstein, & DeHonde, 2017; Ferris, Liu, & Senna, 2013). Research has found that referring to learned grammar rules and making corrections based on intuition are the two most common strategies utilized by student writers. For example, in the study conducted by Ferris et al. (2013), researchers found that when revising, students would sometimes recall certain rules learned from their prior grammar instruction, although some of the rules they recalled were partially correct or even misleading. Similarly, in a study conducted by Ferris et al. (2017), researchers found that learners often resorted to their prior grammar instruction although it played only a limited role in revision.

Most studies about learners' engagement with writing feedback have been examined with direct writing feedback (e.g. Sachs & Polio, 2007; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). For this reason, the current study aims to explore learners' revising strategies when provided with indirect writing feedback.

Based on the above literature review, the following three research questions have guided this study:

1. Are there any differences in the accuracy of error correction of learners of two proficiency levels (intermediate and upper-intermediate) when provided with indirect writing feedback?

2. Are there any differences in the accuracy of error correction for different error types when learners of two proficiency levels (intermediate and upper-intermediate) are provided with indirect writing feedback?

3. Which strategies do the learners use to correct their errors?

3. METHOD

Participants

The study was conducted in a language centre within an Australian university. Participants were recruited from the Direct Entry Course (DEC), which aimed to prepare international students to meet the entry requirements for English to study at Australian universities. Students from the DEC program needed to complete

writing tasks as part of their course requirements, and these writing tasks were used as the research data.

According to the gap between their target IELTS score and their current IELTS score, the students in the DEC program were streamed into different courses. DEC36 and DEC10 are two courses within the DEC program. DEC36 students' current IELTS scores are from 5 to 5.5 and the students are regarded as intermediate, while DEC10 students' current IELTS scores are from 6 to 6.5 and their English proficiency is regarded as upper-intermediate.

Twenty-six students participated in this study. Of the participants, half were at the intermediate level and half were at the upper-intermediate level. Thus, there was an equal number of participants in the two proficiency groups and each group comprised 13 participants. With the exception of one participant whose first language is Korean, the rest of the participants' first language was Chinese.

Textual data

Textual data was collected to answer all three questions. The textual data comprised three texts that each participant wrote for their DEC course and the revisions they made in response to feedback on these three texts. Table 1 provides information about these three texts in terms of text type and required length. As the data comprises texts that students wrote for their course, the text types available to the authors were dictated by the actual teaching of the language centre.

Table 1

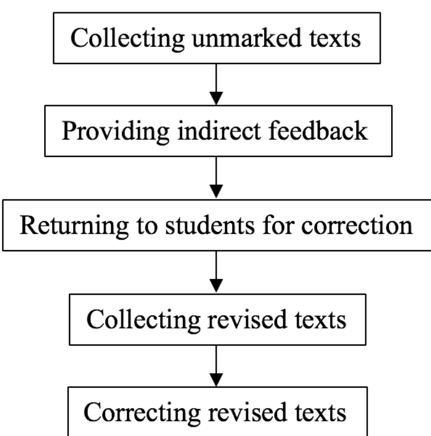
Text information

	Lower level group (Intermediate)		Higher level group (Upper-intermediate)	
	Text type	Required Length	Text type	Required Length
Text 1	Argumentation	250 words	Problem/solution	300 words
Text 2	Summary	100-130 words	Problem/solution	300 words
Text 3	Argumentation	250 words	Problem/solution	300 words

Figure 1 shows the collection procedure for each text. First, the unmarked text that each participant wrote was collected. The texts were written by the participants independently during their normal class time.

Figure 1

Textual data collection procedure



Indirect feedback was then provided by the researchers. Errors in participants' texts were underlined and an error correction code was given above each error. Wherever possible, 12 errors were underlined in each text. This is because 12 errors were considered to be the maximum number of errors feasible for students to revise during a half-hour revision session.

Next, each of the marked texts were returned to the students to correct in a revision session. The revision sessions were run by one of the researchers and were held about one week after the students wrote the texts. In the sessions, the participants were given about 30 minutes to correct the errors. Each participant was given a revision sheet and required to write down their correction of the errors on that sheet. The participants were told that they were allowed to use their phones or computers to access information to help them correct the errors.

In order to make sure that the participants understood the error codes, a training session of about 15 minutes was conducted at the beginning of the first revision session. In the training session, each student was given a handout with an

explanation of the error codes (see Appendix A). After reading the handout, the meaning of each correction code was further elaborated in simple English. This was followed by an exercise practising the error codes provided in the same handout. In the handout, each error code was followed by a corresponding example problem, and the students were required to revise the example problems with the help of the given error code. Students' answers to this practice exercise were checked.

When students finished revising their text, the revision sheets were collected. Students' revisions were analysed by the authors. The revisions were analysed in terms of accurately corrected, partially corrected or wrongly corrected.

Selection and coding of errors

Twelve errors were considered to be the maximum number of errors to be selected due to time constraints in each revision session. However, in some cases, the texts contained less than 12 errors. In the lower proficiency group, of the 33 texts, 11 texts had less than 12 errors. The number of errors ranged from eight to 11. In the higher proficiency group, of the 34 texts, there were eight texts with less than 12 errors. The number of errors ranged from five to 11.

The correction codes focussed on eight specific types of errors. The initial list of error types were adapted from Ferris (2006) and were then selected by class teachers at the language school based on the frequency in their students' writing. According to Ferris (2010), when providing focused feedback, one or two error types may be inadequate for students to make progress, while too many may be overwhelming for both teachers and students. Thus, eight error types were considered to be a suitable number.

As can be seen in Table 2, eight error types were grouped into three larger error categories, namely grammar, sentence construction, and vocabulary. In this study, grouping the errors into three larger categories allowed more general patterns in the participants' error correction to be identified. Table 2 also shows the corresponding codes for each error type that were used in providing indirect feedback.

Table 2

Error categories and codes used in marking

	Code	Example Problem
Grammar Error		
Singular/plural disagreement	S/P	There are many interesting book. (S/P over "book")
Subject/verb disagreement	S/V	She don't like watching movies. (S/V over "She don't")
Tense error	T	I will see him yesterday. (T over "will see")
Sentence Construction Error		
Word order	Wo	I like very much it. (Wo over "very much it.")
Missing words	^	I am so happy when my mum gives ^.
Awkward sentence	Awk	I think have some advantages and disadvantages that universities should only produce digital materials rather than printed textbooks. (Awk over the sentence)
Vocabulary Error		
Wrong form	Wf	This lesson is too long and I am boring. (Wf over the sentence)
Wrong word	Ww	I prefer to study in a group rather than study lonely. (Ww over the sentence)

Think-aloud data

In addition to the textual data, retrospective think-aloud data were collected to answer research question three. Due to time constraints, the think-aloud data were collected for the third text only. The think-aloud session was conducted directly after the third revision session. Ten participants, five from each proficiency group, were randomly selected from the larger sample to participate in the think-aloud session.

During the think-aloud session, each error in the participants' text was pointed out, and the participants were required to recall how they revised each error and to

verbalise this. At the beginning of the think-aloud session, the participants were instructed by the first author with the following prompt:

> *'Now I would like you to recall what you thought while you were correcting these errors just now. I would like you to say aloud anything that went through your mind.' (Translated)*

The retrospective think-aloud sessions were conducted individually, and each protocol was around 15 minutes. As one author and all the selected participants shared the same first language, the think-aloud sessions were conducted in Chinese. Using participants' first language enabled them to express their error correction processes more clearly. The protocols were audio-recorded.

Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis

The original plan was to collect three texts and their corresponding revisions from each participant. However, not all participants attended all three revision sessions. Table 3 shows the number of revised texts that were available for quantitative data analysis.

Table 3

Number of revised texts from the two proficiency groups

	Lower level group (Intermediate)	Higher level group (Upper-intermediate)
Text 1	13	13
Text 2	12	10
Text 3	8	11
Total	33	34

To answer research question one, the number of accurately corrected errors and the total number of errors in each text were calculated. Since the two proficiency groups in the study were independent of each other, independent-samples t-tests were conducted. To answer research question two, the number of accurately corrected errors of each category in each set of texts, and total errors for each category in each set of texts were counted. The percentage of accurately corrected

errors for each category was calculated. Since the data sets for research question two was not large enough, no statistical testing was conducted for this question.

Qualitative data analysis

To answer research question three, the think-aloud data were analysed qualitatively. The audio-recorded think-aloud data of the 10 participants were manually transcribed. Since participants were required to recall how they corrected their texts error by error in the think-aloud session, each error correction was regarded as a segment. A code was attached to each segment of the think-aloud data. Table 4 shows the themes that emerged from coding the think-aloud data for research question three.

Table 4

Emerging themes for research question three

Research question three		Emerging themes
Which strategies do the learners use to correct their errors?	1	Using metalinguistic knowledge
	2	Recognising performance errors
	3	Looking up the dictionary
	4	Using an alternating strategy
	5	Reformulating sentence for intended meaning

4. RESULTS

Research question one

Research question one asked whether there was a difference in the percentage of accurately corrected errors for the two proficiency levels in response to being provided with indirect feedback. Table 5 shows the percentage of accurately corrected errors for participants of the two proficiency levels for each of the three texts and also the total aggregated percentages for all the texts. Statistical testing showed that there was a significant difference in the total aggregated percentages of accurately corrected errors between the lower level group ($M=60.92$, $SD=9.21$) and the higher level group ($M=69.38$, $SD=10.03$), $t(24)= -2.24$, $p=0.035$. The results obtained from the independent-samples t-tests indicate that, overall, participants in the higher-level group were able to correct errors more accurately than their lower level counterparts. However, there were no significant differences in the three texts when tested separately, even though the mean percentages for the higher-level group were higher than those for the lower level group. A possible

explanation for the lack of significant differences when the three texts are tested separately is the small sample size of this study, which reduces power to detect differences. However, the small sample size did not jeopardise the results of the other two research questions, since the data analyses for these questions were based on the number of errors, not the number of texts.

Table 5

Mean percentage of accurately corrected errors by proficiency levels and texts

	Lower level group (Intermediate)		Higher level group (Upper-intermediate)				
	Mean percentage of accurately corrected errors(%)	SD	Mean percentage of accurately corrected errors (%)	SD	*t*	*p*	*df*
Text 1	62.54 (n=13)	12.10	66.00 (n=13)	12.41	−0.72	0.478	24
Text 2	56.25 (n=12)	22.25	69.30 (n=10)	11.16	−1.78	0.093	17
Text 3	68.25 (n=8)	16.90	81.55 (n=11)	16.31	−1.72	0.106	15
Aggregated	60.92 (N=13)	9.21	69.38 (N=13)	10.03	−2.24	0.035	24

Research question two

Research question two concerns participants' accuracy in correcting different types of errors. Table 6 shows the frequencies and percentages of accurately corrected errors of all three texts by error category and proficiency level. As can be seen from the table, overall, the participants displayed the highest correction rate for grammar errors, as 92% of the grammar errors were accurately corrected. This is followed by vocabulary errors: the participants were able to accurately correct 69% of these. The participants were least likely to accurately correct sentence construction errors, and only 45% of these errors were accurately corrected.

Table 6

Percentage of accurately corrected errors by error category and proficiency level

	Lower level group (intermediate)		Higher level group (upper-intermediate)		
	Frequency of accurately corrected errors (All 3 texts)	Percentage of accurately corrected errors (%)	Frequency of accurately corrected errors (All 3 texts)	Percentage of accurately corrected errors (%)	Overall percentage of accurately corrected errors (%)
Grammar Error	58/61	95	67/75	89	92
Singular/plural disagreement	28/29	97	34/35	97	97
Subject/verb disagreement	25/26	96	28/30	93	95
Tense error	5/6	83	5/10	50	63
Sentence Construction Error	37/106	35	55/99	56	45
Word order	5/7	71	4/7	57	64
Missing words	11/32	34	21/29	72	52
Awkward sentence	21/67	31	30/63	48	39
Vocabulary Error	133/200	67	148/206	72	69
Wrong form	60/80	75	70/82	85	80
Wrong word	73/120	61	78/124	63	62

As can be seen in Table 6, within the three error categories, singular and plural disagreement errors were the most frequent errors that were accurately corrected, as both groups were able to correct 97% of the errors. In contrast, the participants displayed the lowest correction accuracy for awkward sentences (sentences with problematic structure, which hinders student writers from conveying their intended meaning) with less than 40% of errors being accurately corrected.

Both proficiency groups exhibited the same overall correction pattern. Table 6 reveals that in both groups, students had the least difficulty correcting grammar errors and they had the most difficulty with the sentence construction errors. The most important difference between the proficiency groups lies in the percentage of accurately corrected sentence construction errors. As shown in Table 6, more than

half of the sentence construction errors were accurately corrected by the higher proficiency group, while only about one-third of the errors were accurately corrected by the lower proficiency group. This shows that the sentence construction errors were particularly difficult for the lower level group to correct.

Research question three

Research question three asked how the participants corrected their errors. Five themes emerged from the students' responses in the think-aloud session. These themes were: using metalinguistic knowledge; recognising performance errors; looking up the dictionary; using an alternating strategy; and reformulating the sentence for intended meaning.

Using metalinguistic knowledge

By examining the verbal reports, the authors found that the dominant strategy for learners was using metalinguistic knowledge. Excerpt 1 presents an example of how a participant corrected a grammar error by using metalinguistic knowledge. In the protocol, the participant was able to accurately figure out why this error was underlined by saying it was a 'tense error'. Also, the participant reported that when she corrected this error, she recalled what she was taught by her class teacher. She had a good understanding of when to use the present-perfect tense when she was correcting this error. In this example, although the participant failed to use the correct past participle in her revision, the student was able to select the correct tense and she was able to recall her metalinguistic knowledge to think about how she should correct this error.

Excerpt 1

T

…, and it becomes a severe problem in recent decades.

Student's revision: has became

> *I understand this. This is a tense error. Because generally speaking, it has already been a problem, I should use the present perfect tense. But when I wrote this essay, I did not pay much attention to it. I remember our teacher told us when it has already become a problem, we should use the present perfect tense to describe this kind of status.*

Recognising performance errors

There were several cases in which participants indicated that some errors were performance errors made due to carelessness. In these cases, the participants were able to correct the errors immediately. Excerpt 2 is an example of a grammar error that was identified by a participant as a performance error.

S / P
In modern society, advertising is an effective way for company to make their products more famous which can let them earn much money.

Student's revision: companies

> *I understand that the code stands for singular and plural. I always make this type of error, these tiny errors, because of carelessness. I knew it's an error and I knew how to correct this error as soon as I see your mark. It should be a plural. This is because I wrote too fast and I was careless.*

Looking up the dictionary

In the revision sessions, participants were told that they were allowed to use their phone and computer. However, by examining the verbal reports, the authors found that there are only a few cases in which participants used these devices. Excerpt 3 is one of a few examples from a participant who attempted to correct his errors by looking up a dictionary.

Wf
A shortage of affordable housing has became a problem in Australia's main cities.

Student's revision: become

> *At first, I thought you marked it wrong because the past form of 'become' is 'became'. Then, I looked up a dictionary, and I've just realized the past participle of 'become' is 'become'. I don't know that. Because since I was in my junior high school, I memorized it like 'become-became-became'.*

Using an alternating strategy

Excerpt 4 illustrates a circumstance when a participant uses an alternating strategy to correct a vocabulary error. Here, the student changes the word 'aiming' to 'aimed', which is the correct form for the present-perfect tense. In the protocol,

the student reported that she knew the correct answer was either 'aiming' or 'aimed', and since 'aiming' was wrong, she directly changed it to another form without thinking too much.

As a result, many companies have aiming [Wf] their advertisements to children.

Revision: aimed

> *When I corrected this error, I knew it is either 'ed' or 'ing'. Because it is wrong when it is 'ing', so I changed to 'ed'.*

Reformulating the sentence for its intended meaning

Excerpt 5 is an example of a sentence construction error that was accurately corrected by a participant by reformulating the sentence for intended meaning. The participant was able to identify that there was a flaw in the original sentence. He figured out that the problem occurred because the head of the noun group 'children as targets' is 'children'. Then, he reformulated the sentence and conveyed his intended meaning.

In conclusion, although the advertisement could spread necessary information, children as targets [Awk] is unacceptable.

Revision: targeting children is unacceptable

> *I understand this error. I reread the sentence, and I think there is something wrong with the logic behind the sentence. The focus of what I have said is 'children', but what I want to say is that the action is unacceptable, not 'children is unacceptable'. So I change to 'targeting children is unacceptable'.*

DISCUSSION

Writer's ability of error correction

Results indicated that the participants in the higher-level group were overall able to correct errors more accurately than their counterparts. Therefore, the findings showed that the students with higher proficiency appeared to generally benefit more from indirect writing feedback.

One possible explanation for the differences in accuracy of error correction between the two proficiency groups is that the students in the two groups are at different stages in terms of their ability to recognise errors. According to Brown (2007), there are four stages of learner language development. These four stages are the random errors stage, the emergent stage, the systematic stage, and the stabilisation stage. Learners who are at the first two stages have little awareness of certain rules and fail to properly internalise them. At these two stages, learners are not able to correct their errors even when the errors are identified for them. In contrast, learners who are in the third stage have a greater understanding of language rules and are able to produce target-like language. Since the learners have a good understanding of certain rules, they are able to correct their errors when they are pointed out. As for the learners who are at the last stage, they have mastered the language rules, so they make few errors and are able to self-correct the errors without the help of others. In the current study, it is possible that more students in the lower-level group are at the second stage, while more students in the higher-level group are at the third stage. The differences in the accuracy of error correction may exist because they have different degrees of internalising of linguistic rules.

Developmental sequence could further explain the influence of proficiency differences on the accuracy of error correction. It is claimed that L2 learners pass through sequences of predictable development to acquire certain features (both in morphology and syntax) in a language (e.g. Lightbown & Spada, 2013): that is, learners acquire single words first, before moving to the category stage (e.g. plural forms of a noun) and phrasal stage (e.g. noun and verb phrase), which are followed by inter-phrasal stage (e.g. subject and verb agreement), and learners finally achieve the much demanding inter-clausal stage (e.g. subordinate clause) (Dyson, 2018). The pattern of accuracy across error types in this study appear to be in line with these development stages. Thus, the difference in accuracy of error correction across the two groups could be the result of learners' differences in development stages. Additionally, this explains why the higher proficiency group still has trouble with correcting sentence construction errors.

In addition, the results of the study are likely to be related to the cognitive processing of language input. According to the framework of the cognitive processing of input developed by Gass (1997), having comprehended input is one of the five key stages of processing new information. Corrective feedback provided by teachers is a form of language input to learners (Schmidt, 2001). It has been suggested that whether or not corrective feedback is comprehended by language

learners is dependent on the explicitness of the feedback and the learners' language proficiency level (Bitchener & Storch, 2016). In the study, the participants from both proficiency levels were provided with indirect coded feedback. Although the indirect feedback with correction codes is more explicit than just underlining or circling, it may still not be sufficiently explicit for the participants at a lower proficiency level.

L2 writer's response to different error types

The overall pattern exhibited in the study (grammar > vocabulary > sentence construction) is likely to be related to the treatability of the errors. According to Ferris (2006), a distinction can be made between treatable and untreatable errors. Treatable errors refer to errors that can be corrected by referring to grammar books or sets of rules, since the target linguistic features are rule-governed. On the other hand, untreatable errors are less-clearly rule-based and more idiosyncratic. In the study, all the sub-categories in the grammar errors can be considered to be treatable errors. Within the vocabulary category, word-form errors are treatable errors, whereas wrong words are more likely to be untreatable errors. Within the sentence construction errors, most of the errors (i.e., awkward sentences) are untreatable errors. Thus, the results suggest that the students in the study tended to correct treatable errors more accurately than untreatable errors.

However, it is important to note that the definition of untreatable errors does not necessarily mean that the errors cannot be corrected, rather emphasises the more complex nature of the rules for those errors. In the study, it is obvious that the rules for the grammar errors and word-form errors are more accessible and are often taught by language teachers or presented in grammar books. In contrast, the rules for wrong words and sentence construction errors are more complicated and abstract in nature; thus, it is less likely for students to be able to diagnose and correct errors based on such rules.

Research question two also showed that the lower proficiency group was conspicuously less accurate in correcting sentence construction errors. This finding suggests that indirect feedback may not be an effective treatment when it is provided to lower proficient students for sentence construction errors. This finding supports Bitchener and Ferris' (2012) suggestion regarding less preferred conditions for providing indirect feedback: one is when learners are at a lower level of L2 proficiency, the other is when it is provided for complex and more idiosyncratic errors. In the study, the sentence construction errors often required

the students to reconstruct the whole sentence or to find an alternative way to express their ideas, so this error type was more complex than the other two types. Therefore, correcting sentence construction errors seems to require writers to have more metalinguistic knowledge and a more solid grasp of syntax. Compared with the higher proficient students, this task was more demanding for the students in the lower group. As a result, it could be quite discouraging for the less proficient writer if they make a great effort to correct errors but have a relatively small chance of successfully correcting them.

L2 writers' self-correction strategies

One key finding was that for all three error categories (grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction), in most instances, students used metalinguistic knowledge to correct their errors. Students recalled what they were taught by their class teachers or they diagnosed and corrected their errors with the help of certain linguistic rules or patterns. This finding suggests that using metalinguistic knowledge appeared to be the most common strategy for students to correct their errors. The finding highlighted the great importance of metalinguistic knowledge in learners' revising process.

Another finding was that, although the students were allowed to use their phone or computer to seek external sources when revising, in only a few cases did students report that they used these devices. External online sources were allowed because it was expected that students would employ them frequently to correct some of their errors. It was also expected that the use of the external sources would help students improve their revising accuracy. Previous research has shown benefits for students in revising by utilising external sources, such as dictionaries (Buckingham & Aktuğ-Ekinci, 2017; Kim, 2017) and online corpora (Mueller & Jacobsen, 2016; Tono, Satake, & Miura, 2014). However, unexpectedly, in this study, students did not generally appear to consult external sources. One possible reason is that the students may not be familiar with the online sources that they could use to solve their problems, or that they were not motivated enough to make the effort to consult external sources, as this was not a high-stakes assessment situation.

When the students did not have enough metalinguistic knowledge for certain types of errors, like wrong words and sentence construction errors, they appeared to be clueless about how to correct their errors. Although it is often expected that by providing error codes, students will obtain some 'hints', in fact correction codes

only help students identify the error type, and tell them little about how to correct those errors. Therefore, the findings reinforce the great importance of teaching students about how to correct different types of errors and of teaching students how to use external sources of information to help them correct their errors when provided with indirect feedback.

CONCLUSION

Several pedagogical implications may be derived from the above discussion. The results indicate differences between the proficiency groups in their ability to correct errors. An implication of this is that when providing indirect feedback, teachers need to take learners' proficiency level into account. When there are students of mixed levels in one class, teachers need to be mindful of not employing only one form of error correction for all learners. Teachers can be more confident about providing indirect feedback to learners of higher proficiency levels, especially when it comes to treatable errors. However, for learners with lower proficiency levels, more explicit feedback or direct intervention may be more effective.

The findings may indicate that L2 writers generally perform better in correcting treatable errors, and that writers, especially lower proficient writers may experience more difficulties in correcting sentence construction errors. This leads to another recommendation for writing teachers, which is to consider the error types when providing indirect feedback. It may be necessary for teachers to apply different feedback approaches for treatable and untreatable errors. For more idiosyncratic errors, like sentence construction errors, more explicit feedback may be a better option. This may be less overwhelming or discouraging for students.

In terms of how students correct errors, the study shows that the most common way is using their metalinguistic knowledge. This finding reinforces the importance of the grammatical knowledge that students acquire when they learn a language. Therefore, if learners have little formal grammar instruction, it could be beneficial if teachers provide them with additional help with certain language features. However, teachers should be mindful that the successful use of grammatical knowledge in revision not only depends on grammar instruction but also on students' internalisation of this instruction. If learners have already received a lot of instruction, emphasis then needs to be put on helping students apply the rules. For example, if students have been taught several times about

subject-verb agreement but still have trouble applying this, teachers could have students do some sentence error correction exercises.

The findings also indicate the importance of teaching revising skills in L2 writing classes. For example, students should be taught which external sources (e.g. dictionary, online corpora) they can utilize when correcting grammar errors, and how to use those sources. The aim of providing writing feedback is to help students improve their writing accuracy. With much emphasis on the feedback that writing teachers provide, it is often neglected that students' uptake of the feedback is equally important, or even more important than the feedback itself.

A major limitation is the small sample size. Thus, the findings should be interpreted with some caution. Future research could expand on this study by enlarging the sample size. It would also be desirable for future research to collect more texts and examine the longitudinal effects of indirect feedback in terms of proficiency level and error types. Another limitation lies in the study design. In the revision sessions, students were allowed to use mobile phones and computers to search for information to help them revise their texts. Thus, it could be argued that this inhibited the ability of the study to examine English proficiency as a factor. However, this limitation did not affect the results much, since students only occasionally consulted these external sources. Also, the study shows that indirect feedback may not be an effective treatment for sentence construction errors, especially for lower level students. Therefore, it is an important issue for future research to find out a more effective feedback approach for sentence construction errors.

AUTHOR

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APPENDIX A. TRAINING SESSION HANDOUT

Code	Meaning	Example problem
Ww.	Wrong word	1. I prefer to study in a group rather than study lonely.
Wf.	Word form	2. He runs quick. 3. This lesson is too long – I am boring.
S/V.	Subject/verb agreement	4. She don't like watching movies.
S/P.	Singular/plural	5. There are many interesting book.
^	A word or words are missing	6. I am so happy when my mum gives.
Wo.	Word order	7. I like very much it.
Awk.	Awkward sentence	8. Because study in a group is very effective way to improve our study.
T.	Tense	9. I will see him yesterday.

Self-efficacy of non-native English-speaking teachers in a teacher training program

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ABSTRACT

This article reports on a mixed methods investigation into the self-efficacy beliefs of early career non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) enrolled in a Master of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program at a metropolitan Australian university. A survey was administered and interviews conducted to examine these teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and the relationship between their self-efficacy and their English language proficiency (ELP) as measured by performance-based tests. The results revealed that the NNESTs appeared to have relatively positive self-efficacy as English teachers, and that self-efficacy and ELP were not very closely related. The interviews showed that a number of factors, such as teaching experience, perceptions of feedback from stakeholders, and cross-border teacher training, influenced teachers' self-efficacy. Implications for language teacher education are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Recent decades have seen a growth in the number of studies into teachers' beliefs and their influence on teacher cognition and professional lives (Borg, 2015; Burns & Richards, 2009). The growing attention to such research efforts can be partly attributed to greater emphasis on the importance of teacher identity (Olsen, 2016). Among diverse dimensions of teacher identity, the connection between agency and

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©2022 *University of Sydney Journal of TESOL*

ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

self-efficacy appears to be an element that is crucial to developing a better understanding of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). According to Bandura (2002), "Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more central or pervasive than belief of personal efficacy" (p. 170). Self-efficacy is, therefore, believed to be an essential component of agency. In English language teaching (ELT), teacher identity and self-efficacy have been found to be closely related (Rozati, 2017), indicating that self-efficacy may be involved in the development of teacher identity to reinforce teachers' beliefs in their capabilities to teach English (Tournaki & Podell, 2005).

In efficacy research among English teachers, particular attention has been devoted to the self-efficacy of NNESTs who received teacher training in their home countries, including the connection between their self-efficacy and English language proficiency (ELP) (Faez & Karas, 2017). In contrast, relatively little is known about the self-efficacy of early career NNESTs undertaking TESOL teacher training in English-speaking countries that are far removed from the contexts in which they intend to teach. As NNESTs represent the majority of English language teachers today (Richards, 2017) and as they increasingly graduate from TESOL programs in English-speaking countries (Kong, 2014), understanding their self-efficacy beliefs is important because these beliefs can have profound influence on their professional identities and classroom practices. This study adds to the limited literature on self-efficacy of early career NNESTs and the relationship of this to ELP.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has been defined as "people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 2006, p. 307). It influences individuals' aspirations and the perseverance they display in the face of difficulties (Bandura, 2018). According to Bandura (1997), individuals develop their self-efficacy by processing information from four sources: *mastery experiences*, *vicarious experiences*, *social persuasion*, and *physiological states*. Mastery experiences refer to the perceptions of previous successful experiences of mastering tasks that might strengthen self-efficacy, whereas perceptions regarding failures might undermine it. Vicarious experiences are indirect experiences of observing the success or failure of others who serve as models. Social persuasion is the positive or negative judgements of other people. Physiological states are emotional reactions or tensions.

In education, self-efficacy is teachers' self-perception of their effectiveness in supporting students' learning (Soodak & Podell, 1997). It has been found to influence the effort teachers put in and how well they respond to challenges (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Thus, the importance of teachers' self-efficacy lies in its strong connection to the quality of teaching (Zakeri et al., 2016). Efficacy research in English language teaching (ELT) has suggested a significant role of self-efficacy in professional development and pedagogical practice (Wyatt, 2018). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) proposed three dimensions of self-efficacy: instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Extensive efficacy research in different EFL contexts has investigated the levels of self-efficacy based on these three dimensions and reported varied results. Because "self-efficacy is domain-, task- and context-specific" (Phan & Locke, 2015, p. 74), it appears natural that teachers' levels of efficacy vary, as they have different teaching contexts and learners (Schunk & Pajares, 2010).

Self-efficacy of early career English teachers

Despite a significant growth in efficacy research in ELT, there is only limited research into self-efficacy of early career English teachers (Wyatt, 2018). Existing efficacy research has mainly targeted English teachers undertaking teacher training in their local contexts (e.g., Zakeri et al., 2016). In contrast, little is known about the self-efficacy of early career NNESTs undertaking teacher training in English-speaking countries. The learning-to-teach experience in a context linguistically and culturally different from their own could have a significant impact on their self-efficacy.

Cross-border teacher training

Cross-border teacher training refers to programs for which aspiring or practicing teachers travel overseas to obtain a teaching-related qualification and to experience linguistic and/or cultural immersion as part of their teacher development (Faez & Karas, 2019). Given the internationalization of higher education, a growing number of NNEST international students are graduating from TESOL programs in English-speaking countries (Kong, 2014). The experiences of undertaking teacher education in English-speaking countries can bring about positive and negative consequences for their personal and professional development. On the one hand, research into cross-border teacher training has been found to provide participants with benefits in terms of professional development, an understanding of contemporary teaching principles (Kamhi-stein, 2009), linguistic gains, and intercultural awareness (Faez & Karas, 2019). NNESTs undertaking cross-border teaching training were found to improve ELP due largely

to the English-medium instruction and courses about ELT (Faez & Karas, 2019). They also have been found to attain stronger levels of confidence in teaching than those without such experience (Walters et al., 2009), leading them to become more willing to experiment with pedagogical approaches (Grossman & Sands, 2008). With international experience, NNESTs may become less ethnocentric (Deardorff, 2006), because this transition provides them with opportunities to develop greater cultural awareness (Marx & Moss, 2011).

However, it has been argued that TESOL programs in English-speaking countries fail to address the needs of NNESTs, many of whom intend to return to their home countries to teach English (Selvi & Peercy, 2016). This is partly because although ELT methodologies advocated in such programs, such as communicative language teaching (CLT), reflect contemporary ways of ELT, they draw unquestionably on Western epistemologies which are not necessarily transferable to non-Western contexts where the socio-educational contexts are radically different from those of English-speaking countries (Liyanage et al., 2015). Large class sizes, teacher and learner roles, cultural tenets, and traditional examinations in non-Western contexts might negate the effectiveness of CLT (Hiep, 2007).

Self-efficacy and English language proficiency

Most English teachers worldwide are NNESTs (Richards, 2017). For NNESTs, the importance of ELP has remained a major consideration in judgements related to teacher competence (Faez et al., 2019). On the one hand, ELP is considered to be an important professional competence (Faez & Karas, 2017), and has been found to affect professional confidence and legitimacy as English teachers (Eslami & Harper, 2018). On the other hand, Richards (2017) and Tsang (2017), among others, downplay the importance of ELP for English teachers. They argue that ELP alone is far from sufficient for effective teaching, as other teaching competencies and skills, such as content knowledge, discourse skills, and pedagogical knowledge and ability, are believed to be equally important. Richards (2017) argues that today's NNESTs "do not have nor need a native-like ability" (p. 9) to teach English well, suggesting that while ELP is important, it is not a stand-alone factor determining teaching success.

Among many attributes that have been investigated in relation to English teachers' self-efficacy, special attention has been given to the relationship between self-efficacy and ELP. Faez and Karas (2017) conducted a meta-analysis of the connection between the two constructs based on 11 studies from 2001 to 2016.

Results indicate that most studies have revealed weak positive correlations between the two constructs: teachers who have reported higher levels of perceived ELP were more efficacious than those who reported lower levels. As ELP remains an important professional quality of English teachers (Faez et al., 2019), this study examines the relationship between self-efficacy and ELP of early career NNESTs.

Measurement of self-efficacy

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) was developed based on Bandura's (1986, 1997) Social Cognitive Theory and has become highly-used across contexts (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). It has two versions (i.e., a 12-item and 24-item form) and comprises 3 subscales: *Instructional Practices*, *Student Engagement,* and *Classroom Management*. These subscales entail simple questions for teachers to evaluate their confidence in teaching. Because the TSES was developed for self-efficacy in general education, its relevance for assessing language teachers' self-efficacy is contentious (Faez & Karas, 2017). Consequently, the current study employs a modified version of the TSES to investigate the self-efficacy of NNESTs.

Measurement of ELP

To measure ELP, most efficacy studies have relied on self-perception measures (Faez & Karas, 2017). However, it has been argued that perceived ELP is highly subjective (Denies & Janssen, 2016; Trofimovich et al., 2016). NNESTs might measure themselves against NEST norms, so this might negatively impact how they rate their ELP (Hodgson, 2014). Unlike most previous studies, Sabokrouh (2014) used grammar and reading scores for TOEFL instead of perceived ELP. However, solely using ELP test results that focus only on receptive skills might not be representative of all the English skills needed for teaching (Wyatt, 2018). Therefore, further investigation using a performance-based measure that includes the four skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) is needed to enhance our understanding of the relationships between teachers' self-efficacy and ELP (Faez et al., 2019). Consequently, the current study uses participants' self-reported IELTS or TOEFL results in the four skills.

THE CURRENT STUDY

The literature review has pinpointed the scarcity of research into self-efficacy of early career NNESTs who undertake TESOL training in English-speaking countries

that are far removed from their teaching contexts. The experience of studying in a linguistically and culturally different environment and undergoing teacher training outside the contexts where they intend to teach could have a significant impact on NNESTs' self-efficacy as English teachers. Moreover, although self-efficacy has been found to be related to perceived ELP, no known empirical research exists that uses measures of ELP in the four foundational skills from performance-based tests. Therefore, this study examines the self-efficacy beliefs of early career NNESTs in a TESOL postgraduate program at a major Australian university, including the relationship between their self-efficacy and their ELP. This study addresses two research questions:

1. What are the self-efficacy beliefs of early career NNESTs enrolled in a TESOL program at an Australian university?

2. What is the relationship between their self-efficacy beliefs and English language proficiency?

METHOD

This study adopts a concurrent mixed-methods design, in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected in parallel, analysed independently, and integrated in one study (Ivankova & Greer, 2015) to obtain a detailed understanding of early career NNESTs' self-efficacy. In this study, both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data are collected and analysed.

Setting and participants

This study was conducted at a metropolitan Australian university that offers a one-year MEd in TESOL. This degree is designed for practicing and aspiring English teachers seeking professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills in the field of ELT. Approximately 110 students were enrolled in the program in 2019. The majority are international students, particularly from Mainland China. Entry requirements for international students are: a bachelor's degree and either a postgraduate ELT qualification or at least 2 years of full-time ELT experience; or a bachelor's degree in ELT and at least 1 year of full-time ELT experience; and an acceptable level of ELP (an overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum band score of 6 in each skill).

Convenience sampling was used to recruit participants for the on-line survey and these participants met the following criteria (Dörnyei, 2007): being a non-English-dominant international student enrolled in the MEd TESOL at an Australian university; and having less than 3 years of full-time ELT experience. Thirty-two participants responded to the survey. Their ages ranged from 22 to 35 (mean = 25.84; SD = 3.52) and their overall English proficiency scores ranged from 6.5 to 8.5 out of a possible IELTS band 9 (mean = 6.95; SD = 0.56). Table 1 presents demographic information about the survey participants.

Table 1

Survey participant information (N = 32)

Gender	Female	28
	Male	4
Place of origin	Japan	1
	Mainland China	28
	Paraguay	1
	Taiwan	2
Semester	1st semester student	10
	2nd semester student	22
Teaching experience	1 year or less	9
	More than 1 year but less than 2 years	9
	More than 2 but less than 3 years	10
	3 years or more	4
Previous degree	ELT	8
	Education	3
	English literature	6
	Linguistics	1
	Other	14

For the interview, six (2 males and 4 females) student teachers volunteered to participate by contacting the researcher via email. As participation in the self-efficacy survey was anonymous, these six interview participants may or may not have completed the survey and they were not necessarily representative of the 32 TESOL students who completed the survey. The profiles of the six interview participants are provided in Table 2.

Table 2

Interview Participant Information (N = 6)

Pseudonyms	Origin	Gender	Term	Age	Teaching experience	Educational background
Ouying	China	Female	2	22	1-2 years	ELT
Ruixiang	Taiwan	Male	2	28	3 years	Engineering
Aling	China	Female	2	21	Less than 1 year	English
Ming	China	Male	1	35	3 years	English
Jinjin	Taiwan	Female	1	25	2-3 years	Business
Kaili	China	Female	2	28	3 years	Management

Data collection

On-line survey

The self-efficacy survey was adapted from the widely used Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). Bandura (2006) suggests that efficacy survey items "must be tailored to the particular domain of functioning that is the object of interest" (p. 308), so the TSES was modified to make it more relevant to ELT. The modified survey has two parts. Part 1 was used to collect participants' demographic information, and to record their self-reported ELP test scores. Part 2 of the survey was used to collect information about participants' self-efficacy. Similar to the short version of the TSES, the survey contains 12 items which can be classified into 3 subscales (i.e., instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management) with 4 items in each. After ethics approval, the survey was administered on-line during the last two weeks of the semester through a university-approved platform. The overall scale reliability of the modified survey (α = 0.91) was acceptable according to Phakiti (2015, p. 31), who suggests that "a reliability coefficient of 0.9 upwards is desirable". The average inter-item correlation among the 12 items was 0.47, and according to Clark and Watson (1995), a value between 0.15 and 0.5 is considered appropriate.

Interview

The one-on-one interviews followed a structured format (see Appendix A). The survey asked the participants about, for example, their perception of themselves as English teachers, their strengths and weaknesses as NNESTs, and their sources of

self-efficacy. Although the questions were predetermined, probing questions occurred when certain points needed clarification.

Data analysis

To answer research question 1, descriptive statistics were calculated for each item and subscale, and the overall scale. In addition, thematic analysis of the interview data was conducted following Braun and Clarke's (2006) recommendations. Themes were drawn deductively from self-efficacy literature and inductively from the data itself. The interview data were transcribed verbatim and entered into NVivo 12. Then, the transcriptions were read several times to identify salient keywords that were grouped into themes. Through the cycles of analysis, initial themes and codes were revised and reinterpreted.

To answer research question 2, testing of statistical assumptions revealed that it was not appropriate to use a parametric test, because some variables were not distributed within the acceptable values. Moreover, analysis of scatterplots indicated monotonic relationships between variables. Therefore, a decision was made to use a non-parametric test, Spearman's rho, to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and ELP.

RESULTS

Research question 1: Self-efficacy of NNESTs

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics for self-efficacy of the early career NNESTs are shown in Table 3. According to Table 3, the respondents perceived themselves to be reasonably efficacious at teaching ($M = 3.51$ out of 5). The mean scores of each item ranged from 3.09 (Item 8) to 3.72 (Items 4, 9, and 11), indicating that their perceived self-efficacy in teaching English was at a reasonably high level. The means for the subscales indicate that participants judged themselves to be slightly more efficacious in classroom management ($M = 3.56$) and instructional strategies ($M = 3.55$) than in student engagement ($M = 3.44$), indicating that early career NNESTs find engaging students to be a little more difficult than managing the classroom or applying effective instructional strategies.

Table 3

Means and standard deviations of early career NNESTs' sense of efficacy

Self-efficacy	**M**	**SD**
Instructional Strategies		
I can ask good questions to facilitate learning.	3.38	0.79
I can use a variety of teaching techniques, such as quizzes, games, and oral presentations.	3.47	0.84
I can give clear explanations and examples to help learners understand the lesson.	3.63	0.75
I can integrate technology into my teaching, such as videos, social media, and blogs.	3.72	0.92
Total	3.55	0.9
Student Engagement		
I can motivate learners to believe they can do well in learning English.	3.62	0.79
I can encourage learners to actively participate in class activities.	3.53	0.98
I can help learners value the importance of learning English.	3.50	0.76
I can create a classroom in which learners use English freely.	3.09	0.86
Total	3.44	0.85
Classroom Management		
I can get learners to work in pairs or groups.	3.72	1.02
I can establish an understanding of acceptable classroom behaviour.	3.59	0.84
I can build up a sense of mutual trust and rapport with learners.	3.72	0.96
I can use allocated time effectively for class activities.	3.19	0.78
Total	3.56	0.91
Total of all subscales	3.51	0.62

* Significant at the .05 level.

Interviews

The qualitative interview data revealed two divergent discourses on self-efficacy of early career NNESTs. Some participants with relatively high self-efficacy were confident in their teaching despite being in their early career, while others with relatively low self-efficacy reported having low confidence in teaching. The interviews also revealed that early career NNESTs' self-efficacy appears to be dynamic and seems to increase as they gain more teaching experience. Three broad interconnected themes that seemed to influence their self-efficacy were: sources of self-efficacy; cross-border teacher training; and perceived professional legitimacy as NNESTs.

Sources of self-efficacy

Findings suggested that two sources of self-efficacy appeared to affect early career NNESTs' self-efficacy: mastery experiences and social persuasion. All interviewees indicated that their self-efficacy was influenced by their mastery experiences. For example, Jinjin recounted:

> *You can tell if your class is successful or not from students' reaction. If students actively participate, I'll feel more confident. If they don't, I'd think the class doesn't go well, which decreases my confidence.*

It appears from Jinjin's account that self-efficacy is fluid and variable: on a day that she has positive experiences her self-efficacy is high, and on a day that she has negative ones it is low. Like Jinjin, Ming's interpretation below of his mastery experiences was informed by learners' participation:

> *Students were cooperative and they enjoyed my lesson. It affected my confidence in teaching.*

This seems to suggest that these teachers relied on learners' participation to develop a sense of teaching mastery. The recognition of himself as a competent English teacher might have strengthened Ming's self-efficacy.

All interviewees cited social persuasion as important for influencing their self-efficacy. For example, judgements from learners appeared to affect Jinjin's self-efficacy:

> *A student said that she really liked my teaching. It's nice to be recognised. Of course, my confidence is greatly improved.*

This seems to suggest the more Jinjin received positive social persuasion, the more she felt competent in her teaching, thereby strengthening her self-efficacy. Conversely, it appears on Kaili's account that the more she received negative feedback, the more she questioned her teaching ability, which might have undermined her self-efficacy:

> *If I get lots of bad comments from students and colleagues, I'll doubt myself.*

However, negative social persuasion does not necessarily diminish self-efficacy. Rather, it appears in some interviewees' accounts that their self-perceptions of the

judgements were more important in influencing their self-efficacy than the judgements themselves, as evident in Ruixiang's comment:

> *My supervisor said I'm incompetent, so I quit my job. I'm not satisfied, but it provided me a chance to reflect on myself. It's a building block for my future improvements.*

Ruixiang resigned from his position because he believed his teaching principles were not aligned with those of his employer. He, however, insisted his principles were appropriate for his learners. The disparity between his supervisor's view of Ruixiang as being incompetent, and his own view of the situation and positive perception of himself as a competent teacher allowed him to be able to see the positive side of this unfavourable experience. It seems that the positive way in which he positioned himself in relation to the negative feedback provided him with a springboard for strengthening his self-efficacy. Social persuasion that appears negative on the surface might not necessarily result in an erosion of self-efficacy, as this depends on how one perceives such experiences

Cross-border Teacher Training

A shared view amongst all interviewees was that the experience of undertaking a TESOL program strengthened their self-efficacy. They viewed this transition as a stepping stone towards professional development and cited heightened cultural awareness, a growing understanding of current ELT methodologies, and improved ELP as positive factors. Ruixiang's growing understanding of cultural awareness is discussed in relation to his future lessons.

> *The TESOL broadens my perspective in cultural diversity. This is something I should teach learners.*

After enrolling in the TESOL program, all felt they developed a greater understanding of current ELT methodologies. For example, Kaili recounted how she put different teaching approaches into perspective and would draw on contemporary methodologies to design her lessons:

> *In China, we adopt grammar-translation. It's negative washback. The method we learn here are more integrated. When I go back to China, I'll use CLT frequently.*

This seems to indicate that the teacher training assisted them to become more efficacious in applying more contemporary teaching principles. However, concerns were expressed about the relevance of methodologies learnt through the TESOL program to non-Western contexts, as most interviewees were planning to return to their countries to teach after graduation. For example, Ruixiang said:

> *Lots of teaching strategies cannot be directly applied to my context. It requires teachers to think critically.*

His reflection on learning-to-teach suggests that he became aware of the need to adjust the methodologies to fit his context. The recognition that the widespread adoption of teaching principles grounded in Western epistemologies might not be applicable to EFL contexts suggests that Ruixiang could critically examine the practicality of methodologies in relation to teaching contexts.

All interviewees agreed that the cross-border teacher training developed their ELP. However, the extent to which they felt that their ELP improved varied; it appears that those who perceived their ELP as relatively high in the first place noticed only a slight improvement. Conversely, those who perceived their ELP as moderate noticed a greater improvement and attributed this to increased exposure to English both inside and outside the classroom. While the MEd TESOL program in this study is for local and international students, in practice the majority are international students of Chinese background. This might have impacted the linguistic choices they made for daily communication.

Professional Legitimacy and NNEST Status

Only two advantages of being NNESTs in relation to self-efficacy emerged: shared linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds; and experiences as English learners that help them better resolve learners' difficulties. Interviewees emphasised disadvantages of being NNESTs: native speakerism in the job market; lower employability and income; and issues surrounding ELP, such as accentedness and pronunciation. Issues of discrimination in hiring practices appeared to be prominent in their teaching contexts, as some interviewees were discriminated against because of their non-native status. It appears that their employers favoured native English speakers, regardless of their teaching qualification and experience, and offered them much higher salaries than their non-native counterparts. Ruixiang's comment illustrates this:

> *Though we have more teaching competence, we cannot compete with a native speaker who doesn't have teaching qualifications. Institutes in Taiwan cannot provide decent payment … because I'm not native.*

While all interviewees perceived their ELP to be sufficient for teaching, they shared varying views about their attitudes towards pronunciation and accents. The ways in which they viewed the need to achieve native-like accents seemed to impact their self-efficacy. Those who measured themselves against a native yardstick tended to perceive a deficit in their speech as not being suitable to provide appropriate models. Such an attitude seemed to diminish their self-efficacy. Conversely, those who subscribed to the view of World Englishes seemed to embrace language variations and felt efficacious in teaching. Kaili's comment highlights that the way she perceived herself as a legitimate English language teacher could have an impact on her self-efficacy. The fact that she wished to be a native speaker seems to suggest her inner struggle to develop a legitimate teacher identity as a NNEST, as she strived to meet social expectations:

> *I wish I could be a native speaker. I still feel unconfident and people will judge you, even if you have good teaching.*

Research question 2: Self-efficacy and ELP

As shown in Table 4, neither the overall self-efficacy nor the 3 sub-scales were significantly related to overall ELP. For overall self-efficacy and overall ELP, only a non-significant weak correlation (ρ = 0.31) was found. However, the *p* value (0.085) indicates marginal significance. Thus, it is possible that the lack of significance is due to lack of power associated with the small sample size. Surprisingly, however, results indicate that overall self-efficacy and listening proficiency were associated. Moreover, results reveal that the more proficient the NNESTs were in reading and listening, the more they felt efficacious in engaging learners. Further, their efficacy in classroom management seemed to increase with listening proficiency. Nevertheless, the results are rather unexpected. There might be factors that may have caused anomalous statistic results, which will be discussed further.

Table 4.

Correlations between self-efficacy and ELP

Variable	Overall Proficiency	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Overall self-efficacy	0.310	0.416*	0.344	0.142	0.007
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.085	0.018	0.054	0.438	0.970
Instructional strategies	0.208	0.292	0.250	0.054	0.007
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.253	0.105	0.168	0.771	0.968
Student engagement	0.337	0.430*	0.349*	0.123	0.070
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.059	0.014	0.050	0.501	0.702
Classroom management	0.252	0.393*	0.333	0.139	-0.044
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.164	0.026	0.063	0.447	0.812

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Despite no significant relationship being found between the overall self-efficacy and ELP in quantitative analysis, some interviewees indicated that their levels of ELP made them more or less confident in teaching English. The increased exposure to English in an immediate educational and a broader sociocultural context in Australia made these interviewees more confident in their ELP, which in turn appeared to enhance their self-efficacy. However, the qualitative results also provide insights into other professional virtues, such as classroom management, motivational, and teaching skills, which appear to override the importance of ELP, indicating that ELP is by no means the only factor influencing early career NNESTs' self-efficacy as English teachers.

DISCUSSION

Self-efficacy of early career NNESTs

Research question 1 examined early career NNESTs' self-efficacy. Results revealed that they appeared relatively confident in their teaching ability. Only a small difference was noted between the three dimensions of self-efficacy. Regarding their relatively high level of perceived self-efficacy, the findings are somewhat surprising. The TESOL program where this study was conducted requires at least 1 or 2 years of ELT experience, depending on prior qualifications, as an entry requirement. In reality, however, nearly one-third of the survey participants indicated having less than 1 year of ELT experience. Research has shown that unlike their experienced counterparts, inexperienced teachers tend to overestimate their self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). A possible explanation for this overestimation might be that these participants were affected

by what Lortie (1975) terms “apprenticeship of observation”, whereby student teachers rely heavily on their naïve preconceptions about teaching from a learner’s rather than a teacher’s perspective (Borg, 2004). Given their limited prior teaching experience, they might not yet have encountered many difficulties in teaching, leading them to believe that they are capable teachers. Teachers with very high self-efficacy might be unrealistic and have little incentive to improve their teaching (Lampert, 2010). In contrast, teachers with extremely low self-efficacy might develop cognitive dissonance that prevents them from improving themselves professionally (Wheatley, 2002). To help student teachers form a more realistic picture of teaching, TESOL programs should include opportunities for authentic teaching that allow trainees to put theory into practice and examine their teaching beliefs (Westrick & Morris, 2016).

Previous research that used the TSES has generally revealed that NNESTs in different contexts felt most efficacious in using effective instructional strategies, followed by managing the classroom and engaging learners (e.g., Yilmaz, 2011). In this study, the findings partially contradict these results, but support the earlier research (e.g., Ghasembolanda & Hashim, 2013), which found that NNESTs felt most confident in managing the classroom. Such inconsistent results are not surprising, as “self-efficacy is domain-, task- and context-specific” (Phan & Locke, 2015, p. 74). Therefore, it is not unusual that teachers’ levels of self-efficacy should vary across contexts (Chacón, 2005).

The qualitative analysis provides a more nuanced picture of NNESTs’ self-efficacy by revealing that it is dynamic and tends to develop over time, in agreement with Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). The results also revealed three key interconnected factors that appeared to influence their self-efficacy: sources of self-efficacy, cross-border teacher training, and perceptions of NNEST status. Regarding sources of self-efficacy, interviewees appeared to emphasize mastery experiences and social persuasion which seemed to go hand-in-hand in mediating self-efficacy. This finding is supported by the results obtained by Milner (2002) and Bandura (1997), who suggest that two or more sources interact with one another to affect self-efficacy. A possible explanation for this interaction may be that a lack of teaching experience led early career NNESTs to draw heavily on stakeholders’ feedback to confirm a sense of mastery.

This study illustrated that judgements on sources of self-efficacy, rather than the sources themselves, may affect NNESTs’ self-efficacy. This is likely related to Bandura’s (1997) contention that sources of self-efficacy only become active

through cognitive processing and Schunk and Pajares' (2010) assertion that sources of self-efficacy do not necessarily influence self-efficacy, but that teachers' own judgements strongly do. This finding reinforces the importance of assisting NNESTs in developing self-regulation strategies that enable them to view unsuccessful experiences and negative feedback as beneficial for professional growth (Wheatley, 2002). Self-regulation, defined by Zimmerman (2000) as "self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals" (p. 14), and self-efficacy have been found to be closely related (Wigfield et al., 2011), indicating that teachers capable of regulating their thoughts may potentially be more efficacious (Wyatt, 2013). Therefore, equipping NNESTs with self-regulation strategies might be helpful for them to reframe their perceptions in a positive manner and as a result strengthen their self-efficacy.

Despite some adjustment difficulties, all interviewees found their cross-border teacher training experience worthwhile, because it enhanced their self-efficacy, cultural awareness, understanding of current ELT methodologies, and ELP. These findings accord with Walters et al. (2009) who found that student teachers undertaking training overseas attained stronger self-efficacy and developed better understanding of cultural awareness than those without such an experience. Regarding ELP, this result is in accordance with Faez and Karas (2019), who found that NNESTs undertaking a TESOL program in Canada reported having developed ELP due largely to the increased exposure to English in and outside the classroom.

However, although NNESTs perceived the training to be valuable, they questioned the wisdom of implementing ELT principles embedded in Western epistemologies to their teaching contexts, which diverge markedly from English-speaking countries. This finding was reported by Hiep (2007) and Kurihara and Samimy (2007), who found that conflicts existed over the implementing of Western-based ELT approaches in non-Western contexts. To ensure that courses available are responsive to the needs of all participants, a possibility would be for TESOL programs to incorporate reflective practice into existing syllabi, so as to engage student teachers in critical reflections on the appropriacy of particular ELT principles in relation to their contexts.

Regarding perceptions of NNEST status, the findings revealed that discrimination in the job market remains largely present, in agreement with Kamhi-Stein (2016) and Mahboob and Golden (2013). The findings appear to corroborate previous studies (Holliday, 2005; Kamhi-Stein, 2004) that have documented discrimination

in terms of employment, earnings, and ELP faced by NNESTs in their local contexts. This is due mainly to the native speakerism ideology, which places NESTs as idealised English teachers, without considering their teaching qualifications and experience. Despite having reasonably high self-efficacy and being professionally trained, this study reveals that NNESTs' reliance on native-speaker norms and self-marginalisation can make their self-efficacy and by extension their teacher identity rather vulnerable. Therefore, it might be worthwhile for teacher educators to put effort into demystifying discourses about the native/non-native labeling (Varghese et al., 2005) and raising awareness of student teachers that Inner Circle models should not be the only acceptable standards to reflect the sociolinguistic realities of the English language today (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Teacher educators should engage student teachers in discussion on issues surrounding norms, varieties of English, and professional legitimacy. The recognition of themselves as legitimate English teachers may empower NNESTs' self-efficacy and teacher identity.

The relationship between self-efficacy and ELP

No significant correlation between the overall self-efficacy and the overall ELP was observed, suggesting that early career NNESTs' self-efficacy and ELP as measured by performance-based tests are only weakly related. These findings broadly support other studies (e.g., Digap, 2016; Marashi & Azizi-Nassab, 2018) linking self-efficacy and ELP, indicating that the latter is only a relatively small factor influencing English teachers' self-efficacy. However, most previous studies reported statistically significant, albeit weak, relationships between the two constructs (Faez et al., 2019). A possible explanation may be due to the different ways of measuring ELP. While most studies (e.g., Chacón, 2005; Yilmaz, 2011) used self-perceptions, this study used objective measures of ELP which could have influenced the results. The unanticipated statistically significant correlations found between overall self-efficacy and listening, and student engagement and reading are rather questionable, as not a single survey item pertains specifically to listening or reading. These results could possibly be statistical artefacts (Plonsky, 2015). The possibility of a Type I error cannot be ruled out, as the significance level was set at 0.05.

The qualitative analysis might be able to offer further explanations as to why the non-significant weak correlations were found for ELP. Consistent with Eslami and Harper's (2018) and Kamhi-stein's (2009) findings, the interview data revealed that ELP affected NNESTs' confidence as English teachers to some extent. However, it is notable that interviewees recognised other professional qualities, such as pedagogical and content

knowledge, as important elements that characterise effective language teachers. That is, they did not equate ELP with effective teaching. It is certainly not necessarily the case that proficient English users, regardless of their native or non-native status, are effective English teachers. This finding broadly supports Richards' (2017) and Tsang's (2017) studies concerning NNESTs, indicating that ELP should not be the sole criterion for determining effective English teachers. Such a dogmatic assertion for NNESTs as "proficiency will always represent the bedrock of their personal confidence" (Murdoch, 1994, p. 254) may no longer hold true today.

Directions for future research

The current study may be the first of its kind to examine the relationship to self-efficacy using performance-based ELP scores from the four language skills. However, the measure of ELP in the current study relied entirely on respondents' honest account of their self-reported performance-based ELP test scores which are obtained before their enrollment in the program. This may have affected the results of the correlational analysis. Future studies could replicate this study in other contexts and use more current performance-based ELP measures.

Methodologically, although the sample size of 32 is acceptable to perform inferential statistics, in absolute terms it is still small. This number limits the statistical power of the study. A factor limiting generalisability of the study is that participants were recruited on a voluntary basis, so participants with higher self-efficacy beliefs than typical might have opted into this study. Future studies could employ larger sample sizes and recruit participants from a broader range of self-efficacy levels.

Self-efficacy and ELP are dynamic constructs that can develop over time. However, the survey and interviews were only administered once, and so could not capture changes in self-efficacy or ELP. For future research, multiple interviews are therefore recommended. In addition, although the survey was modified in accordance with Bandura's (2006) guidelines, with only 12 items it may not capture every aspect of self-efficacy. Future studies could develop a more comprehensive self-efficacy scale for language teachers.

Theoretically, a more robust conceptual framework is needed that articulates the relationship between self-efficacy with teacher identity more clearly. It would be of interest for self-efficacy research to ally itself more firmly with teacher identity research. Research has shown that the psychological mechanisms underlying self-efficacy are an important component that influences teacher identity formation

(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Tournaki & Podell, 2005). However, the issue of self-efficacy in connection with teacher identity has not been adequately addressed. Rozati (2017) suggests that efficacy research be based on an interdisciplinary framework that integrates social psychology into teacher identity.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study have indicated that early career NNESTs' self-efficacy is influenced by many factors, such as teaching experience, feedback from stakeholders, self-perceptions, and cross-border teacher training. Although ELP will remain an important professional quality of English teachers, this study accentuates that it should not be the sole criterion of determining effective English teachers. NNESTs are a major and very important part of today's and tomorrow's TESOL professionals. Their teaching beliefs, as stressed by Loughran et al. (2001), are built and challenged in the process of teacher-learning. A growing awareness of early career NNESTs' beliefs and perceptions is pivotal, as they are the lens through which they perceive themselves as teachers and affect who they will grow into as teachers. If left unexplored, it might have negative implications on their self-efficacy and teacher identity.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCAL

1. How do you see yourself as an English teacher?

2. How confident did you feel as an English teacher before enrolling in the program? Has your participation in the program changed your beliefs in yourself as a teacher? If so, how?

3. Has your studying abroad been positive OR negative? Has this experience influenced your beliefs in yourself as an English teacher? If so, how?

4. Has the English-speaking environments affected your beliefs in yourself as an English teacher? If so, how?

5. After arriving in Australia, do you feel that your English proficiency has improved? Why/ why not?

6. Are the ideas about teaching in the program similar to OR different from the ones you have learnt from your country? If they are different, have these new teaching ideas affected your beliefs in teaching? If so, how?

7. Have your teaching experience affected your confidence in teaching English? If so, how?

8. Talk about a positive and negative teaching experience. Did this experience affect your confidence in teaching English?

9. What level of English proficiency should English teachers have to teach effectively? Do you think your English proficiency is sufficient for teaching English?

10. How do you feel about being a non-native English teacher?

One TESOL practicum, nine maxims and countless dilemmas

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ABSTRACT

The in-person or 'embodied' practicum is recognised as one of the most important and integral parts of any language teacher education program because it develops dimensions of teacher identity. This study outlines nine 'maxims', a concept introduced by Richards (1996) but under-investigated in TESOL research. These maxims emerge from qualitative descriptive analysis of reflective writing about critical moments during a TESOL teaching practicum completed by 33 practice teachers in a postgraduate course in Melbourne, Australia. These maxims, used as a reflective lens for analysing critical learning, embody the participants' key learnings from their teaching practicum. The maxims presented here align with teachers' personal and professional principles that inform their approaches to teaching. They also reflect the practical choices which they make in the classroom and derive from their authentic experiences during practicum placements. Capturing those responses as critical incidents is crucial for practice teachers to engage in experiential and even transformative learning during their practicum.

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©2022 *University of Sydney Journal of TESOL*

ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

Key words: critical incidents, maxims, real world learning, reflective practice, practice teacher, ELT (English Language Teaching), L2 (Second Language), TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language) practicum

INTRODUCTION

The practicum is recognised as one of the most important and integral parts of a language teacher education program (Arslan, 2019; Cirocki et al, 2019; Crookes, 2003; Richards & Crookes, 1988). The main focus of the practicum is traditionally defined as putting into practice the knowledge which was learned during theory classes in situated, social contexts (Cirocki et al, 2019). Arslan (2019) calls it “the transformation of theoretical knowledge into practical knowledge” (p.111). This applied learning is done under the supervision of an experienced mentor or a supervising teacher and it is assessed through a series of tasks, (in this study, observations, critical incidents, reflections on teaching, feedback from supervising teachers), which are combined in a portfolio and which encourage practice teachers to reflect on their experience to enhance deep professional learning (Andrew & Razoumova, 2017, 2019).

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Practicum as authentic and reflective pedagogy

In teacher education, ‘practice’, ‘practicum learning’, and ‘practical knowledge’ are complex, immersing and controversial concepts which might encompass different political and historical traditions, different educational arrangements, processes and participants. While there are different views on what it entails, it is not contested that the key focus is on how to allow practice teachers to develop their professional identities in an authentic context (Crookes, 2003; Gee, 1991, Lave & Wenger, 1991). With the focus on doing, they are able to learn and develop from their own personal understandings of what happens in their classrooms, explore *the self* in a particular place and time, thereby making practical knowledge situated, context-related and embodied. Through ‘saying’, ‘doing’ and ‘relating’ (Kemmis, 2009, p. 19) and through responses to planned and unforeseen challenges (Andrew & Razoumova, 2017; Yunus et al., 2010) it offers opportunities to “develop new dimensions of teaching identities” (Beynon et al., 2004, p.442).

Clearly, a teacher's identity is influenced not only by access to practice, but also by participation within communities (Parks, 2005) in specific professional terrains (Lavina, 2020) and, since identities are multiple, belonging to multiple communities of meaning including that of the accredited teacher (Goodnough, 2010). As Goodnough notes, teacher identity is in continual flux and "involves teacher beliefs, values, and emotions about many facets of teaching and being and becoming teachers. It is continually informed, formed and reformed over time and with experience" (Goodnough, 2010, p.168).

In order to assess the authenticity of experience, authentic assessment methods are crucial. Iverson, Lewis and Talbot (2008) offer guidelines to ensure assessment tasks are authentic. These guidelines indicate that authentic assessment: (i) is routinely performed by professional teachers; (ii) involves students in the classroom; (iii) promotes knowledge of the practice of teaching; (iv) offers a prompt for self-reflection; and (v) serves a formative purpose. Assessment through a collection of experience-based written and oral pieces of evidence over the duration of the practicum contributes to the authenticity of practical learning, capturing the critical incidents which point to transformative moments.

Critical incident analysis as reflective practice

Practicum learning needs reflection to make sense of practice (Dewey, 1933) and practice teachers are encouraged to reflect while they are teaching a lesson (reflection-in-action), after they have taught a lesson (reflection-on-action) or before they teach a lesson (reflection-for-action) (Farrell, 2015, 2016; Schön, 1983, 1987). One of the reflective practices which has become commonplace in experiential learning is a critical incident. There is dissent in the educational literature as to what a 'critical' incident is, largely due to differing interpretations of criticality. Often, critical incidents are defined as unplanned or even serendipitous events that occur during class requiring reflection-in-action and initiative, aligned with Romano's (2006) 'bumpy moments' in the practicum road. Brookfield (1990) linked 'critical' incidents not only to reflection in action, but also to forms of critical action or ethical responsiveness, such as examining one's own positionality, biases and prejudices and exploring one's own assertive and agential behaviours in professional practice contextually. This is what makes them critical: an agentive willingness to act in a social or even moral context.

Critical incident analysis is a pedagogical theory developed by Tripp (1993), whose analytical approaches allow reflection on teaching situations – 'the critical incident'

– so that teachers can develop their professional judgments and practices. Tripp stated (pp. 24-25):

the term 'critical incident' comes from history where it refers to some event or situation which is marked by a significant turning-point or change in the life of a person or an institution...The vast majority of critical incidents, however, are not at all dramatic or obvious: they are mostly straight forward accounts of very common place events that occur in professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures.

Indeed, the critical incident is seen as one of the reflective techniques and of particular importance to forming an ELT teacher identity (Pennycook, 2004); and we argue this is especially the case if it is undertaken in a formal and structured manner and as a part of a portfolio (Andrew & Razoumova, 2019). By reflecting on critical incidents in a formal and structured manner or discussing them with practice mentors, language teachers can develop critical understandings of everyday teaching situations, leading to research-informed professional learning (Nilsson, 2009; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Edwards-Groves (2014) wrote that such learning-focused, analytical, dialogic, and critical practices are "based on evidence from experiences and actions" and are, hence, "accountable for making connections between theory and practice and involve timely responsive feedback and collaborative goal setting" (p.163). Recorded and analysed, these connections form a set of core beliefs, aligned with general truths or experience-based 'maxims' which teachers internalise and develop during their teaching and apply in their future professional lives within the professional communities to which they are aligned. The frame of practice teachers develop on practicum is as empirically grounded as the maxims Richards (1998) developed as aids to teacher development. These maxims which emerge from the practice of Richards and colleagues can also be used to prefigure critical incidents on practicum and enable reflection for action.

Maxims informing teaching

In teacher education, Shulman (1987) discussed maxims as conceptions of the "wisdom of practice' and 'argued that research on teaching ought to consider the maxims and norms" (p.33). In the context of TESOL, Richards (1998) advocates "orientation away from training as the primary focus of teacher preparation towards one that seeks a more holistic approach to teacher development, built on

the notion of the teachers as critical and reflective thinkers" (p.xiv). This, he maintains, represents a move away from 'rule of practice' to 'principles of practice' (Richards, 1996). This reorientation prompts both teachers and researchers to investigate statements that represent *the what* and *the how* that inform teacher's pedagogical choices (Payant, 2016). Those statements can be viewed as an accumulated repertoire of images, principles, personal theories, maxims, dictums and metaphors which language teachers use to reflect on their teaching (Crichton, 1999; Farrell, 2018; Freeman, 2018; Payant, 2016). Kramer (2018) argued that the energy of reflective practice should be directed to 'opening up' a range of possibilities "instead of finding an underlying 'truth' of the situation" (p.212).

We contend that it is not essentialist or reductionist to suggest that practice teachers might both glimpse and realise their potential and resilience on practicum and align their observations of self and others with remembered theory from the curriculum. These are, arguably underlying truths of the kind that Richards (1996, 1998) enumerated and which lie at the heart of the work of Cirocki et al. (2019) on linking practicum to curriculum. This study argues that maxims point to instances of learning situated within socio-cultural contexts and work environments. We contend, too, that reflection on uncovered or discovered truths fosters close and rigorous considerations of critical incidents as a practitioner tool. The action of resituating, unpacking and reconceptualising is, thus, "embedded in the wider cultural and social context from which it cannot be easily detached" (Kramer, 2018, p.214).

When teachers reflect on their classroom teaching, they generally present a rational view of the kind of learning environment they try to create. In earlier research, based on observations of teachers and conversations with them, Richards (1996) showed that for many novice teachers, planning teaching and following plans is the most vital requirement (the Maxim of Planning); for others, following the prescribed method becomes the key principle (the Maxim of Conformity). There are also those who esteem effective use of class time (the Maxim of Efficiency). Richards states: "these principles function like rules for best behavior in that they guide the teacher's selection of choices from among a range of alternatives" (Richards, 1996, p.286). Further, they lead to the creation of their culture of teaching (Richards, 1996) and can explain "specific classroom action" (Farrell, 2018, p.78). Teachers' maxims can be viewed as working principles which show teachers' prior knowledge, develop their frames of practice and philosophies of teaching, and serve as a tool for aligning their practicum experiences with their personal belief and value systems (Farrell, 2015) and their classroom learning

prior to practicum. In this way, practice teachers establish frames of practice of core beliefs infused by experiential and transformative learning from both lived practice and reflection for, in and on practice (Schön, 1987). Richards (1996) noted that maxims are invaluable in practicum learning as they "explore both their own thinking-in-action as well as that of other teachers" (p.294). They help to collectivise the act of reflective practice from focusing on the individual's journey (Kramer, 2018) to the wisdom and discourse of the learning community to which the practice teachers aspire to belong (Gee, 1991). They help with the reflective act of reframing future professional activities and provide a yardstick with which to measure growth.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study is informed and guided by theoretical discussions about reflection as an active and critical process and its role in the development of future teachers (Dewey, 1933; Tripp, 1993, 2012). Our conceptual framework, considering the work of Borg (2003), values and validates teachers' beliefs, knowledge, theories, attitudes, assumptions, metaphors, conceptions, and the ways in which these beliefs systems are formed. Further, it considers *how* they influence teachers' classroom practices and decisions, so it contributes to a critical conversation about how maxims inform teacher educators and how their experiences and perceptions underscore the value of such maxims. We specifically drew on Richards' (1996, p. 282) notions of "working principles or maxims which teachers consciously or unconsciously refer to as they teach". We contend that student teachers' decisions and actions can be understood by examining their reflections on how their practical actions align with the kinds of core beliefs that Richards articulated as maxims.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed qualitative descriptive analysis (Sandelowski, 2000). This naturalistic and interpretivist method was chosen due to the nature of the study where the personal knowledge and discursively-constructed subjectivities of the practice teachers' reflections during the practicum were read closely using their own personal perspectives, voices and interpretations. The method of close-reading critical incident narratives enabled researchers to locate specific metaphors, statements, or descriptions of how an individual's frame of practice was expanded via practicum. Such a method, supported by the action of two

readers, indicated major social, cultural and professional themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) and in this case led the readers to resonate with particular maxims from the Richards' repository (1996, 1998). The two researchers used cross-checking to ensure they agreed with the alignment, leading to the creation of crystallised narratives (Patton, 1990). Each critical incident reflection was aligned with a guiding maxim which a practice teacher identified through an event or a dilemma, or a conversation or a dialogue with a supervising teacher or a peer or a group of students. The maxims serve as headings for nine narratives.

The current study addressed the question: what principles, as embodied by maxims, emerge from reflective critical moments experienced and captured by practice teachers on a TESOL practicum?

The setting and participants

This project captured thirty-three critical incidents of TESOL practice teachers completing a compulsory practicum component as part of a core unit in a postgraduate TESOL qualification. Students were required to complete up to 200 supervised teaching hours comprising observations and teaching. The participants ranged in age from 22 to 70; 30% male and 70% female. Their teaching experience in the TESOL sector varied from none to 15 years. For some practice teachers being in a language classroom was a completely new experience even though some of them have many years of facilitating training, for example in various vocational settings. Several students were teachers who needed to upgrade their TESOL qualifications. 61% of the respondents were native English speakers. Most (98%) chose to complete their practicum in an adult education setting, either public or private-based. Few undertook placement teaching in primary or secondary schools, so our findings relate largely to the adult sector (see Appendix A).

English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) or English as a Second Language (ESL) courses captured in this research are diverse and of various length – from vocational (e.g., Certificates in Written and Spoken English) to in-house designed (General English as part of the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students).

Data collection and data analysis

The researchers gained ethics approval to use the critical incidents of the portfolio as data as part of a larger project. The learners granted approval for their work to

be used retrospectively, so they were in no way writing to appease assessors or to accord with their research enquiry.

The portfolio included: a brief description of the theoretical underpinning of practice teachers' personal approach to teaching EAL/D, lesson plans including reflections, the supervising teacher's report, and a set of reflective responses to survey questions designed to capture impressions of the practicum-based learning. The portfolio in this unit is an ungraded assessment component of the practical learning. For this paper, the data were limited to critical incidents. All students were offered a set of guided questions which they can use in writing their critical incidents. Examples of questions were:

- What happened, where and when?
- Who was involved?
- Give a brief description of the incident. What is it that made the incident 'critical'?
- What were your immediate responses?
- What are your thoughts now?
- What has changed since it happened?
- What have you learned about your teaching practice from this and how might your teaching practice change and develop as a result of this reflection and learning?

In presenting the maxims, emergent from our data analysis, we briefly contextualise each one within teaching and learning theory before discussing the findings. Within the narrative articulating each maxim, we also discuss the implications of each maxim for teaching and learning on practicum. Maxims can be seen as metaphors, wisdoms based on collective experience or short practice statements (Farrell, 2018) which teachers use to support their teaching dilemmas and discoveries. Maxims point to complex and value-laden understandings which are crucial to language teachers' personal growth and professional development, and hence to language education in general.

There is a hypothetical limitation in epistemologically aligning learnings from critical incidents to maxims from the collected wisdoms of teachers rather than safely using a grounded thematic approach. We acknowledge a tension between the emergent and the imposed. Yet such an approach makes visible the tightly held systems of beliefs that inform practice teachers' emerging identities and enables insightful analysis of practice. Critical incidents are well researched in work-based reflective learning (Pennycook, 2004; Webster & Mertova, 2007) and are valuable for capturing information not only about what was seen to happen but also how the participants felt. Lester (2011), for instance, describes the process of reflectively positioning or repositioning understandings of our potential to change our practice in this way:

> Complex change-oriented issues...approached with a researching and critically reflective orientation can be a powerful source, not only of contextual insights but of academically and professionally-valid knowledge, giving rise to new concepts, models, theories and critiques as well as different ways of doing things (p. 279).

While acts of deconstructing our understanding of concepts, models and theories, such as those embodied by maxims, may lead to change in practice, we realise that there is an affective dimension as well. Being an emotionally driven experience makes critical incidents rich descriptive accounts of identities 'becoming' in practice. They indicate what practice teachers aim to improve in their teaching by creating solutions through their own propositions. Their further professional learning is enhanced by the principles they adopt from their negative and positive critical moments on practicum.

FINDINGS

Critical incidents, written as reflections with a lesson for future practice, were analysed thematically drawing on Ryan and Bernard's (2003) methods of scrutiny of lexis for recurrent and hence significant ideas. These methods do not stray into descriptive statistics but identify such linguistic features as synonyms, antonyms and metaphorical language to crystallise the resonant themes of the critical incident reflections and how they align with the broad interpretative potential of maxims. Nine maxims were identified as aligning with critical events: the Maxim of Planning; the Maxim of Teaching; the Maxim of Trial and Error; the Maxim of Diversity; the Maxim of Moral Dilemmas; the Maxim of Emotions; the Maxim of Resistance; the Maxim of Time; the Maxim of Grammar.

The Maxim of Planning: Good lesson planning leaves some space for the unplanned and The Maxim of Teaching: See where the class takes you

Lesson planning is the initial phase when practice teachers think about the expectations of modern language teaching and the challenge of providing a good lesson versus being a good teacher. One of the initial dilemmas occurs when practice teachers try to plan every step of their teaching to feel in control and to implement what they know best – lesson planning.

The planning stage is often challenging as practice teachers try to navigate through complex theoretical concepts such as current learning theories, pedagogical principles of a language classroom and a methodology that includes a variety of communicative and authentic tasks/activities which encourage active language learning simultaneously. Practice teachers learn to accept that lesson planning is a multifaceted process and an act of imagining what should be included in the lesson and how a teacher would act in an unknown situation. According to Practice Teacher 8 the situation might simultaneously include:

> *(1) planning a lesson based on the classroom requirements; (2) managing a huge class or managing the class in a quality way; (3) identifying low proficiency students and engaging them in various tasks and (4) identifying students who need support.*

For many practice teachers in this study, lesson planning became a goal of its own; and Practice Teacher 9 felt that she needed to foresee all the nuances of the lesson until she realized that a good lesson plan should be balanced and 'natural':

> *I felt this first experience made me overly pedantic when planning my first few lessons and I would consider finer details, such as how I would word something when explaining a task.*

Another practice teacher was surprised when his supervising teacher said that his lesson looked like a good lesson plan on paper:

> *My response to [my supervising teacher] was that a great lesson plan and successful delivery of it had been my goal. That was what my teacher education had drilled into me. It was met with a frustrated reply: a successful lesson was not dependent on a great lesson plan, it was dependent on great teaching, he said. In his book, clarity, rapport, humour and responsiveness trumped any plan. (PT16)*

In accord with this anecdote, Practice Teacher1 recalled: I realised that it doesn't matter if things do not go to plan. In fact, the best learning takes place incidentally.

Practice Teacher 16 also added that:

> *meticulous lesson planning is the enemy of 'off-the-cuff' competence... I was more attentive to delivering the plan than developing nuanced and effective interaction with the class…the structured lesson did not mirror a 'real-world' situation at all and … this planning and delivery may hinder student outcomes, not assist them.*

Finding his feet, he went on to describe:

> *that positive feeling of a lesson virtually 'running itself'. Finding the right content material and creating a truly student-centered class made me almost redundant – there was peer correction and debate, I hardly had to do any 'work'. (PT16)*

One more aspect of over-planning prevents practice teachers from appreciating their students. Rushing through the lesson made another practice teacher forget her frustration of not covering all prepared activities, instead focusing on the possible emotional stress experienced by migrant and refugee students. To resolve multiple demands in lesson planning, practice teachers concluded that flexibility and adaptability were vital strategies in their initial teaching journey.

The practicum demonstrates to practice teachers that every day is different and the preparation should come with an ability to quickly respond to the classroom reality. It is a commonplace that a good lesson is not based on a good plan but great teaching. When the initial challenge of planning eases, practice teachers start attending to what constitutes good teaching. In this phase of the practicum, student teachers rely on their supervising teachers' support in encouraging them to act naturally and spontaneously and think on their feet.

The Maxim of Trial and Error: Be prepared for the unexpected

One of the practicum students recalled a situation in her class when a group of students from China enrolled in an academic course was reluctant to participate in drama scene enactment. Initially, she thought that a kinesthetic learning style did not suit that class. Also, she linked the students' obvious reluctance and

unwillingness to participate in a drama activity due to difficulties with practising speaking.

> *The first drama scenario was an eye-opener for me. The concept of performance and students playing a speaking part seemed a foreign idea for most students and they were somewhat reluctant to participate in this activity… I also thought this type of activity was probably very unfamiliar to them in their schooling experiences. [Education institutions in] Asian countries tend to favor straight down the line academic excellence not performance ability and expression. (PT1)*

However, analysing the critical incident, she realised her need to consider a range of pre-planning strategies like identifying and explicitly explaining goals of a teaching technique; scaffolding the learning more explicitly and explaining the advantages of some tasks. In this case it was a drama activity as an exercise of self-expression. The practice teacher recognised the advantages of using a drama activity as a contemporary technique (Gamlen, 2018) and the importance of incorporating authentic activities to make their teaching more engaging; but realising how to implement such activities often remains an area of substantive learning during the practicum. She summarised her learning in the following terms: "This situation encourages me not to make assumptions about students' readiness to do certain activities and to feel the waters so to speak without jumping fully into a lesson determined to carry out the lesson plan" (PT1).

As Belliveau and Kim (2013) stated, the use of educational drama has increasingly been of interest to language teachers and practitioners as it affords benefits like creating a more contextually-situated, engaging, multi-modal, and empowering L2 learning experience. Further, the use of drama creates the context and interaction which are important for language learning; yet some teachers fear it (Belliveau & Kim, 2013; Gill, 2013). Winston (2012) adds to that: "Even the most experienced of drama teachers will often need to be patient, reflective, flexible and willing to re-think and adapt their plans in response to the students they work with" (p.5).

The Maxim of Diversity: Be open-minded and supportive of your students

From diversity to 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007), many contemporary societies include various ethnicities, languages, religious traditions, regional and local identities, cultural values and practices. Modern EAL/D classrooms, being a reflection of such societies, are portrayed as super-/multi-diverse learning spaces where teachers learn to respond to the affordances and characteristics of their

environments (Miller et al., 2009). As migration movements continue to evolve in complex ways, the field of education becomes increasingly multifaceted. So does the work of teachers.

Learner diversity is a common feature of language classrooms in Australia and can manifest itself in many ways including different ethnic and educational backgrounds, first language and English language proficiency and experiences, cultural values. The ongoing challenge for language teachers is to ensure teaching practices around literacy learning are inclusive and integrated. Teaching a language which is different to EAL/D students' first language and culture presents opportunities for practice teachers to explore ways to communicate with students, to differentiate content, activities and teaching approaches appropriately and plan lessons which will allow those students to meet their learning goals. Practice teachers develop their own strategy to cope with the requirements of the practice.

Mixed proficiency or multileveled classes are an emerging reality in language settings and the dilemma of planning versus meeting the needs of multilevel students is a reality check for many practice teachers. To have a scripted lesson plan for 'two types of classes' like low-literacy and multi-leveled did not seem workable and practice teachers had to mobilise a lot of resources and conduct further research. Practice Teacher 23 shared a critical incident:

> *By far the biggest challenge I faced with my practicum was having so many different levels in the classroom at one time… Having to prepare so many different materials for different levels was just the start… for each lesson I would have 2 or 3 different activities based on the same theme but with varying degrees of difficulty… Although it was a difficult aspect of teaching I enjoyed the challenge.*

Confronting the reality of the language adult classroom creates new opportunities for professional growth for teachers with some previous experience in other sectors. This practice teacher (PT10) admitted that some complexities and difficulties were ones he had never considered in the past, despite coming from a background in the public education system, and having worked with several different cohorts of disadvantaged and at-risk students. He said:

> *[This] classroom is a particularly interesting case because [the teacher] has to deal with a multi-course, multi-level classroom, while also navigating the complexities related to teaching often disadvantaged adult students in a*

> *community setting – such as students with very little to no formal education at all and with personal and economic difficulties in their lives. (PT10)*

Focusing on various ways of supporting their students and seeking out ideas is the next logical step for many practice teachers. A range of teaching strategies are used to ensure that these language students are able to make further progress. He added:

> *I can see myself including…more visual aids…providing more structured, but informal opportunities for students to use English, and cultivating peer tutoring–possibly between students with a shared language. (PT10)*

The maxim of diversity teaches us that in the practicum environment, the professional conversations with a supervising teacher before the commencement of teaching and during observations are vital so that the practice teacher knows their class and their students and can consider the relevant strategies while teaching.

Maxim of Moral Choices: Moral choices are always difficult choices; just be honest and be yourself

The role of a language teacher is new for most practice teachers. Depending on their ages and cultural affinities, learners regard teachers as a sage who should always be not only a moral role model of teaching and languaging, but also morally and factually right, as Practice Teacher 26 discovered:

> *There can be an assumption that the teacher knows best and whatever is taught is right and unquestionable. From my own experience throughout life as students, I have always held my teachers in a high regard and respected their wealth of knowledge and experience in which they share. Therefore, I was to learn and they were to teach. Although there was this subtle power imbalance I was able to gain what was required to learn and pass the requirements. I was corrected when errors were made and feedback was gratefully accepted. (PT26)*

Another practice teacher was observing how one of the students from Sudan mentioned that children in Australia are not respectful towards their parents and in Sudan they would be regularly beaten. In reflection, this practice teacher was thinking: I felt shocked and did not know how to respond to a situation like this. I could not push my ideas of right or wrong onto the students (PT4).

One frequently observed situation in multicultural classrooms became a dilemma for this practice teacher to resolve. It is illustrated below:

> *The Somalian student was very loud and she had a very strong character. She was a very active student. She had a tendency to provoke reactions from other students especially the European student. (PT5)*

Whether practice teachers are confronted by unexpected students' statements or classroom management issues like students' arguments, they have to make choices over how to act well and to reach the right decision (Johnston, 2003). Prejudices in ESL adult classrooms are not unusual. Teachers witness both racial and educational prejudices in different contexts. Stuart (2005) lists the numerous groups identified as displaying prejudice, asserting that he has observed prejudice "in every ESL class he has ever taught" (p.66). The ideal of 'peace education' can be achieved by ESL teachers nurturing respect, empathy, and kindness. This can happen by self-example, the teacher as model; or by introducing socially responsible texts (Stuart 2005). As Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) noted: "Teaching involves moral action. Teachers are moral agents and thus classroom interaction in particular is inevitably moral in nature" (p.648). Teachers make "many decisions which are of a moral character almost without noticing" (Crookes, 2003, p.91) as they interact with students, with the curriculum and as a part of the educational setting. These decisions include teacher-student communication, student-student interaction, classroom rules, teachers' expectations of their students, cross-cultural issues between the culture of the teacher and that of the students and points of view presented in the textbooks.

Teachers cannot make general, blanket decisions on these issues; they are based on the teacher's own values along with how these values interact with each individual context or situation.

The Maxim of Emotions: Be calm if a situation goes out of control and the Maxim of Resistance: Remain positive and seek support

The TESOL industry is changing fast and "students with very different personal histories, language proficiencies and learning needs" continue to appear long after the establishment of the discipline's trademark pedagogies (Cadman, 2008, p.29). Hence, language teacher education is constantly pressured by change. This leaves practice teachers to learn to respond to ever-changing situations and think on their feet (Andrew & Razoumova, 2017, 2019), dealing not only with the demands of their teaching but also with their own feelings, stress, and well-being. It has been

long recognised that many practice teachers experience noticeable stress and anxiety in relation to their teaching practicum (Campbell et al, 2006; Wyatt, 2018). It is increasingly common for practice teachers to face difficult classroom situations including conflicts between classmates such as the one reported by Practice Teacher 7:

> *Voices were raised and the air became thick with tension. Other members of the class looked nervous and a little cowed. Without a circuit breaker, there was a feeling the tension would persist and perhaps escalate. If allowed to get further out of control, this would have affected class cohesion and the learning experience for all…. I confess I don't like the emotions of conflict. However, realistically, such things are part of life. Also, they don't necessarily reflect teacher competence. It's largely just the nature of human society, I think. (PT7)*

Stressful situations, as described above, create an opportunity for practice teachers to manage unexpected emotional challenges of the practicum. This practice teacher continued:

> *I've learned I need to manage my own emotional state better in the classroom and not to be too thrown by interpersonal conflict. Also, in multicultural groups, there are probably inevitably somewhat different values and customs. (PT7)*

Participation in professional practice can involve more than simple 'bumpy moments' (Romano, 2006) and become a serious challenge, especially for non-native speaking or minority ethnic practice teachers. One frequent question asked by postgraduate students from non-native speaking backgrounds (NNESTs) upon enrollment into TESOL courses relates to future job prospects whether such graduates can be accepted by the workforce.

Even though it is hard to define who a prototypical native speaker of English can be nowadays, non-native EAL/D teachers continue to indicate "problems with language, communication and cultural differences which had a negative impact on their successful completion of field experiences in schools; they reported on problems of feeling isolated, financial worries and racism" (Campbell et al., 2006). One practice teacher found this out through practice:

> *This news came as a shock to me as I believed that I was building a rapport with the students and that I was teaching relevant content that I have*

> *actually put time and effort into to cater to the student cohort… who are more likely to listen to my mentor […] because he is a white male. (PT20)*

Another non-native speaking practice teacher noted:

> *I realized that my teaching approach was completely different than the supervising teacher's in terms of our nature… Considering that I come from a non-Western education background, it has been evident to me through my teaching and learning experience that many Western and so-called student-oriented academics and teachers are/can be extremely egocentric in their teaching style. (PT32)*

Campbell et al. (2016) argue that universities need to do more to prepare such student teachers for the challenges they might meet and help them learn what will sustain them in their efforts to grow as professionals. At the same time, language settings need to have relevant policies and procedures in readiness for such situations.

The Maxim of Time: Make good use of time to stay or go

Time for learning allocated for EAL/D students in language settings has been seen as a problematic concept by most practice teachers because a one-size-fits-all assumption takes no account of the factors contributing to speed and success in learning an additional language. One of the practice teachers noted that the reality is that the teaching profession like other professions has "to deal with politics and administrative burden" (PT19). One of the typical discoveries was that endless paperwork, multiple assessments to satisfy compliance requirements add a lot of pressure to language teachers' workload.

> *It feels like the paperwork is costing EAL teachers' critical time for preparing classes and threatening their core job of educating students. (PT19)*

The lack of time and resources available to work effectively with EAL/D students is not a new problem. Examples of intensified teaching workloads include the expansion of student: teacher ratios, fund changes, longer working hours and fewer resources (Timms et al, 2007). Time for teaching, time for learning and time for 'other' tasks are interconnected dilemmas for practice teachers — the dilemma to stay in the profession or not.

The Maxim of Grammar: Be prepared to answer some tough language questions

In this study the practice teachers recognised the importance of including grammar in their teaching but they feared that their knowledge of grammar was not sufficient for classroom language practice where EAL/D learners were encouraged to raise 'inconvenient' spontaneous grammar questions. Not knowing grammar made practice teachers anxious about their impact on students' learning – through either not knowing how to explain it or through not knowing what context to use for teaching grammar. This practice teacher's critical incident indicated:

> *I experienced many times when my knowledge of grammar was tested and I found my knowledge to be insufficient to answer the specific questions of the students… My confidence was at its lowest. I didn't trust myself, and I felt very insecure about teaching grammar, so much, so, that I created PowerPoints for every grammar lesson that followed and tried to keep the control in my hands to reduce the risk of students asking questions I couldn't answer. (PT3)*

Further, grammar may become an area for disagreement between practice teacher and their supervisors if the latter is a non-native speaker:

> *I was shocked. Although I was a native speaker, I was being told that my feeling for correct grammar was wrong… I am adept at using the prescribed grammar, but because I have not consciously studied it, this approach seems unreliable to students who want a clear, definite explanation. (PT12)*

Historically and methodologically, teaching *grammar has been a 'push and pull' phenomenon for language teachers. It is simultaneously a central and problematic aspect of teaching. For many years, according to some researchers,* Australia was one of the countries which neglected explicit grammar instruction (Jones et al, 2013); however, more recently, the importance of knowledge about language for teacher education programs and classroom practice has been re-instated (Carey et al, 2015). It is generally agreed that a teacher's knowledge of grammar is one of the core components of a language teacher's expertise (Derewianka, 2001, p.269). Language teachers might not know whether to teach grammar explicitly or use a more inductive approach, but they need to have a solid grasp of grammatical systems to be sure that EAL/D students' questions will be answered satisfactorily. Interestingly, alongside other areas of content knowledge (pronunciation, and vocabulary), grammar presents a particular challenge for both experienced and

novice teachers. It is important that practice teachers who plan to work with EAL/D students need to have access to a wide repertoire of resources and know how to use them in the context of their teaching contextually and functionally appropriate grammar.

DISCUSSION

The reflective nature of the practicum has been well noted (Aslan, 2019; Cirocki & Farrell, 2017; Farrell, 2015, 2016; Tripp, 2012). Reflecting on teaching becomes particularly valuable if it "involves some form of challenge to and critique of ourselves and our professional values" (Tripp, 2012, p. 21). Contextualised and informed by a culturally-informed and values-inflected view of the world, reflection on teaching becomes a sociocultural activity which encourages teachers not simply to state what they see but view it differently and consequently alter their practice to implement practical solutions in the present or in the future. Practicum is central to helping practice teachers "take risks and acquire ownership of their learning" (Cirocki et al, 2019, p.4). Practicum is the site where learning from a range of sources converges: theory, with its implicit and implicit educative truths as epitomized by maxims, the organizational requirements of the practicum and professional discussions with mentors. Thus, practice teachers build the foundations of their conscious pedagogy.

Critical incidents can be positive or negative. Practice teachers regard critical incidents as a tool for reflecting on, and finding solutions to, challenging situations. Critical incidents also show that practice teachers in this study not only reflect on classroom recounts but recognise their own need for further research. The practice-led pedagogy of practicum itself leads student practice teachers back to research, but with fresh curiosity, as in the case of Practice Teacher 23, who wrote of the need to return to in-depth research to shed light on issues involving mixed-level teaching and learning contexts observed on practicum. Similarly, Practice Teacher 10, reflecting on a critical incident, realized the need for special resources to help those with learning difficulties. Analysing needs in the light of practicum experience, Practice Teacher 7 thought more critically about society's discourses on conflict management, while Practice Teacher 24 underlined the increasing importance of building digital skills further.

Teaching challenges and facing a real class mean different things for different practice teachers: giving clearer instructions; managing the class more effectively; adjusting one's 'teacher voice'. Hence, practice teachers are interested in

knowledge that is practical, that can be applied in their classrooms. We cannot claim that every practice teacher makes explicit connections between teacher actions and pedagogical theory. For such learners, theoretical knowledge is not always experienced in action so there is no evidence for its immediate usefulness in addressing their problems in practice. This is why critically reflective work is valuable. Through their critical reflections on teaching experiences, they recognize their knowledge needs and, thus, bridge theory and practice in a meaningful way (Nilsson, 2009).

We also recognise now that affect is central to language teaching (Benesch, 2017). Many aspects of experience develop through participating in classroom activities and collaborating with a supervising teacher and support from the wider school setting. We described earlier the learning experiences of non-native practice teachers who share learners' experiences of racism, culture shock, lack of local cultural knowledge, and educational challenges. Arguably, they might also act as advocates for minority ethnic students in school settings and become role models (Basit & Santoro, 2013; Moloney & Giles, 2015). These advantages can enrich cultural safety, social understanding and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977). Potential teachers' confidence to behave judiciously in complex teaching situations is fostered on practicum both by supervisorial support and continued reflection on actions in the light of theory, principles or indeed maxims.

Reflection on its own does not always lead to any improvement or change in teaching practices. However, researchers tend to agree that TESOL teachers who engage in reflection become more aware of their practice and that awareness can lead to further improvement (Farrell, 2016). In our use of qualitative description, we have garnered narrative data that is "straight and largely unadorned … minimally theorized or otherwise transformed or spun" to address questions of relevance to practitioners and policy makers (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 337). Answering the question about what principles emerge from reflective critical moments captured by practice teachers on a TESOL practicum, we note that teachers' subjective realities expressed through a set of principles or maxims offer important perspectives on how the practicum itself can be improved. The areas of improvement should be considered by all stakeholders – university teacher educators, supervising teachers, centers which support practicums, developers of learning resources, policy makers and membership organizations.

A critical incident is not a single event but a complex story with its own storyline and participants. If they align with key maxims, such stories have the capacity to

impact educators' perception of what content should be included in preparation for practicum. Other teacher educators may find these prominent issues useful in designing practicum courses or induction guidelines.

CONCLUSION

This study has aligned stories from critical incidents to maxims from Richards' (1996, 1998) toolbox. In the process we have viewed maxims as principles embodying phronesis, professional wisdom of empirical and experiential origin, which potentially enable language teachers to navigate through complex teaching environments. A further affordance of maxims is the possibility of making visible a connection to theory via reflection in action and on action. In short, maxims are a ready means of mediating between experienced practice and theory, remembering that at the time of action practice teachers might have forgotten the classroom theory due to being in the flow of the moment. Maxims reflect practice teachers' understandings of what is important for their practicum. The ones discussed in this work are linked to the nature of language planning and teaching and provide a space for reflection on errors, diversity, emotions and moral choices, resistance, time, and the role of grammar in language learning.

The maxim of trial and error applies to and is embodied in many critical moments practice teachers described. It is in discussing their application of new strategies and techniques that learners utilize reflective retrospection and critical reimagining. There is evidence of metacognitive processes that point to a potential consolidation of theoretical knowledge and professional practice. In such reflections on actions and perceptions, the practice teacher articulates a moment of both synthesis and discovery and experiences a clarification of their personal frame of practice and their perception of the wider teaching world. As teacher educators, our job is to facilitate the process of becoming a language teacher. In designing units or a whole course we might begin by focusing on those common experiences that are a natural part of the learning process. By encouraging practice teachers to reflect on their teaching experiences to recognize and focus on critical incidents, they can then question their practice more deeply and begin to see into the problematic nature of teaching and return to theory or turn to research. This point is epitomized by Practice Teacher 7's reflection:

> *Standing back from a contrasting teaching experience, seeing input from other educators, practicing new ways of doing things, doing research as well*

> *as networking, allows for deeper clarity and perhaps a different perception of the so-called problem. (PT7)*

AUTHOR

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APPENDIX A: TABLE OF PARTICIPANTS

Practice Teacher (PT#)	Native speaker (NS)/Non Native speaker (NNS) status	Experience as a language teacher	Gender	Age
PT 1	NS	5 years	F	60
PT 2	NS	10 years	F	48
PT 3	NNS	3 years	F	35
PT 4	NS	NE	M	52
PT 5	NNS	2 years	F	40
PT 6	NNS	2 years	M	35
PT 7	NS	2 years	F	55
PT 8	NNS	NE	F	36
PT 9	NS	6 months	F	25
PT 10	NS	6 months	M	28
PT 11	NNS	5 years	F	45
PT 12	NS	10 years	M	56
PT 13	NS	NE	M	73
PT 14	NNS	NE	F	35
PT 15	NS	3 years	F	45
PT 16	NS	NE	M	59
PT 17	NNS	3 years	F	25
PT 18	NNS	10 years	F	54
PT 19	NNS	NE	F	25

PT 20	NNS	3 years	F	45
PT 21	NS	NE	M	55
PT 22	NNS	5 years	F	45
PT 23	NS	NE	M	32
PT 24	NS	NE	F	30
PT 25	NS	5 years	F	35
PT 26	NS	2 years	F	38
PT 27	NNS	3 years	F	45
PT 28	NS	5 years	F	37
PT 29	NS	30 years	F	60
PT 30	NS	5 years	F	35
PT 31	NS	13 years	M	35
PT 32	NNS	NE	F	35
PT 33	NS	NE	M	32

On Complex Dynamic Systems Theory and second language development: Looking back at over two decades of theory and research

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ABSTRACT

In celebrating over two decades of the integration of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) in the study of language learning and development, this paper looks back at some cornerstone publications that marked certain milestones in a quarter century of historical trails this theory has made in the field of second language development research. This paper then reviews two of the main tenets of this theory that feature frequently in CDST-inspired studies and discusses their contributions to advancing our understanding of language learning and development over time. This paper also mentions some concerns voiced in the systematic criticisms on the current practice of applying this theory in researching language learning phenomena and concludes by pondering potential directions moving forward.

INTRODUCTION

The year 1997 marked the introduction of Chaos/Complexity Theory into the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research through the publication of Larsen-Freeman's (1997) seminal work that introduced the main tenets of this theory and their parallels to the phenomena observed in the SLA research area. Having its roots in the hard sciences, this theory, along with many of its very close kin, such

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

as dynamical systems theory and complex systems theory, offers not only an ontological account of complex phenomena but also an epistemological frame to study them. Over two decades after its inception, this theory has now been amalgamated with Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), and a new label – Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) – is now used, based on de Bot's (2017) proposal, particularly in the field of second language development study.

CDST as a transdisciplinary framework brings its metaphorical abstraction as well as methodological (and mathematical) approach to complex phenomena in the natural world into the study of language. In the field of SLA and Applied Linguistics, CDST is considered as a metatheory (Han & Liu, 2019; Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2020; Larsen-Freeman, 2017) and hailed for the holistic account it provides to describe complex phenomena in language and language learning. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the application of this theory into the study of language acquisition – or rather, language development, the preferred term used in CDST-inspired research (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). The last decade has seen a surge in the number of publications, ranging from research papers, to edited volumes, to monographs on CDST and its application in studying aspects of language development. While proponents of this theory commended the philosophical lens and conceptual tools it offers the field in thinking about, describing, and theorising phenomena as complex as language learning/development and ventured further into the methodological/statistical application of this theory, others are critically (re-)considering and appraising the contribution of this theory to the field.

This paper will look back at the two decades or so of this theory coming into the area of Second Language Development (SLD) research, review some of its main tenets and contributions, scrutinize its criticism, and from there, invite researchers and practitioners alike to shape the future of this enterprise together.

LOOKING BACK: OVER TWO DECADES OF CRUSADE

After her cornerstone paper in 1997, Larsen-Freeman (2006) again took the lead in applying this theory in exploring data from language learners. Her work was then followed by a series of publications in several journals (including *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, volume 10, issue 1 in 2007, *The Modern Language Journal*, volume 92, issue 2 in 2008, and *Language Learning*, volume 59, special issue in 2009). In 2011, the Groningen scholars published an edited volume on the methods and techniques that can be used to explore second language

development from a dynamic approach/perspective (Verspoor et al., 2011). In the meantime, this theory has also spread to other language-related disciplines (see Larsen-Freeman, 2017 for an assortment of studies published within some of these disciplines).

Due to its strong, if not main, focus on the process of changes in complex dynamic systems, this theory has recently enjoyed a relatively wide acceptance in the studies of language development. CSDT-inspired studies on second language development, for example, have flourished much, especially in the last decade, and have advanced the field through conceptual and methodological breakthroughs. In some of these studies, CDST offered a novel conceptual and methodological framework for the design of the study (e.g., going beyond the quantitative-qualitive divide and moving towards a pragmatic transdisciplinary framework (Hiver et al., 2021)); in others, it also inspired the researchers to use some highly advanced statistical methods and/or mathematical modelling techniques in examining language developmental data (e.g., Caspi, 2010; Chan et al., 2015). Two very recent volumes on the application of the CDST framework in exploring learner language (i.e., Han, 2019 and Fogal & Verspoor, 2020) further demonstrated the broader application of this theory across language-related disciplines and celebrated a wider uptake of this theory in the field of second language development.

Nevertheless, in the two decades of the integration of this theory into language-related research, some scholars felt the need to put it under a critical lens and take a step back to look at the contributions CSDT-inspired studies (may have claimed to) have made to the field. Gregg (2010) reviewed the suitability of the conceptual apparatus in this theory to explore (or even, to describe) certain phenomena in the study of language and was not convinced about the ontological compatibility between this theory and these particular language learning phenomena. Bulté and Housen (2020), on the other hand, looked at the (overclaimed) contributions of CDST-inspired new methods of data analysis and invited a re-appraisal of CDST-inspired empirical studies, noting that, in their opinion, most of them have not really applied this theory beyond its metaphorical notion.

The rest of this paper will first review some of the main tenets of CDST and discuss their contributions to SLD research, and then proceed to examine some of the criticisms that are launched to put this theory (and those studies inspired by it) under an internal audit. The purpose of this review is to put forward both sides of the arguments and, from there, to consider what can be done moving forward.

CDST'S LENS ON SLD: TENETS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Rosmawati (2014) argued that CDST has prompted a paradigm shift in second language development studies at the conceptual, practical, and methodological levels. This shift is mainly attributed to the tenets of this theory, which are rather distinct, both ontologically and epistemologically[i], from those of the more traditional frameworks. One example of this shift is the move away from trying to establish causal relationships and towards an ecological approach and relational system orientation in studying language development (e.g., Thewissen, forthcoming; Wang and Tao, 2020). Larsen-Freeman frequently labelled CDST as a "poststructural ecological view" (2020, p. viii) of language development and argued that it not only shares the poststructuralism's rejection of reductionism (Larsen-Freeman, 2017), but also emphasizes that the properties of such an interconnected and dynamically growing system are irreducible to the sum of its parts (Larsen-Freeman, 2019). According to the CDST perspective, the spatial and temporal contexts are integral parts of the development of any dynamic systems and should therefore not be omitted from any observation of the systems' growth. In other words, CDST emphasizes the importance of looking at the development of the systems with(in) their soft assemblies with the surrounding contexts as well as with time. To allow for such an investigation, several means[ii] of epistemological nature have been borrowed from other fields. An example is the use of *change point analysis,* a method usually used in meteorology, in detecting phase shift in language development. With such rather radically different ontological and epistemological underpinnings, it is fair to say that this theory has fundamentally revolutionized the way language development is perceived, conceptualised, investigated, and modelled.

This section will discuss two of the main tenets of this theory and demonstrate how they are rather radically different from the more traditional views of language development. Due to the limited space in this paper, this section will only review two tenets that feature quite frequently in CDST-inspired L2 development studies. This selective list of the tenets is by no means representative of the whole theory – and in the non-reductionist spirit, it should not be considered as such (interested readers are referred to de Bot, 2017; Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2017; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Rosmawati, 2014 for discussion on other tenets).

Dynamism and non-linearity

CDST is, in principle, a theory of change (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). It is a theory about how changes happen in dynamic systems, and it posits that these changes are non-linear and dynamic. A dynamic system is a system that consists of many highly interconnected subsystems which, in turn, host many interrelated sub-subsystems. The interactions within and between these interconnected levels of subsystems, as well as the interactions with their spatial and temporal contexts, contribute to the behaviour of the system. This outward behaviour is neither the product of a sole component or subsystem nor a simple summative result of all the aggregates; rather, it "emerges from the interactions of its components" (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, p. 143), and therefore the system is complex and dynamic (for a discussion of these characteristics, please refer to de Bot and Larsen-Freeman, 2011; Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Rosmawati, 2014). In a language classroom, the concept of dynamism is reflected in the soft assembly in the classroom ecosystem between the members of the classroom and the spatial and temporal contexts in which they are situated. The dynamic nature of their interactions pushes the whole ecosystem to move forward in the temporal dimension and eventually give rise to the emergence of, for example, linguistic features that the class is learning.

The notion of non-linearity, simply put, refers to the phenomenon where an effect is not always proportionate to its cause. A frequently cited metaphor to describe this notion is *the butterfly effect* where a seemingly small change in any sub-component of a system at any point in time may lead to an immense effect in the long run. The complexity of the outcome(s) caused by such a slight change in a dynamic system is not easily mapped into a linear cause-and-effect relationship, especially when all the sub-components are interrelated and their interaction is perpetually dynamic (Larsen-Freeman, 2013). According to CDST, language development is an example of dynamic systems, and like any other dynamic systems, it goes through non-linear and dynamic development (Larsen-Freeman, 2017).

Radically different from some of the traditional approaches to L2 studies, where the aims were generally to establish a neat (and possibly universal) pattern of development, CSDT posits that "…[T]here is no goal or direction in development; there is only change." (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011, p. 13). In contrast to the traditional view of a developmental ladder that is assumed to exist in the learner's interlanguage, CDST does not presume such a unidirectional/linear pattern of

development (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). Instead, it adopts a process view, whereby L2 learning and development is viewed as a work-in-progress, unbounded by any real endpoint. Moreover, as each dynamic system is comprised of highly intertwined components which interact dynamically, and it is soft assembled with its spatiotemporal contexts, this feature, along with other characteristics of dynamic systems, makes each dynamic system a unique one, with their own idiosyncratic developmental path. Hence, it is not possible to map all these idiosyncratic to fit perfectly into one universal series of orderly stages of development, especially when there is no real endpoint assumed in the CDST view.

Underpinning this is CDST's attitude towards reductionism and dichotomies. Sharing the sentiment of poststructuralism, CDST rejects the possibility of reducing complex phenomena into singular causes (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). Instead of linear causality, CDST offers to consider possibilities of circular/reciprocal causality (Witherington, 2011), from which complexity emerges. This, along with other considerations, is one of the motivations behind the abandonment of the term 'acquisition' and the shift to the term 'development' in CDST-inspired L2 studies, as L2 skills, in the CDST perspective, emerge from the dynamic changes within the learners and their interactions with the environments. By the same token, proponents of CDST questioned the need for dichotomies, which have frequently failed to account for non-dualities in the world. Larsen-Freeman (2017) proposed six ways[iii] to deal with dichotomies and urged to the need to consider the complementary relations between what was considered two separate members in any dichotomous pair within the traditional approaches.

The features of nonlinearity and dynamism are well demonstrated in CDST-inspired L2 studies. Most, if not all, of these studies found evidence of non-linear and dynamic development in their observation/data. Spoelman and Verspoor (2010), for example, noted the dynamic changes in the interaction between two constructs (i.e., complexity and accuracy) in the writing of their participant. Vyatkina (2012), who looked at the development of lexicogrammar in her participants (learners of German), also captured a high degree of dynamics in the data and was content that each of her participant's developmental patterns was highly dynamic and idiosyncratic. Similarly, Polat and Kim (2014) also documented the non-linear development of an immigrant's interlanguage in a naturalistic context and proposed that development of this learner was highly dynamical and variable, although it was nested within a relatively stable attractor state. Nevertheless, the nature of development of the constructs under observation in their study was shown to be not reducible to a simple linear causal relationship

with any factors affecting progress/regress in this learner. Moreover, Dörnyei's work on L2 motivation has also demonstrated the non-linear and dynamic nature of this multidimensional construct in L2 development (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). On the interface with neuroscience, Schumann (2017) showed that the one-to-one mapping of brain structures to the linguistic functions they perform is not representative of how brain works, and supported the idea that "… [T]he brain can operate with many-to-one mappings" (p. 59). Through his work with neural complexity of the brain and human lexicon, he suggested that both are complex and dynamic, and their relationship is not reducible to a simple one-to-one mapping.

These studies (and many others that are not mentioned here due to the limited space in this paper) collectively put forward evidence to demonstrate that language learning and development process is indeed nonlinear and dynamic. Although the L2 learning/acquisition process is said to follow a *natural* route, this route is not necessarily linear. Sometimes the stages overlap, and at other times learners slide back instead of progressing forward/upward (van Dijk et al., 2011). Developmental trajectories show rises and falls, peaks and valleys, displaying some degree of variability due to their dynamic nature (de Bot, 2008; Larsen-Freeman, 2007). From a CDST perspective, variability is to be expected. The study of variability in L2 learning has gained a new momentum in light of the CDST perspective, in which it is raised to the centre of the stage and given much more spotlight than in the more traditional studies of L2 learning and development.

The role of variability in language development

The existence of variability in interlanguage data has long been noted in L2 studies. Dickerson (1975), for example, noticed the variation in her participant's pronunciation and argued that "… [There] must be a system of variable rules if it is to account for variability…" (p. 401). In the same spirit of establishing systematicity, Tarone (1982) sought to map causal relationships between learners' attention to language forms and their choice of interlanguage style which led to variation in performance. Ellis (1985) drew a classification model of interlanguage variability where he differentiated between systematic and non-systematic variability, with the former one being generally attributable to the differences in task nature, situationally and contextually, while the latter one to performance variation and free variation. Within these traditional approaches to L2 development, where much effort was directed towards establishing (systematic) patterns of development, unexplained free variation evidenced in the data was

frequently labelled as measurement errors and discarded as noise (van Geert & van Dijk, 2002) in the zealous pursuit of systematicity in interlanguage data.

Within the CDST perspective, however, variability is elevated to the main stage and given the spotlight. Proponents of this theory argued that variability is the *condition* for development (van Dijk et al., 2011). In the CDST view, variability (and the changes of its degree) is an expression of the system's adaptability and, therefore, a manifestation of development-in-progress (Verspoor et al., 2008). Variability allows for rooms to accommodate the changes in the system while the system is going through its self-restructuring process to move toward the next state of order. Variability, according to the CDST perspective, is the sound, instead of noise, that tells stories of development (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011; Larsen-Freeman, 2013). It is an intrinsic property of the developmental process and is ubiquitous and inherent in any complex dynamic system (Larsen-Freeman, 2020). Every dynamic system shows some degree of variability which is, most of the time, reflective of its idiosyncratic developmental path. As such, CDST-inspired studies do not assume that there is a universal pattern of development and hence do not set out to look for one either. Consequently, it is not within their priorities to look for systematicity in their data.

CDST-inspired L2 studies that explored variability have developed along several interrelated lines of research. Many of them investigated variability to look for signs of development, usually in the form of developmental transitions. Rosmawati (2016), for example, scrutinized the variability along the development of complexity, accuracy, and fluency in L2 English academic writing in 4 of her participants. Applying a variety of techniques to visualise variability and to statistically detect developmental jumps, she documented a high level of variability in the developmental paths of all four participants, although she did not manage to find any statistically significant developmental transitions in the data (which, she noted, might be due to the observation period of one year being "too short for such development to occur in advanced learners who usually have reached the ceiling plateau, or, in dynamic parlance, reside in a more stable attractor state" (p. 182); also see Hepford, 2020 for potentially unrecognized phase shifts in one subset of the data in this study that was published separately in Rosmawati, 2014). In a similar vein, Lowie et al. (2017) looked at the degrees of variability in the free production (involving written and spoken tasks) of a pair of identical twins and attempted to establish if the changes in the degrees of variability were associated with L2 success. Although a direct relationship between changes in variability and L2 success in individual learners was not evident in their data, this study managed

to demonstrate that variability is an important pre-requisite for development through evidence of relatively higher degree of variability accompanying changes (be them instances of an increase or a decrease) in the data.

Studies that managed to find positive evidence include Baba and Nitta (2014) who, through the use of phase shift analysis, successfully captured at least one phase transition in each of their two participants. Opitz's work with students who learned Russian as a foreign language (one of the four studies reviewed in Opitz, 2017) also clearly demonstrated that there was a large extent of variability along the developmental path at the weekly level which contributed to an overall positive developmental trend observed at a higher timescale of the year level. In the other three studies reviewed in the same chapter, variability was also evidenced at all examined timescales and Opitz was satisfied that variabilities at different levels of granularity, although they may not coincide, have a role to play on the overall development of the whole system over time. Studies in this line of research, regardless of their positive or negative evidence, advanced our understanding of variability in the L2 data and demonstrated that dismissing unexplained variation as measurement errors may risk losing important information on L2 development process. The implication of such an understanding in L2 pedagogy is that students' errors might be carrying messages about what is going on in the subsystems of interlanguage within the learners, and in hastily labelling them as nonconformity to the native speaker norms (whatever these refers to; or if such a set of norms does exist) and dismissing them, we might turn our heads away from valuable signals.

Another related line of research on variability in L2 development includes those studies that attempted to visualize the emergence of complex patterns from the interactions among the variables under observation and aimed to explain how these interactions gave rise to complexity of the system. Studies within this line of research tried to map out the process of emergence in language development (e.g., Baba, 2020; Caspi, 2010; Evans & Larsen-Freeman, 2020). In many cases, studies of this nature drew heavily upon mathematical calculations and computer simulations to develop models that fit the developmental data of the learners and to a certain extent predict how the next stage(s) will unfold. Examples of such models include the precursor model and the dynamic growth model, which can visualize the interactions among some connected components in language development (Caspi, 2010; Caspi & Lowie, 2010; Lowie et al., 2011; van Geert, 2008). Research in this line advanced our understanding of language learning/development by modelling the relationships among some linguistic

constructs and demonstrating how some of these constructs are connected growers, and therefore their development supports each other, while others are competitors, such that an increase in one inhibits the growth of the others (Schmid et al., 2011; Spoelman & Verspoor, 2010; van Dijk et al., 2011; Verspoor et al., 2008).

Through these studies, it is clear that CDST is more than a mere conceptual apparatus; it also offers a set of tools and statistical methods to detect and capture developmental transitions (van Dijk & van Geert, 2007; van Dijk et al., 2011) and to visualize the interactions among variables (Verspoor & van Dijk, 2011). Over the past two decades or so, this collection of tools and methods has expanded, owing much to the work of CDST proponents around the world (see examples of highly advanced methods in Fogal and Verspoor (2020)). While some CDST-inspired L2 studies may have applied this theory at its metaphorical level alone, others have ventured beyond, and as a result, all these studies collectively contributed to a better understanding of the role of variability in L2 development.

CDST UNDER SCRUTINY: SCEPTICISM AND CRITICISM

The integration of CDST in the field of Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition has not always been smooth. At its inception, it was not met with great enthusiasm in the field as researchers and practitioners shared reservations about its radically different ontology and rather complex epistemology. This had resulted in roughly a decade of silence following the publication of Larsen-Freeman's seminal work in 1997. Following some early works published in 2006-2008 by scholars who embraced this theory, Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) published a book-length discussion on the parallels between Complexity Theory and human language, which then triggered one of the first systematic criticisms on the application of this theory in language study. Gregg (2010) in his review of this book pointed out many flaws in the arguments that Larsen-Freeman and Cameron put forward in this book regarding the relevance of Complexity Theory in explaining language acquisition. He rejected the proposition that language is a dynamic system by arguing that language is an abstract concept, not an entity, and therefore cannot be a *system* (p. 553). If it is not a system, then this theory would not be an appropriate one to study it. He then systematically discussed how science and language were misunderstood and hence misrepresented in many of the arguments put forward in this book. His critique was very strong in tone and was mainly concerned with the compatibility of the tenets of this theory to the

phenomena outside physical sciences, such as those in language learning and development. Noting that Larsen-Freeman and Cameron did not support their position with substantial evidence/arguments, he was not convinced about their propositions in the book although he did not completely dismiss the potential application of this theory in the domain of language studies.

More recently, Bulté and Housen (2020) undertook another systematic scrutiny of this theory. They examined 5 CDST-inspired empirical studies of L2 development and noted several controversial issues in them. For a start, they pointed out that the empirical evidence put forward by these studies have not convincingly demonstrated the central claim in the CDST perspective that variability *drives* development. They noted that since variability is an epiphenomenon of development, its existence is expected along developmental paths. However, existence does not necessarily infer causation. It takes more solid proof than currently demonstrated in the field to make and support this claim. Citing several statistical methods that have been used in these studies (for example detrended correlation analysis), they further pointed that the underpinning assumptions of some of these methods might even be contradictory to the tenets of this theory. Of stronger concern is, in their view, CDST's extreme rejection of reductionism as this tenet puts CDST-inspired studies at risk of being inundated with a virtually endless numbers of factors, contexts, constructs, possible analyses to be dealt with in their complex data sets. Along with in-depth discussion of three other issues they noticed in these studies, they voiced their concern over the seemingly superficial paradigm shift in the field. By demonstrating two different courses of statistical treatment of a same data set (one with CDST-inspired methods and another with more traditional (commonly used) statistical methods), they questioned if there was any substantial contribution of these new methods despite their complex and highly challenging underpinnings. While Bulté and Housen (2020) acknowledged that the novelty of this theory has led to the difficulties in translating concepts and principles into appropriate methodologies, they envisioned that until these controversial issues are resolved, CDST-inspired still will most likely "remain limited to a mainly metaphorical application" (p. 235).

MOVING FORWARD

Through these reviews, it becomes evident that there is a lack of shared understanding (or perhaps, a consensus) on a few points regarding the integration of this theory into L2 development research. Firstly, at the ontological level, there

is not, to the best of the author's knowledge, any standardized definition of the tenets of this theory that is formalised to account for phenomena in language learning/development. While most of the tenets have been described in their broadest sense, owing much to the work of Larsen-Freeman and the Groningen scholars, the lack of standardized terminology (or common agreement, if you like) in their account for the constructs in L2 learning/development makes the framework overly loose. This has frequently resulted in each researcher having to derive their own operational definition of the tenets they would like to base their study on or make observation of. While the practice of deriving operational definitions is not a new one, this could be problematic with this new theory when many of its proponents are not seeing eye to eye yet about all of its tenets. For example, as can be seen in the review in the previous section, proponents of CDST have different opinions and stances on the notion of reductionism (and CDST's rejection of it). These different positions lead to different, sometimes opposite, arguments which cause confusion in the field. The lack of formalized definition risk pandemonium where scholars might use different terms to refer to the same phenomenon, or worse, a same term to talk about two ontologically different constructs. It should, therefore, be a priority to have a discipline-wide discussion on the translation of these tenets, beyond their hard science notion and directly into the phenomena in language studies, in order to reach a consensus on how the conceptual apparatus in this theory is to be applied in thinking about, talking about, and exploring language development phenomena.

Following the resolution at the ontological level, efforts are then to be directed to reach some consensus on the epistemological level. At the present stage, there seems to be a lack of agreement about the extent of the methodological application of this theory in empirical research. By extension, there is even less consistency in the answers to the question of what methods are considered appropriate in handling language data from the CDST perspective and for the study to claim that it is methodologically based on CDST. As Bulté and Housen (2020) pointed out, some of the methods used in the currently available CDST-inspired L2 writing studies are underpinned by the assumptions that are contradictory to the tenets of CDST. This has cast doubts over the findings presented in those studies. Before jumping ahead too readily into the adoption of any advanced methods, researchers should perhaps first examine the underpinning principles/assumptions of these methods and look more closely at how they are applied in other fields to get a better understanding of its power in making claims before even considering their relevance to language data. Given that many of these methods are highly complex and presume a fairly advanced understanding of mathematics/statistics/computer

modelling, a good conversation between language studies and these areas of complex systems studies could be a useful way to start. This suggestion is, of course, not a new one. It has been voiced in many CDST publications, but the uptake has not been very wide. The author of this paper is also guilty of such a slow uptake and would urge fellow scholars to build and foster collaborations with complex science researchers for more fruitful future applications of CSDT in language development studies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge that despite her best effort in deriving the arguments in this paper from an eclectic collection of works, she has missed out on many interesting and intellectually challenging studies that are not mentioned nor discussed in this short review, due to the constrain of space in this paper as well as the author's limited capacity to be all-inclusive.

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[i] Interested readers could refer to Larsen-Freeman (1997), Beckner et al. (2009), and Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2020) for in-depth discussions on the ontological and epistemological review of CDST tenets.

[ii] It is worth noting that some newer methods were conceived and developed within the field of language studies.

[iii] They are: (1) to look for alternate course of action, (2) to reject both parts of the dichotomies, (3) to include both parts of the dichotomies, (4) to synthesize the two parts of the dichotomies, (5) to posit a third space, and (6) to accept paradoxes (Larsen-Freeman, 2017).

Action research in TESOL: Representations and Recommendations

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I intend to follow up on a Special Issue of the *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL* on Action Research, which was published in August 2017. First, I will present a summary of the Special Issue and then give a synopsis of the action research studies published in the *TESOL Quarterly* journal over its lifespan (1967-June 2020). I will present a summary of the ten articles with action research themes that were published in the journal to raise consciousness among TESOL practitioners and stakeholders about this type of research. I will also draw on the trends found in these ten articles to make some recommendations to TESOL practitioners in case they aspire to conduct and publish action research on their own practices and issues of concern.

INTRODUCTION

University of Sydney Papers in TESOL published a Special Issue on Action Research in August 2017. The Special Issue successfully published a number of papers from relatively diverse contexts such as Australia, New Zealand, and Poland. The papers also represented various types of English language learning contexts. The guest editors were hoping that the Special Issue with six papers would inspire other teacher-researchers to conduct similar studies on their own practices and publish them for a wider community of TESOL practitioners and stakeholders.

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©2022 *University of Sydney Journal of TESOL*

ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

The first article in the Special Issue was written by the prominent expert on action research, Anne Burns. In her article, Burns (2017) made the point that it was difficult to find action research as a coherent body of teacher-led research two decades ago. She observed that "in the early 1990s, there were encouraging signs that an interest in the teacher-as-researcher was beginning to permeate the field of English language teaching" (p. 1). Leading and supporting action research in Australia, Burns reflected that action research has a strong precedent in Australia more recently. Burns referred to Simon Borg, who had written the concluding paper in the Special Issue, to extrapolate that research done by teachers in "educational contexts has recently become much more firmly established, with by now a substantial number of publications by teachers and with several large scale programs being initiated around the world with support from major organisations" (p. 2).

The four papers (not including Burns' introductory and Borg's final papers) in the Special Issue covered a range of topics and contexts. The four papers reported teacher research on topics such as General English students' independent learning, and the use of Web 2.0 tools for academic reading and writing development, both conducted in Australia. There were also articles on peer assessment in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classroom in New Zealand, and task-based one-on-one instruction for business students in Poland.

In this paper, I present a synopsis of the action research studies published in the *TESOL Quarterly* (*TQ*) journal over its lifespan (1967-June 2020). *TQ* was selected because it is one of the prestigious and high-ranking journals in the field of language teaching and learning; a journal Swales (1988) referred to as the "flagship publication of the TESOL organization" (p. 151). It is, therefore, important to see how action research is represented in this flagship publication of the field. I will then conclude by drawing on the trends found in those ten articles to make some recommendations to TESOL practitioners in case they aspire to conduct and publish action research on their own practices and issues of concern. First, however, a brief discussion of action research will benefit those readers who might not be familiar with this type of research.

ACTION RESEARCH

There are two approaches to action research. These two approaches include a broad approach or perspective and a narrow approach or perspective. A broad perspective on action research provides opportunities for researchers to involve

participants in research for social and cultural changes related to the participants' lives and professions. This perspective is usually referred to as participatory, emancipatory, or critical-emancipatory action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). On the other hand, a narrow perspective primarily focuses practitioner research and is usually used in different professions to make changes in the routine practice.

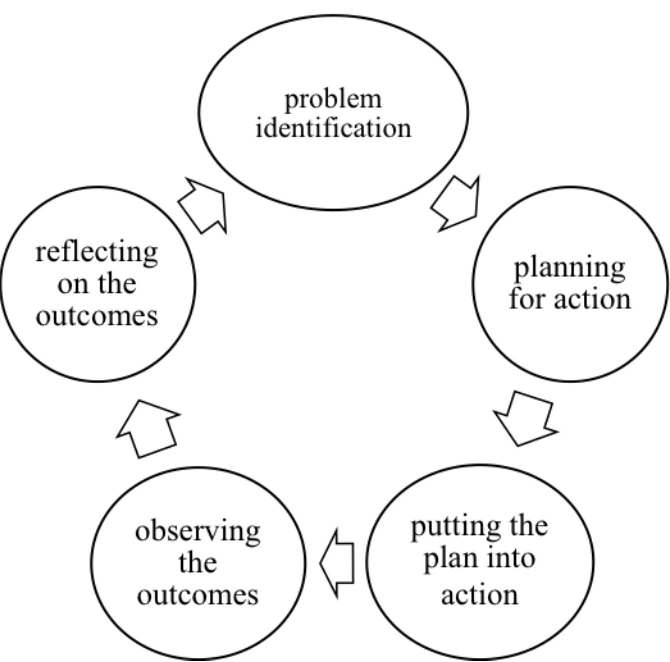
Action research is defined (see, e.g., Ary et al., 2014; Burns, 2010; Heigham & Croker, 2009; Richards, 2003) as research conducted to improve professional practice. This type of research is usually done "by bringing about change, often through involving research participants in the process of investigation" (Riazi, 2016, p. 4). Burns (2016) uses the broader term of "practitioner research" (PR) and explains that "practitioner research (PR) broadly reflects the notion that professionals working within their own workplace settings carry out systematic investigations on aspects of their daily practices" (p. 56). As an example of practitioner research, Burns (2016) refers to educational PR that "draws on methodologies of action research, practitioner inquiry, classroom research, action learning, and reflective and exploratory practice" (p. 56).

Practitioner action research is represented in the literature with other names and versions such as cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996), participatory action research (Campbell & Burnaby, 2001), and critical participatory looping (CPL) (Murphey & Falout, 2010). A narrow perspective on action research is particularly common in the field of applied linguistics and TESOL (Burns, 2005). Using this perspective, English language teacher-researchers design and conduct action research projects related to issues of their concern in their educational settings with the hope of making appropriate and beneficial changes to their instruction.

Notwithstanding different nomenclature and versions, this type of research may be conducted by a practitioner or in collaboration with more experienced researchers. The core element in action research is the intervention the researchers would like to make in the course of a routine (e.g., teaching a classroom) to examine the change the intervention may bring about. The literature on action research (see, e.g., Ary et al., 2014; Burns, 2010; Heigham & Croker, 2009) identifies five steps researchers need to go through to conduct the research. These steps include problem identification, planning for action, putting the plan in action, observing the outcomes, and reflecting on the achieved outcomes as depicted in Figure 1. The process can lead to new cycles of action research depending on the reflections the researcher makes on the achieved outcomes.

Figure 1

The steps involved in a course of an action research (adapted from Riazi, 2016)



The use of action research in language teaching and learning, and teaching and learning more broadly, is to encourage practitioners to develop a culture of reflection and change by identifying potential problems and reflecting on their own approach to teaching. The outcomes of action research can also be shared with other practitioners to help them with their practice. As such, action research can lead to some benefits for teachers by engaging in research and enhancing their professional development. The process can also foster research-based decision making, research collaboration, and empowering teachers as researchers. Beyond these benefits, conducting action research will improve teachers' capability to bridge the gap between theory and practice in their profession.

ACTION RESEARCH IN *TESOL QUARTERLY* JOURNAL

I searched the journal and looked for only empirical action research articles. My criteria for inclusion of an article as an action research was twofold. First, if the researcher had explicitly stated that the research was indeed an action research or a version of it as discussed in the action research discussion above. I thus searched for "action research" in the title, abstract, and the body of the article to find articles with an action research orientation. My second criterion was to read the articles returned by the first criterion to ensure they were focusing on practitioner research based on the features discussed above. In particular, I was looking for the research that involved teachers and learners in the process of research to make changes in teachers' perspectives or identities, their teaching or the learning of students through problem identification, an action plan, observation, and reflection on the outcome of observations (data and analysis).

The outcome was that some action research studies used an intervention to make changes in the classroom routines (e.g., Luk & Lin, 2015; Lee & Wallace, 2017). On the other hand, some other studies used other methods such as narrative inquiry (e.g., Johnson & Golombek, 2011) or critical participatory approach (e.g., Kasun & Saavedra, 2016) to develop teachers' awareness about their professional development and identities which, in turn, resulted in changes in the teachers' approaches to teaching and students' classroom activities. Further elaborations on the articles with a practitioner action research are provided below.

The search results showed that only ten full articles, and one short paper with an action research theme were published in *TQ's* 52 years of publication. As Burns (2016) also observed, this low number of articles with an action research orientation is "telling". The short paper (Murphey & Falout, 2010), was also reported by Burns (2016) to be the only article with a practitioner research orientation published in *TQ* over five years (2010-2014). Two full articles were published in 2005 (MacPherson; Pawan & Thomalla), and one in 2011 (Johnson & Golombek). The remaining seven articles were published between 2015 and 2020 (Luk & Lin, 2015; Kasun & Saavedra, 2016; Lee & Wallace, 2017; Vieira, 2017; De Castro, Bodi, & Montejano, 2018; Herrera, 2019; Chen, 2020). This finding is in line with Burns' (2017) observation that action research was hard to find in the 20th century. This trend also reflects the recent and increasing recognition of the potential of action research to bring about congruence between teaching and research (McKinley, 2019). I will present a synopsis of these ten action research articles to (a) raise consciousness among TESOL practitioners and stakeholders

about the rate and type of action research that gets published in the flagship journal of the field, and (b) draw inferences from these published articles and make some recommendations to TESOL practitioners for designing, conducting, and publishing their action research projects.

The ten action research articles in the *TQ* journal can be categorised into broad and narrow perspectives. Five articles can be classified as broad perspective action research studies concerned with learners' and teachers' identity change as well as making macro changes in the English language education programs. These five studies are: MacPherson (2005), Pawan and Thomalla (2005), Johnson and Golombek (2011), Kasun and Saavedra (2016), and De Castro, Bodi, and Montejano (2018).

MacPherson explored the identity struggles of five Tibetan refugee women in the Indian Himalayas whose educational program combined a traditional Buddhist philosophical curriculum in Tibetan alongside a modern, secular bilingual English-Tibetan curriculum. The researcher collected and analysed ethnographic data from the five participants who served as cases to be considered for "five alternative patterns of identity and language negotiations: rejection, assimilation, marginality, bicultural accommodation, and intercultural creativity" (p. 585). The author related these cross-cultural identity negotiations to various gender identity stances. MacPherson's study can be considered critical emancipatory action research with the idea of offering relief to the community of Tibetan refugee women through education and by inviting them to share their life stories in simple in-class conversations and journal-writing exercises. The five women participants involved in the research were able to reflect on their identity and negotiate their gender identity stances.

Pawan and Thomalla (2005) also focused on immigrants in a rural county in Indiana. They used responsive evaluation as a form of action research to use stakeholders' issues and concerns as bases for evaluating a language program and producing a plan for improvements. The researchers identified the ESL services and Spanish language services for immigrants in the rural county. The evaluation of language services was led by an ESL specialist who evaluated language services in the county from the perspectives of language providers and recipients. The responsive evaluation action research allowed the researchers to identify many of the struggles faced by immigrants and residents who were working with limited resources to fulfil language needs. The study produced a set of recommendations

to add new resources and enhance existing ones to meet the needs identified by the stakeholders.

Although Johnson and Golombek (2011) used narrative inquiry to investigate changes to teachers' cognitions about their professional development, they postulated that such narratives could ultimately bring about significant changes in teachers and their teaching practices. That is, rather than focusing on how a particular intervention in teachers' practices might bring about change, the researchers drew on the transformative power of narrative and its ability to ignite cognitive processes that could foster teacher professional development. To illustrate the transformative power of narrative, the researchers analysed two teachers' narratives to illustrate how narrative operates as a mediational tool in the teachers' professional development. The first teacher was a novice in-service teacher working with undergraduate English language learners in a freshman composition course. Through writing journal narratives, she thought through concepts and formulated an idealised conceptualisation of what she would like to do in class. Through these narratives, the teacher specifically encouraged students to take a more active role in the power structures in the classroom.

The second teacher was an experienced ESL teacher who taught natural and environmental science in a bilingual English-Spanish primary school in Spain. Through his narratives, he revealed a persistent tension between the school's policy of encouraging the children to actively participate in learning and the fact that children would not or could not fully participate in classroom instructional activities. The teacher was determined to address this tension as part of a professional development assignment with three other teachers who were all enrolled in a distance-learning program. Johnson and Golombek conclude that the centrality of narrative is not only transforming teacher professional development but is also transforming the field of second language teacher education (SLTE). The researchers turn different stakeholders' attention "to the various ways in which SLTE is being shaped by the burgeoning area of teacher inquiry; referred to in the general educational literature as the new scholarship or practitioner research" (p. 501).

Kasun and Saavedra (2016) investigated eight teacher candidates who participated in a four-week study abroad program in Mexico. The researchers described and theorised the challenges and promises of exposing preservice teachers' identities to indigenous and critical second language teaching experiences in the study abroad program. The researchers collected and analysed teacher candidates' self-

assessments, course work samples, class discussions, focus group sessions, and ethnographic field notes. They found three identity shifts among teachers, namely, becoming socially aware, becoming empaths, and becoming creators of loving classroom spaces. These teacher candidates' identities seemed to conflict with their former identities, such as being excellent "classroom managers." Kasun and Saavedra reflected that the critical participatory approach to teacher preparation and the cracks between identities that it created allowed preservice teachers to rethink their identities as second language teachers in local and global contexts. The researchers conclude that this and similar alternative programs to preparing preservice teachers in which teachers come to work with culturally and linguistically minoritized communities can serve as examples of beginning efforts to decolonise curricula.

De Castro, Bodi, and Montejano (2018) reported a 2-year collaborative action research (CAR) project. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) education in Spain, the researchers analysed and aimed to counteract some of the most negative educational effects of English linguistic imperialism in the field of English language teaching (ELT). The CAR project investigated the ramifications of this phenomenon in a primary school located in one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city of Valencia. The researchers introduced an alternative pedagogical approach to reverse the underlying tenets of ELT under present-day neoliberal imperialism. The alternative pedagogy combined art and multimodality through a series of projects. The researchers collected a variety of qualitative data, including classroom observation, journal entries, recordings, student interviews, and photographs to assess the effects of the alternative pedagogy. Evidence from the data and analysis showed that the three projects developed during the CAR project succeeded in offering a worthwhile educational experience. The program hence provided a valuable critical alternative to the mainstream ELT and brought about a change in the way the socially underprivileged students related to the English language.

The above studies represent collaborative action research in which participants (teachers) collaborated with researchers to undertake changes in teacher professional development (Johnson & Golombek, 2011), identity shifts among teachers (Kasun & Saavedra, 2016), and to reverse the underlying tenets of ELT under present-day neoliberal imperialism (De Castro, Bodi, & Montejano, 2018). The action research collaborators (more experienced researchers) can be considered as insider actors, players, or change agents in their own social contexts (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

The remaining five published action research articles can be categorised under a narrow perspective, which were concerned with issues related to classroom instruction dynamics. These studies addressed issues related to the teaching and learning of English in different educational settings. The five studies are: Luk and Lin (2015), Lee and Wallace (2017), Vieira (2017), Herrera (2019), and Chen (2020).

Luk and Lin (2015) used a participant-driven approach and engaged two teachers in a teacher inquiry and professional development project. The idea was that a teacher-participant-driven approach to instruction could provide intensive opportunities for teachers to initiate and reflect on changes in their conventional instruction. The two teachers initiated a new instructional routine to promote critical thinking among ESL students in Hong Kong. The teachers were working with low-English-proficiency senior secondary students as they were practising how to express critical talk in English. That is, they were practising with students to use English to express ideas that were first developed in Cantonese (the students' first language). Data were collected from observing the two teachers' classes and conducting in-depth interviews with them. Drawing on a discourse analysis method, Luk and Lin found a significant contrast between the students' more elaborated discourse in Cantonese and a restricted discourse in English. Based on the findings, the researchers draw more attention to the impacts of linguistic proficiencies on the critical thinking performance of ESL learners and to how the communicative gaps in critical literate talk revealed in ESL learners' first and second languages can be gradually reduced.

Lee and Wallace (2017) investigated whether a flipped learning approach would work in an EFL college English classroom in a South Korean university. The study comprised a class of 39 students who were learning English using a communicative language teaching approach, and another class of 40 students who studied English in a flipped learning manner. The same instructor (the co-researcher) taught both classes. Data were gathered from the students' achievements in three major tasks, their responses to three surveys, and the instructor's notes regarding the students' engagement in the process of their English learning. The findings demonstrated that the students in the flipped classroom achieved higher average scores on their final three tasks. The results of the surveys also indicated that most students seemed to enjoy learning English in a flipped learning environment. Also, the instructor found the students in the flipped classroom to be more engaged in the learning process than those in the non-flipped classroom. Pedagogical implications of the study are presented and discussed for effective English language teaching.

Vieira (2017) investigated task-based language teaching (TBLT) as a potential learner-centred approach in the EFL context. She was interested in developing a realistic understanding of possibilities for instructional change by confronting theoretical discourses with the realities of schooling and teacher education. In collaboration with two student teachers, the researcher used an interpretative perspective and focused on the use of TBLT by the two teachers during their English language teaching (ELT) practicum in an initial teacher education programme. In this teacher education program, autonomy-oriented action research projects were developed to engage student teachers in research. The two teachers' portfolios and reports accounted for the feasibility of a weak approach to TBLT that transcends current practices. The feasibility of a TBLT approach provided potentials for promoting autonomy that derives from a professional development framework where teaching and teacher education are conceived as empowering processes. Vieira concludes that understanding how language teaching is shaped by contexts and developing empowering approaches to teacher education will help to enhance instructional change as an interspace between reality and ideals, where possibilities for transformation are explored.

Herrera (2019) presents an action research study conducted in an English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) newcomer classroom. The teacher researcher carried out a reading project over seven instructional days. The project provided an opportunity for the participants to learn English while engaging in a purposeful discussion of cultural similarities and differences between the participants' L1 and L2. The author engaged in meaningful teacher research to learn about the importance of exploring the topics of moral values and behaviour through the lens of English learners (ELs). The findings of the study suggested that from the participants' point of view, moral values and behaviour are topics that should be learned in the household and then enforced at school. The findings also showed that participants agreed that addressing these topics in the ESOL classroom will benefit student classmates with discipline challenges at school.

Chen (2020) investigated the synergy of language education and virtual learning. The researcher studied the effect of Second Life (SL), 3D multi-user virtual environments, on learners' language outcomes and perceptions. The hypothesis was that virtual learning would improve learners' motivation, communication skills, confidence, and avatar identity. Employing collaborative action research, Chen used a case study to explore how an ESL teacher switched her role from an experienced classroom-based teacher to an SL "newbie" teacher. The teacher reconstructed her teacher identity and fostered her professional growth through

her verbatim account documented in her critical reflections in blogging, shadowed, and interviewed by the researcher as her mentor. The teacher's story exemplified an online teacher's resilience in striving to equip herself with a new skill set and a new understanding of online teaching vis-a-vis challenges encountered, strategies employed, and lessons learned through critical reflections in dialogue blogging. The researcher reflected that these aspects open a new avenue for research and pedagogy in virtual teacher training and professional development through action research in the 3D virtual environment.

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION RESEARCH

There were only ten action research articles published in the *TQ* lifespan and one short report. This number is about one per cent of the total number of empirical articles published in *TQ's* 52 years of publication. I, thus, concur with Burns' (2016) statement that the proportionally few numbers of articles with a practitioner research in *TQ* is "telling". I also agree with McKinley (2019), who called for more articles with action research orientation, given its potential and promise to narrow the proverbial research-practice divide. This trend has implications for both journal editors and ESL/EFL teachers. Journal editors can devote a section in their journals to articles with an action research orientation to encourage the implementation and dissemination of teacher-based action research. Some journals such as *Language Teaching Research* and *TESOL Journal* have already created a space for this. Researchers and scholars like Burns (2010; 2015) and McKinley (2019) have advocated the growth of the "teacher as researcher" movement, which was initiated in the 1980s. However, this does not seem to have been fully actualised given the low number of action research articles in the prestigious journals of the field. The positive point, however, is this type of research is attracting attention from teachers and research collaborators, and so we can expect to see more action research reports in future.

There are several reasons for the low number of action research articles, not to mention the recency of this type of research in ELT. It seems one of the reasons for less productivity in this area relates to the challenges teachers face when thinking about and implementing action research. Several of the ten action research articles discussed in this paper were, in fact, not written by teachers. Rather, teachers collaborated with more experienced researchers (themselves as insiders) to bring about the changes they desired. However, inadequate knowledge and skills of conducting research and writing up the research reports are serious challenges

ELT practitioners need to overcome. Having said that, we need to accept the fact that not all the teachers may aspire to conduct and publish research.

I, therefore, make the following recommendations for those ELT teachers who might want to consider if they would like to take a more active role and mitigate the unidirectional trend in the theory and practice divide. Traditionally, teachers were considered consumers of instructional theories developed by researchers, sometimes alien to the realities of the classroom. This trend created a theory and practice gap. That is, some researchers were assumed to conduct research and develop principles and methods of teaching, while teachers were supposed to put those principles and theories into practice. Practitioner action research provides the opportunity for the teachers to change the unidirectional trend of theory and practice into a reciprocal trend.

ELT practitioners can consider the research and teaching nexus more seriously and systematically. They can productively and dynamically connect reflective teaching with teacher-initiated research. Reflection is one of the main stages in the process of action research and, teachers reflect on their instruction all the time as they think about and make changes in their instructional routines to enhance students' learning. They can, therefore, think about ways they could initiate and incorporate such changes in a more systematic way leading to planned action research projects. It is not only the product of the research (the changes brought about as a result of action research), but also the process of systematically documenting what happens as a result of the changes through reflective observations. There are a lot of good episodes of teacher-initiated changes and outcomes that are unfortunately not documented. Through planned action research projects and publications, teachers can not only disseminate these changes, but they can also transform and contribute significantly to the scholarship of teaching and learning. This may look like a big stride given the realities of the teaching profession. However, through collaborative action research (see suggestion number 3 below) and involving other insider researchers (such as those represented in the *TQ* articles), teachers can make this a reality.

To achieve the above target, ELT practitioners need to upskill their research and writing abilities. To be able to plan, implement, and publish action research, teachers need to enhance their current abilities and achieve adequate levels of research and writing expertise required for this type of activity. They may, thus, consider the options 1-3 below to achieve this goal.

1) ELT practitioners may consider promising opportunities for collaborative action research. Through collaborative action research, ELT practitioners could team up with more experienced teachers or researchers to plan, conduct, and report action research. Teachers could also form reading and writing circles to study and discuss published action research reports. The discussion of published action research reports in teacher circles can help teachers think about potential practitioner research. If they are going to collaborate with more established researchers, they need to take more active roles as co-researchers. As seen, in several of the ten articles discussed above, teachers only acted and provided data to more experienced researchers. They were not fully represented as co-researchers. It is, therefore, imperative to make sure that any action research that teachers are invited to participate in is plausibly designed to account for the crucial role of teachers as co-investigators. Teachers can then co-publish with these researchers or prepare their own writing with guidance from the collaborative researchers.

2) The collaborative action research in which teachers take a more serious role will allow TESOL research "to be more grounded in classroom contexts, and for methods to be more transparent about the messiness of doing real-world classroom research" (McKinley, 2019, p. 876). Such collaborative action research will potentially improve the unidirectional trend of theory and practice in favour of a more reciprocal trend as stated earlier.

3) ELT practitioners may want to consider the possibility of enrolling in higher degree research programs. The current affordances of higher education provide opportunities for teachers to undertake higher degree research while they are working. These programs can grant teachers the chance to embark on action research by turning the problems they face in their profession into a research program that can feed forward relevant changes in their profession. These opportunities can help teachers to upskill their research and writing abilities through systematic research programs. There are now many universities that provide full-time, part-time, face-to-face, and online master of research and doctoral programs. Teachers may consider enrolling in and choosing a mode of instruction that fits their personal and professional life. They can bring their valuable teaching experiences to define their research projects. Through action research projects, they can contribute to the teaching and research nexus but more

broadly to the scholarship of teaching and learning while enhancing their academic abilities for future research projects.

A final comment would be that teachers have a lot to do and probably with less time to invest in research. Even for those who get the time and aspire to get involved in research, moving from being a teacher to a researcher is challenging for many teachers. There is, therefore, an onus on their institutions and managers including head-teachers to create opportunities for these types of teachers. Opportunities like the Action Research in English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), run by English Australia and Cambridge Assessment English (https://www.englishaustralia.com.au/professional-development/action-research), are good examples of fostering teachers' inspiration for action research.

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Mehdi Riazi is the author of *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Research Methods* (Routledge, 2016) and *Mixed Methods Research* (Equinox, 2017). His most recent co-edited volume titled *Studies and Essays on the Learning, Teaching and Assessing Second Language Writing* was published in 2020 by Cambridge Scholar Publishing. He is now authoring a book titled How to Write Research Proposals to be published by Equinox. His most recent articles include a co-authored paper on Journal publication productivity, impact, and quality among Applied Linguistics and TESOL academics in the Group of Eight Australian Universities, which was published in the *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* in 2020, and another co-authored paper on The contexts, theoretical and methodological orientation of EAP research which was published in the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* in 2020.

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Initiating professional development in language teaching

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INTRODUCTION

For many of us, language teaching is something we have committed to for the duration of our professional lives. However our professional journeys can be more productive and rewarding if they take us to destinations that we want to reach. These could be to become a subject specialist, a teacher trainer, a curriculum specialist, or a textbook writer. Important transitions in our careers can happen by chance, or of course they may not. In this paper based on my own experience and others whose careers I have followed over many years, I would like to suggest a number of initiatives that teachers can take in order to take charge of their own professional development. These involve developing a professional development plan, assessing where you are in your professional development, and reflecting on how you have changed as a teacher over time[i].

1 PREPARING A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A quality I have often observed in teachers who have achieved significant stages in their professional development is that they took deliberate steps to engineer their own progress. Early in their careers they took control of their careers by setting their own goals and mapping out the steps that needed to take to achieve them. Research on teacher development suggests that it constitutes a kind of life-cycle. Teachers' professional lives tend to move in stages, and the goals they set may vary

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

depending on the stage the teacher has reached. (Hubermann, 1989). Garton and Richards (2008) describe a four-stage trajectory:

1. Starting out
2. Becoming experienced
3. New horizons: professional development
4. Passing on the knowledge

You might like to consider where you are in relation to the stages in this trajectory. Is your career static or do you feel you have moved beyond where you were professionally when you started teaching? Are you actively looking for ways to move from one stage to the next? What sort of changes would you like to achieve? Perhaps compare yourself with other teachers you know and who have achieved significant milestones in their careers. How did they get there? If you are still at a stage where you are mainly focused on surviving in your present circumstances then it may be a good time to stop and review your professional development. Transitioning from one stage to another is at the heart of professional development in teaching.

Another way of thinking about professional development is by visualizing your ideal 'teacher self': an important aspect of goal setting is having a clear 'image' of the kind of teacher you would like to be in the next stage in your career. Research on motivation and its role in learning refers to what is called 'the motivational self system'. This is based on the idea that motivation can be driven by an image of our imagined future self- an aspirational identity that we would like to realize in the future. This can be contrasted with our current or actual self. In making a comparison of this kind we also need to think about the steps that need to be taken in order to make the transition from our current self to our aspirational or ideal future self. One way to do this is visualize what your ideal professional self might look like in the future- for example in five years' time. Does it include possible future selves of this kind below or of other future selves?

- Managing your own language school
- Having completed an MA or higher degree.
- Publishing a textbook based on your own teaching experience

- Becoming a teacher trainer
- Publishing articles in teacher magazines or professional journals

The next step involves making a 'road map' for your professional development: what will you need to do in order to achieve your goals and what will the first steps be in this process? What kind of support will you need and how will you obtain it? What barrier might you anticipate and how will you respond to them? What will your time frame be? In planning a map of this kind it is important to set realistic goals and to revise them if necessary as your career moves forward.

2. REVIEWING YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While professional development involves looking forward, it also involves looking back and reviewing what you have achieved so far and whether there are aspects of your professional knowledge and skill-base that you may want to develop further.

You could start by looking at your current qualifications, whether they be a certificate–or diploma-level qualification in TESOL or a degree or other qualification in the field. Do you feel the need for additional qualifications? Which ones are most likely to interest you and provide support for your professional development plans? Perhaps you can contact or talk to someone you know who already has that qualification and find out what their experience was like. Where did they take it? What was the course like? How demanding was it? How useful has it been to them? Would they recommend taking it full-time or part-time? What other advice would they give you?

Or rather than pursue an additional qualification you might consider some areas of TESOL that you might like to become more familiar with, such as testing and assessment, classroom research or the use of technology. What activities do you think could best help you develop expertise in each area? For example you might be able to take a course, go on-line, team teach, do independent reading, observe another teacher or attend a workshop.

Another area for professional growth is in terms of your responsibilities in your school or institution. These could include classroom teacher, materials' designer, curriculum designer, test designer, mentor, teacher trainer, supervisor of other

teachers or program co-ordinator. Are there responsibilities you would like to focus more on in future and what steps can you take to achieve them?

It's also useful to review the kinds of professional development activities you make use of. To what extent do you read books and magazines, write for publication, design instructional materials, attend workshops and conferences, research your teaching or take part in on-line forums? Do you belong to a teacher's group or to a professional organization?

When teachers compare their professional development I also find that they learn a lot from other activities they are involved with in their schools, such as organizing a conversation club or helping a student-teacher with lesson planning or with designing teaching materials. These can be valuable learning experiences too.

Another useful activity is to prepare an account of yourself as a teacher. What kind of teacher are you? What are your special skills? What are some of your success stories in teaching? A fuller account of your teaching philosophy and approach could take the form of a portfolio (a collection of items that you assemble to present an overview of yourself as a teacher), or you could prepare a one page account of yourself as a teacher of the kind that you could include in a job application. This could include the same kind of information above and could showcase your strengths and potential as a teacher.

3. REFLECTING ON HOW YOU HAVE CHANGED AS A TEACHER

Teacher development is all about change – about the nature of change and how change occurs. Hopefully all of us experience different kinds of changes throughout our careers. Experience is one source of many kinds of change. Over time our confidence increases. We develop new skills. We learn how to deal with difficult teaching situations. We may change our beliefs about the nature of good teaching and perhaps become less dependent on textbooks and make greater use of technology. And we develop a deeper understanding of ourselves as teachers as well as of our learners.. Some of these kinds of changes may happen relatively quickly, while others may happen over a longer period of time.

However experience is insufficient as a basis for change. 10 years experience may simply be one year's experience repeated ten times. For experience to serve as a source of change it needs to involve critical reflection on our teacher selves and

exploration of the nature of change. Change does not always mean doing something differently. It may involve a change in understanding or awareness. And it may lead to be an affirmation of our current beliefs or practices. Conversely it may involve a complete rethinking of ideas and practices that we were sure of when we first started our teaching career. (Bailey, 1992: Freeman 1989: Richards, Gallo and Renadya 2001).

A useful professional development activity is to think about some of the kinds of changes you may have experienced in your teaching over time.For example, in what ways do you think you have changed your understanding of the issues below? Have these changes affected your teaching practice?

- How you see your role in the classroom
- Your use of technology
- Your effectiveness as a teacher
- Your understanding of your learners
- Your attitudes towards learners' errors
- Your view of the importance of a native-speaker accent

When change does occur, it may be result from different causes. Sometimes it may be the result of self-discovery as this teacher describes:

> *Learning through trial and error is on the top of my list. When I plan my lessons I often try to do things a little differently from the book, to make my classes more interesting. The things I try don't always work as well as I had planned but at least I get to find out what works well and what doesn't and I add the successful ones to my teaching repertoire.*

Hamed, English teacher, Iran (author interview)

Sometimes feedback from students, from a supervisor or from a peer may prompt a rethinking of our beliefs or practices. Observing other teachers and collaborating with others in different ways may prompt change as well as attending a workshop, reading, researching your own classes or through reflecting on problems you may have experienced in some aspects of your teaching.

If you have identified changes you would like achieve in your own understanding and practice of teaching, the next step is to decide the best way to bring them about, as teacher Hamed describes:

> *Although I have several years experience teaching in an Institute I don't have a formal qualification. I want to take a Cert Course in the next year, and to be able to register for a course I first need to take the IELTS test. I have begun studying for the test on my own and will also take an IELTS preparation course in a couple of months.*

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Professional development involves taking part in activities that require reviewing where we are in the process of professional development; self-reflection on our beliefs and understandings of language teaching and of ourselves as teachers; adding to our knowledge and skills; acquiring information about new trends and directions in language teaching; taking on new roles and responsibilities, and developing collaborative relationships with other teachers. While we are all busy professionals and don't always have time to stop and review where we are in our professional journeys, the process of doing so can help develop an awareness of our individual qualities and strengths as teachers, as well better prepare us for both challenges and opportunities in the future.

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Professor Jack C. Richards is an honorary professor at the University of Sydney. He has written over 150 books and articles on language teaching as well as many widely used classroom texts. His recent publications include articles on language teacher identity, emotions in TESOL and a forthcoming book on English Medium Instruction. He has been awarded an honorary doctorate of literature by Victoria University, Wellington, for his services to education and the arts. The TESOL organization honored Jack Richards as one of the 50 TESOL specialists worldwide to have made a significant impact on language teaching in the last 50 years.

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For a useful framework of teaching knowledge and skills see

Cambridge English Teaching Framework (http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/cambridge-english-teaching-framework/ https://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/continuing-professional-development/cpd-teacher-trainers/british-council-eaquals-core-inventory-general-english

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[i] The suggestions here are developed further in my book *Jack Richards' 50 Tips for Professional Development:* Cambridge University Press.

A children's book for teaching grammar

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INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a picture book that introduces the basic concept of past tense to young English language learners of non-English background, aged 5-6. It is designed for use by both English teachers and parents with functional English competence, so that it can be used to teach young learners at school or at home.

Figure 1 is the illustrated book that is based on two underlying principles. The online version of this illustrated book with sound effects is available at http://specialproject.ozfont.com/ Firstly, *implicit grammar teaching* (Hastings & Murphy, 2004; Murphy & Hastings, 2006), which emphasises the meaningful input of the target language and indirect presentation of the grammar feature. Children are believed to learn an additional language more quickly than adults (Oliver & Azkarai, 2018) and in a more implicit way (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2008); a picture book is suited for this purpose. Secondly, *multimodal scaffolding* (Stein, 2000; Canagarajah, 2016), which uses a combination of modes such as visual, auditory, textual, and oral forms to express meanings. Unlike wide range of graded reading materials for native English students, books for young ESL/EFL learners other than English vocabulary are not as readily available (Hill, 2001). Therefore, this picture book explores some new approaches to create potentially more engaging ways to teach young ESL/EFL learners. It is story-based, with visual and auditory information to scaffold comprehension. Like many children's books, its concise text is predictable and repetitive (Linse, 2007). These features provide

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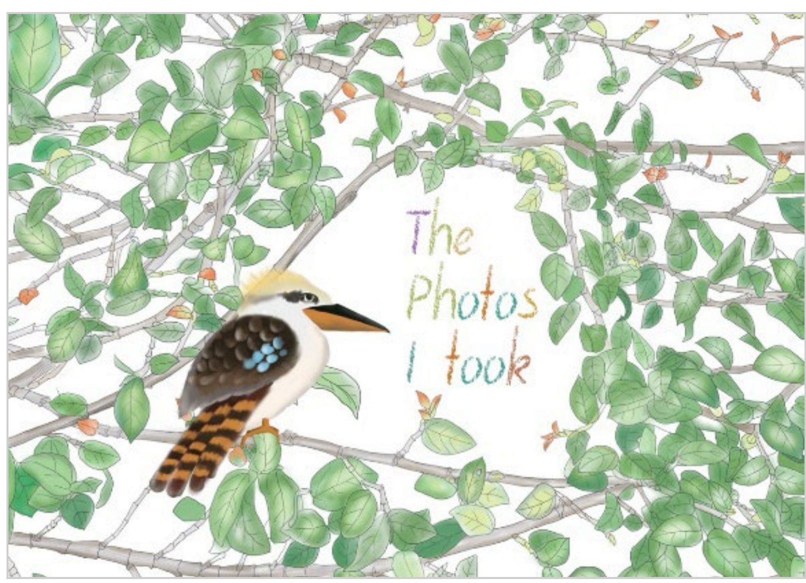
ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

"controlled"(p.48) language and are particularly suitable for young ESL/EFL learners.

Figure 1

The cover of the picture book for teaching grammar



The storyline of the picture book follows a day in the life of a year-one student in a coastal city. She takes photos on her way to school. When school finishes, on her way home, the student discovers some situations had changed from what she saw in the morning. The story presents the simple past tense implicitly by showing the young reader distinct stages of the passing of time.

The book was inspired by my 5-year-old daughter's frequent recounts of what she observed on the way to and from school. I noticed that not just my daughter, but many children are more observant than adults, and they pay attention to objects and creatures that might seem trivial to us. This book tries to associate children's observations with the use of the past tense in English.

This book was originally designed with young Chinese EFL learners in mind, but it is suitable for young EFL learners with all kinds of L1 backgrounds. Although many languages are different in terms of the manner in which past actions are expressed,

all languages do have a way of conveying that something happened in the past. Take Chinese language for example, in all of its various dialects, even though the verbal form of past tense does not exist, Chinese speakers do use tense markers in different regional dialects, such as *了(did)*, *咗(have done)*, *着(doing)*, *过(have done)*, and time markers, such as *现在 (now)* and *今早 (this morning)* to indicate the time of occurrence.

All illustrations in the book are accompanied with simple sentences to explain the scenes. The narrator of the story is a young child and the observations in the story are from her perspective. The words and sentences are simple. The sentences are restricted to comparing two situations, with no compound sentences or conjunctions. The text repeatedly compares what the photos documented in the morning and what the situations are like "now", side by side on each page. This repetitive and predictable structure is common in children's books.

In recent decades, the illustrated books for native English-speaking children have drawn the attention of EFL/ESL teachers, because these authentic materials (Malova, 2016) not only raise awareness of many grammar and phonetic features, including the passing of time, they also help young learners familiarise themselves with sentence structure and lay the foundations for developing writing from reading.

APPROACHES

Implicit grammar teaching

No matter how challenging grammar is for EFL learners, we still need to teach our students about grammar, as EFL teachers in non-anglophone countries like China cannot expect their students to have long term immersive exposure to natural-occurring English, which Hastings and Murphy (2004; 2006) suggest as the best way of acquiring grammar. Thus EFL teachers in China should make-do and explore all possible approaches. While the debate on grammar is mainly about to teach it explicitly or implicitly, grammar itself is believed to be the 'liberating force' in EFL learning (Cullen, 2008). Because it is important but hard to teach, English teachers need to design their lessons and choose the materials carefully to suit different learners. For younger learners, implicit grammar teaching is the better option than explicitly teaching grammar rules. As Hastings and Murphy (2004; 2006) put it, implicit grammar teaching facilitates students to acquire the grammar

of the target language through meaningful language input, instead of through descriptions of grammar in textbooks.

Unlike this picture book, many existing teaching materials for EFL are designed in a fashion that lists all the grammar features, vocabulary, and presents this with made-up situational conversations (Hastings & Murphy, 2004). Students are expected to learn and memorise grammar rules like they learn maths equations and formulas. However, learning English as a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects (Williams, 1994, as cited in Dörnyei, 2005, p.68). Therefore, in case of young ESL/EFL learners, it is more appropriate to adopt an implicit approach for teaching young learners, by presenting meaningful content, instead of grammar rules or vocabulary lists.

Keeping young learners motivated is a daunting task. One of the reasons for this is that the extrinsic motivations which incentivise adult or teenager learners, do not function with younger learners (Huang, 2011). Young children do not generally face tests or exams that might determine their future, and even if they do, they do not really care. Thus, the crucial job of maintaining students' interest in an EFL classroom lies with the teacher. According to Oliver and Azkarai (2018), only when the fundamental design, of a lesson is interesting enough for the students, can they be motivated in the learning process.

Multimodal scaffolding

The illustrations in the book are used to highlight the changes that occur over time during the course of the day. For instance, the traffic in the morning rush hour is contrasted with the completely empty road in the afternoon. At times, the scenes depicted in the book are exaggerated to make them clearer and more interesting for children; for example, two sea snails are drawn with stick-out smiling faces. The dramatic contrast of different times of the day facilitates a better understanding for the children.

Sound effects (see Appendix 2) are included on some of the pages to create an ambience for students to better envision the situations, and at the same time, serve as a stimuli for maintaining the students' engagement. As the illustrations are static and still, the sound effects animate the contrasting morning and afternoon scenes. The dramatised difference of 'in the morning' and 'now' lets the students distinguish the time difference and therefore understand the purpose of simple past tense in English.

GUIDELINES USING THIS BOOK FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

The following are recommended guidelines for using this book.

- Before reading, introduce the topic by asking students to talk about what they usually see on their way to school. As a lead-in, the teacher could talk about his or her own observations on the way to school.
- When reading the book aloud to children, consider using English as the main medium of instruction. However, explanations in the child's first language are also encouraged where appropriate.
- It is important for the students to see the illustrations while the story is being read.
- The focus of the book is the receptive understanding of the past tense, rather than production. It is about showing examples of the use of past tense such as ***is*** and ***was*** and the time frame concept behind these.
- Clear pronunciation for reading aloud is important, especially placing correct stress on both lexical and sentence level, as some teachers would probably not read the sentence in a connected way, which are sometimes habitually influenced by their first language.
- Natural speed of reading and intonation are also important. Do not slow down too much and ensure the reading pace sounds natural.
- The book is expected to be read aloud to the students with the following sequence:

    1. Show illustrations
    2. Click on sound effect button
    3. Read out text
    4. Ask students if they can find anything that has changed during the day other than the text's description
    5. Ask students about their own experiences

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

The following figures provide an overview of the book.

Figure 2

Illustrated pages 2 and 3 of the book

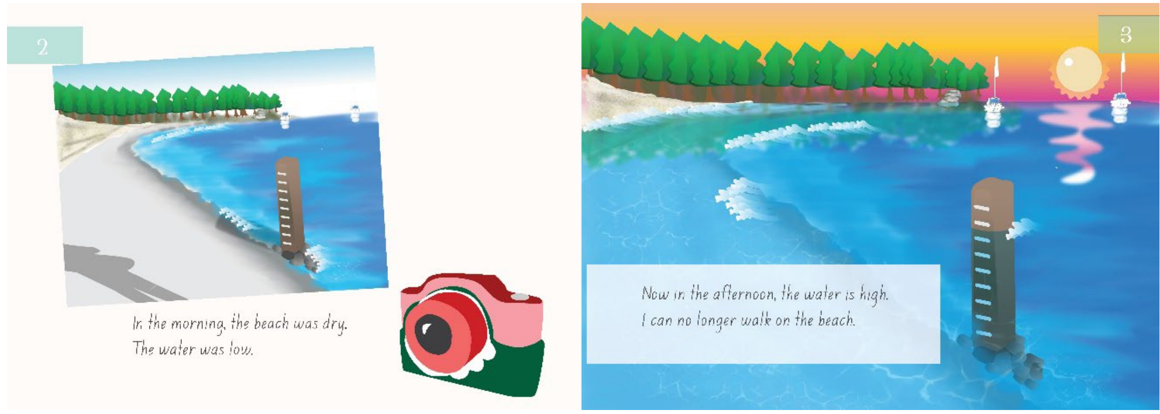


Figure 2 shows a comparison of the changing water level on the beach. Under the teacher's guidance, students should be able to identify the tense change and describe:

> *There* ***was*** *a person's shadow. But now there* ***is*** *just water.*
>
> *The sky* ***was*** *blue. But now it* ***is*** *orange and purple.*

Figure 3

Illustrated pages 4 and 5 of the book

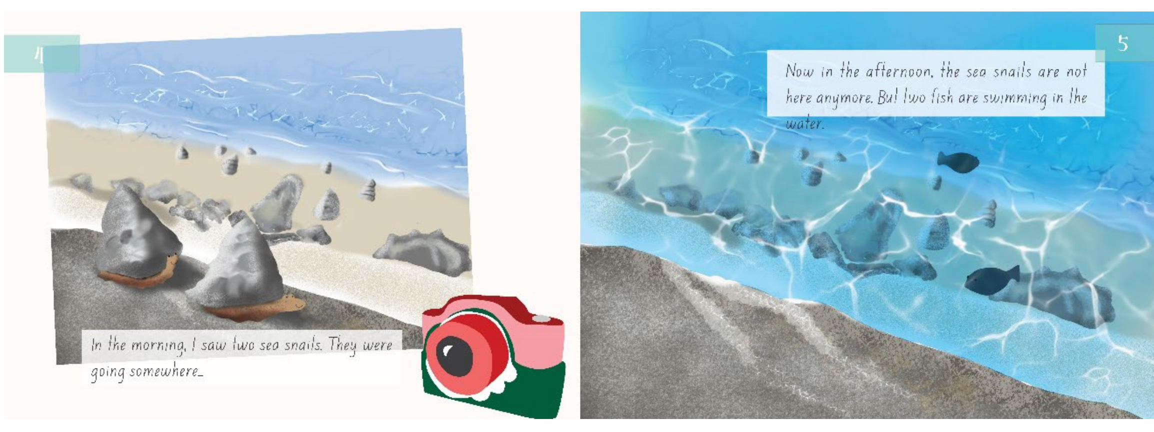


Figure 3 shows the comparison of different sea creatures in the same location. Things that students might also discover and describe:

> *Some rocks **were** on the beach. But now they **are** underwater.*

Figure 4

Illustrated pages 6 and 7 of the book

Figure 4 shows that the frangipani flowers fell on the ground in the afternoon. Please note, if frangipani is not a common flower in your area, the term can be omitted, and replaced simply with "flowers".

Things that students might also discover and describe:

> *The wind **was** not strong in the morning, but now it **is** stronger, and it **blew** the petals off the tree.*

Figure 5

Illustrated pages 8 and 9 of the book

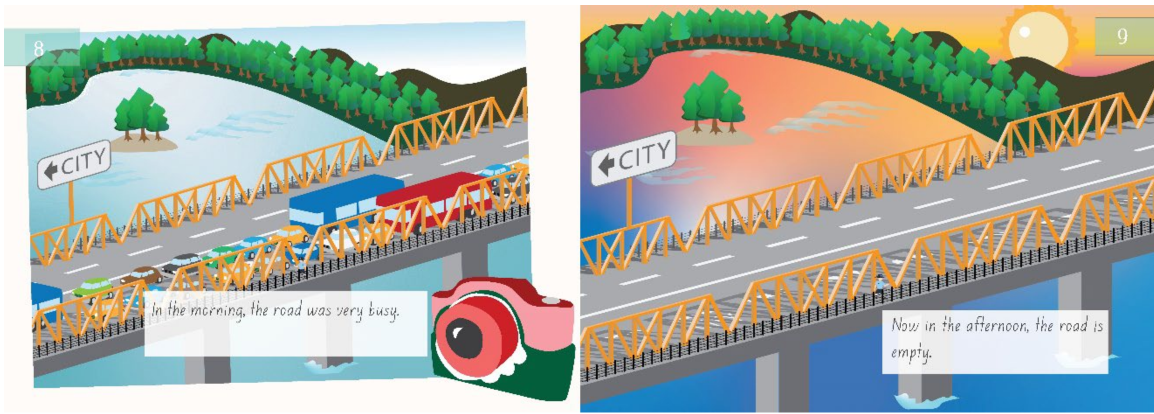


Figure 5 shows the traffic conditions in the morning (page 8) and in the afternoon (page 9). Things that students might also discover and describe:

> *The sky and water **were** blue, but now they **are** orange and purple.*

Figure 6

Illustrated pages 10 and 11 of the book

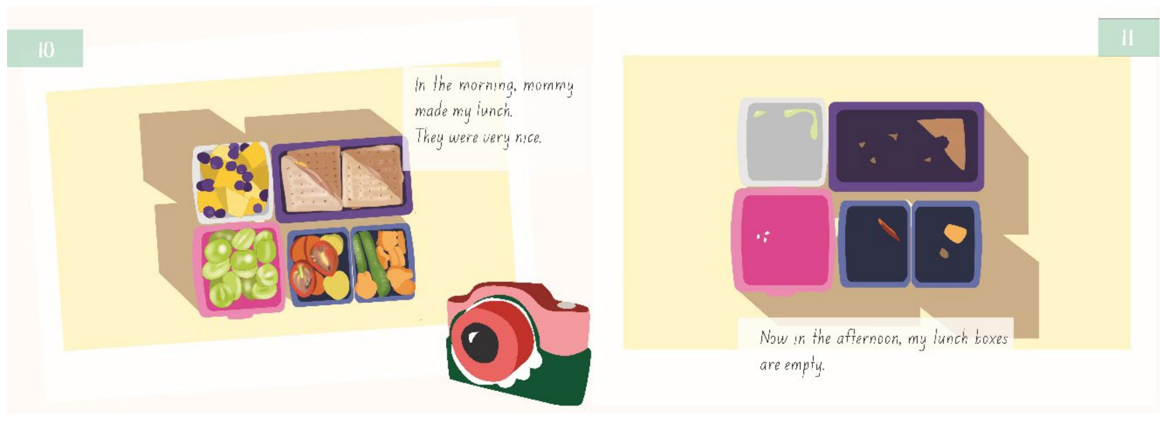


Figure 6 shows the empty lunchboxes after the food was eaten. Things that students might also discover and describe:

> *There* ***were*** *sandwiches, mango, blueberries, grapes, tomatoes, cucumbers.*

Figure 7

Illustrated pages 12 and 13 of the book

Figure 7 is to wrap up the story and bring all the photos together. Things that students might also discover and describe:

> *What **did** you have for dinner last night?*

GUIDE FOR ACTIVITIES

In the latter part of the book, from Page 15, there are grammar practice activities.

Besides the main aim of raising awareness of describing and understanding actions in the past and in the present, there are 3 specific sub-objectives to be achieved with grammar activities after the main story.

Firstly, the **different forms** of past tense markers in English are implicitly presented to the children through story reading. One important point we need to bear in mind is that teachers should not introduce the concept of irregular and regular verbs, as this is likely to confuse young learners.

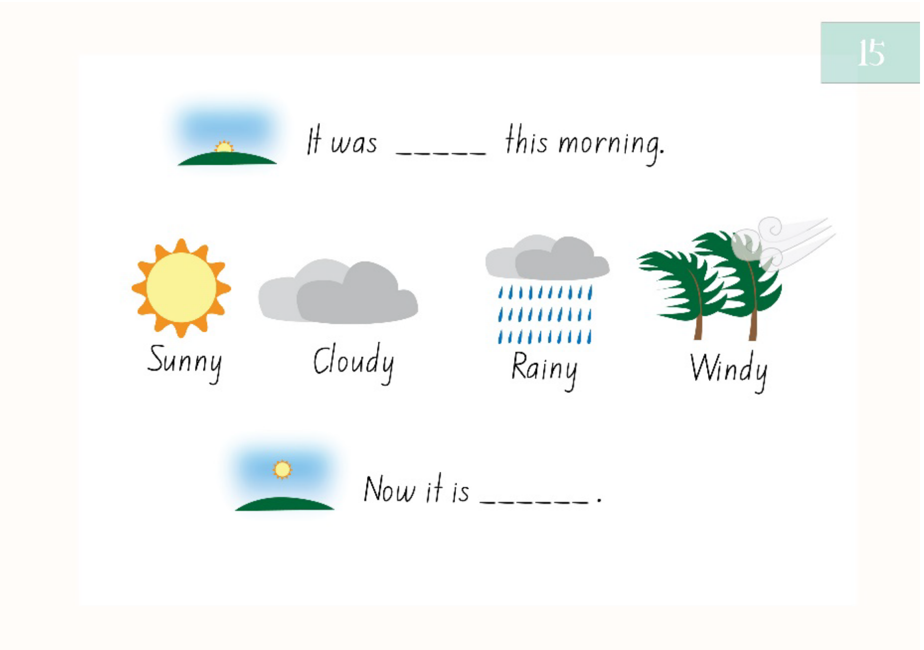
Secondly, the learners can practice describing current and past situations based on illustrations and pictures using *be + adjectives:*

> *it was* (adjective) (time marker), + *it is* (adjective).

Practice examples are given on page 15, where the illustrations show different weather situations. Learners can practices using past tense "was" and present tense "is" to indicate the change of the weather. The teacher can use other situations to make sentences.

Figure 8

Illustrated page 15 of the book

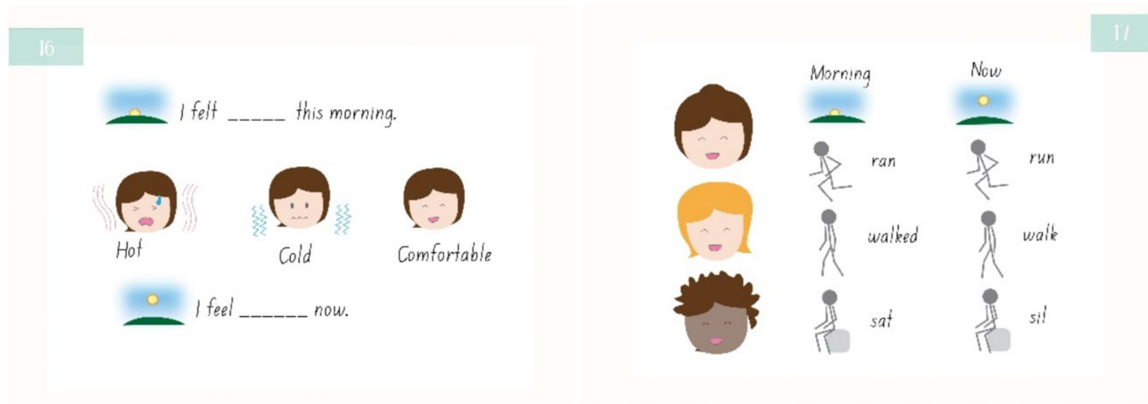


The *is/are* and *was/were* are easier for students than other verbs in various tense forms. To be able to understand something in the different time frame with *is/are and was/were,* it should be an obtainable goal for young learners, at least in an assisted and guided classroom environment. Please note the exercises provided in the illustrations are just examples, teachers are encouraged to use other words and situations for practice.

In Figure 9, a practice activity is given in which learners can describe past actions by using verbs in the simple past tense.

Figure 9

Illustrated pages 16 and 17 of the book



Teachers can also extend the practice with other words that are easy enough for students. Learners can be encouraged to make attempts to use simple past tense verbs, even if they are used in incorrect forms, i.e. **runed* for *ran*, **seed* for *saw*. For young learners, overemphasis on correctness and interruptions for making corrections can discourage them from interacting in the target language.

After completing the activities, if there is still time, the teacher can quickly go through the book again and ask students about the comparing situations in the illustrations. For example, when the teacher reads out the sentence on the page this time, the teacher can pause before verbs such as *was/is*, and let students decide which one to use in order to reinforce the lesson goals.

CONCLUSION

Teaching English as a foreign language to young learners can often be demanding and challenging, especially in a context that lacks L2 input. Among many approaches, meaningful multisensory input can often facilitate the students' comprehension holistically beyond linguistic means. Moreover, the implicit teaching of grammar ensures the more natural and effective learning for long-term authentic communication instead of answering exam questions, as well as maintaining students‘ motivation.

AUTHOR

Wei Wang is currently an MPhil student at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. His MPhil research focuses on investigating EFL teachers' perception and practice in the Covid-19 pandemic period. His other research interests include: multimodal and ICT empowered teaching and learning in EFL/ESL and early literacy education. He has experience in teaching English as a foreign language and creating teaching materials that incorporate graphic design and visual art elements, especially typography design.

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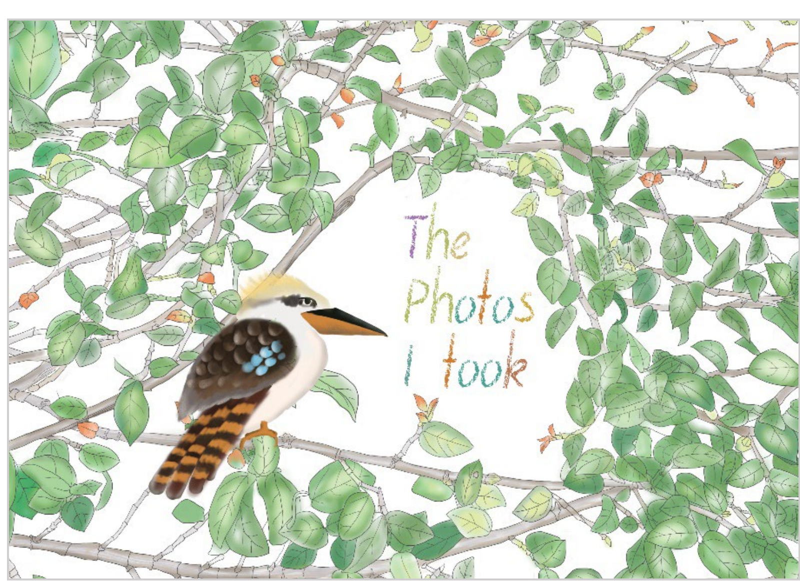
APPENDIX 1



Link to the book (online and downloadable versions are both available)

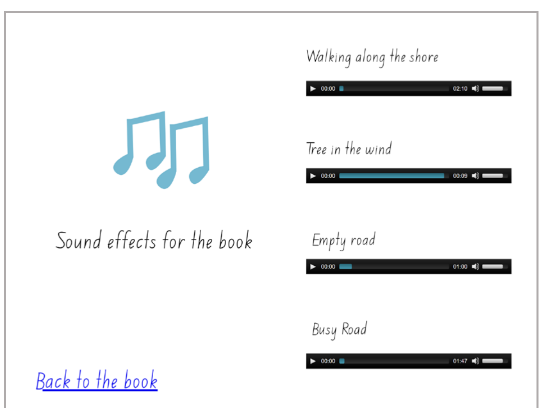
http://specialproject.ozfont.com/

APPENDIX 2

The sound effects for illustrations

The sound effects are all copyright free content or under the common creative agreement licence

http://specialproject.ozfont.com/sound.htm



Relate, Encourage, Guide and Care: For effective classroom management

Rozan Kuryyim[1]

University of Jeddah

RELATE, ENCOURAGE, GUIDE AND CARE

"Relate, Encourage, Guide and Care" is a professional development workshop that aims to guide in-service and trainee English language teachers with classroom management strategies they can follow in order to manage their classrooms more effectively.

The workshop was originally presented at the University of Jeddah, where I work as an EFL instructor at the English Language Institute, at the beginning of 2018. The attendees for the first workshop were teachers with different educational backgrounds and teaching experience. The workshop was presented a second time for teacher-trainees who were completing a training program in English teaching at the University of Jeddah. The workshop was also presented at the University of Sydney, later in 2018. The target audience for the workshop in Sydney were Master of Education in TESOL students. As a student in the same master's program, I took the initiative to share my experience in classroom management with my fellow student teachers.

The inspiration for designing this professional development workshop came from compliments I received from colleagues at the University of Jeddah on my classroom management skills and on the good rapport I was able to build with my learners. I started teaching at the university when I was 21, so there was not a

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

great age difference between myself and my learners, which could have led to not being taken seriously or not being trusted and respected. My awareness of this prompted me to challenge myself and keep improving my classroom management skills.

THE CHALLENGE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classroom management has been perceived as a great challenge and concern for teachers- especially preservice teachers, as it plays a major role in influencing their teaching careers - particularly for high school teachers, because of its strong link to classroom discipline. Everston and Weinstein, (2013) point out that failure to manage classrooms effectively can be a persistent obstacle that stands in the way of teachers' job satisfaction and success. However, despite classroom management being a major concern, there seems to be a lack of focus on incorporating classroom management as a significant element in teacher preparation programs (Everston & Weinstein, 2013).

Effective classroom management is essential for productive instruction to occur as well as achieving target learning outcomes (Datta & Das, 2018; Doyle, 1986; Everston & Weinstein, 2013; Postholm, 2013). Datta and Das (2018) argued that effective management of the classroom is the product of good managerial skills and good teaching quality.

It is important to know what classroom management is and what it consists of to have a better realization of its major effect on the learning process. Back in 1986, Doyle defined classroom management as the strategies teachers perform to maintain classroom discipline. This contrasts with broader, more modern definitions of classroom management that cover all the tasks and procedures teachers must conduct to create a "favourable" atmosphere for students that facilitates successful learning (Datta & Das, 2018). Classroom management involves managing learners' behaviour, as well as their engagement in the lesson activities. It also includes establishing healthy and positive teacher-student rapport that helps in raising teachers' awareness of students' emotional and academic needs. Moreover, mastering subject knowledge, methods of delivery and the use of teaching tools are also other aspects involved in classroom management (Datta & Das, 2018).

In a review of studies on classroom management, Postholm (2013) formulated a set of guidelines that create a good foundation for effective classroom management:

1. Teachers should have a basic understanding of emotional and social skills.

2. Teachers should be present mindfully in the classroom.

3. Teachers should maintain a dynamic relationship with their students. Having mutual understanding between teachers and learners will ease communication between them and will lead to learners liking the teacher, thus urging them to give their full attention.

4. Teachers should establish a harmonious classroom that abides by a list of rules that students take part in making in order for them to understand the rationale behind these rules and comply with them. This active role helps promote learners' self-discipline.

5. Teachers should sustain a balance between being in control while still being understanding, helpful and approachable.

My classroom management workshop is designed on the basis of these guidelines. In the following sections, I take the reader through my workshop by referring to my PowerPoint slides and workshop activities.

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT?

The workshop starts with a group warm-up activity to explore attendees' ideas and understanding of classroom management (see Figure 1). Their answers are shared via *Formative* which is an interactive online tool that displays participants' replies to posted questions instantly and projected onto the class screen. The different answers are discussed.

Figure 1

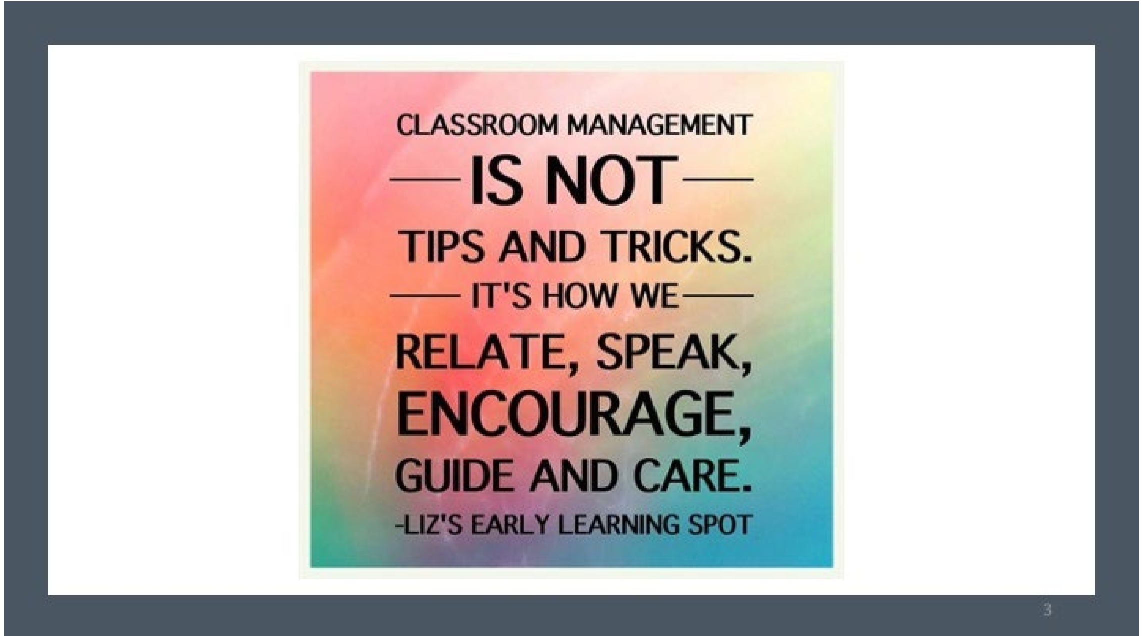
Slide 1

It is highlighted that, traditionally, classroom management has been seen as a set of tips and tricks for teachers to use with their students to keep the classroom organized, focused and productive while disruptive behaviour is minimized.

However, to emphasize that effective classroom management is much more than this, a quote from the learning blog LIZ'S EARLY LEARNING SPOT (https://www.lizs-early-learning-spot.com), that redefines it as "Classroom management is not tips and tricks (see Figure 2). It is how we relate, speak, encourage, guide and care" is shared with attendees.

Figure 2

Slide 2

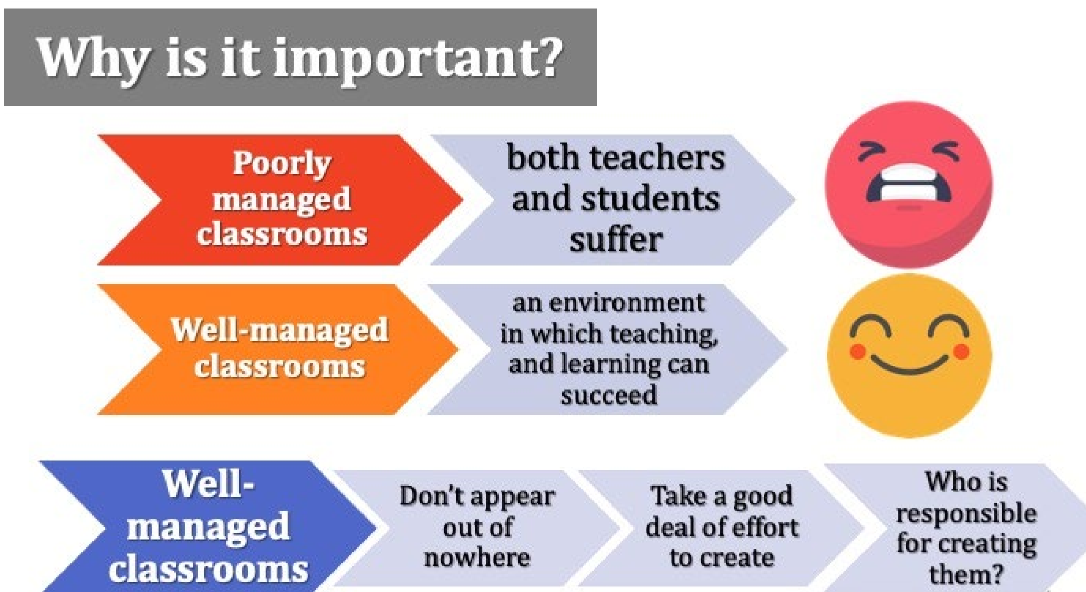


Importance of proper classroom management

The significance of mastering the art of classroom management in facilitating an effective teaching and learning process is discussed in the next slide by comparing poorly managed classrooms with well-managed ones (see Figure 3). In poorly managed classrooms, both teachers and learners are negatively affected as teachers struggle to deliver the lesson, which results in impeding learning and minimizing the benefits for students. In contrast, application of effective classroom management techniques and strategies facilitates a successful teaching and learning environment.

Figure 3

Slide 3



These techniques and strategies are not natural-born talents or blessings; they take a good deal of effort to create. Although teachers play a significant part in establishing well-managed classrooms, students should be assigned half of this responsibility with proper direction and guidance (e.g., setting classroom rules, leading classroom activities, dividing teams and tasks)

The first meeting

In Figure 4, I discuss the importance of the first meeting with students. Just like all other meetings in life, the first meeting with students is undoubtedly the most important as in this meeting, teachers can establish the solid base of a well-managed classroom as well as leaving a strong impression on students to keep for the rest of the semester. This strong base is much easier to establish in early classes rather than later as it sets the boundaries for undesired behaviours that should be avoided before they accrue, and it would be too late to control them. The important points that should be addressed in the first meeting with the students are listed and discussed as follows:

Figure 4

Slide 4

Your First Meeting

Most important class!

Know your students (names & interests)

Break the ice

Set the rules

Where to find you?

5

- **Know your students:** Learning about students is a crucial factor in initiating a positive rapport. As much as it may be difficult for some teachers to learn all of their students' names from the first meeting, especially with large classes, it is highly encouraged. It will make learners feel noticed and important, thus increase their attention and interest in the teacher and the subject being taught. Teachers can use different ways to help them remember students' names fast like using "My name is …" cards, for example. Not only names, knowing a little about their backgrounds, such as ethnic origin, educational background and previous experience in learning English, could be of great benefit in understanding some future attitude issues. Some friendly designed online surveys may be useful for this purpose.

- Moreover, being familiar with students' interests can enhance lesson planning and preparation, especially for language classrooms, as the subject knowledge may be taught in various contexts so teachers can choose the

context that matches the interest of the majority of their learners and base their lessons on it to maximize their involvement in the learning experience.

- **Break the ice:** using ice breaker activities with learners in early meetings contributes greatly in setting a positive classroom atmosphere. They also help facilitate the process of knowing students and for them to learn about their new classmates.

- **Set the rules:** regardless of the learner's age, setting some classroom rules and stating them in the first meeting helps to keep things on track and smooth the teaching and learning experience. These rules may vary according to learners' age, needs, background or the teaching context.

- Where to find you: it is important to make sure that your new students know where to find you and how to contact you from the very first meeting. Usually at the beginning of the course, students have so many inquiries and concerns that they need to meet their instructor in private to discuss them.

Classroom rules

In Figure 5, I ask my attendees to share their thoughts on setting classroom rules. I then suggest how to make classroom rules effective.

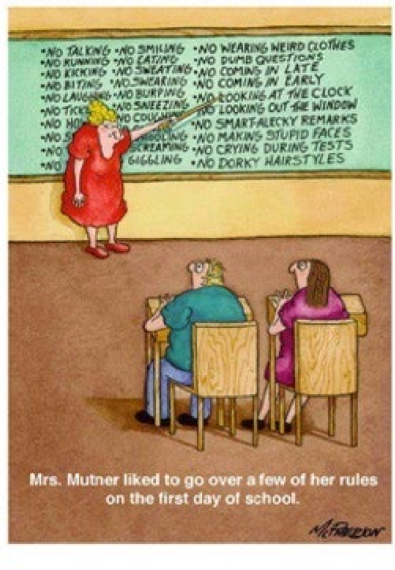
When stating the classroom rules for students, it is very important to explain to them first the necessity for having these rules. This could be simply done by pointing out the need for rules in all different aspects of life, such as house rules, traffic, sports games, ...etc. Another important point when stating the rule is to discuss the rationale behind each rule and make sure learners understand the reason for stating them. Students should take part in negotiating classroom rules as well. They should be consulted on what, from their point of view, are some good rules that would help them work efficiently in the classroom. This will make them feel more responsible for following these rules. Students could also set the consequences for breaking these rules themselves and suggest some rewards to receive when following them. However, the classroom rules should not contradict the institution's rules.

There may not be as many rules needed when teaching adults. However, particularly in ESL contexts in which students' backgrounds vary, it would be really useful to pre-teach some polite language to use in the classroom with

instructors and classmates as well as pointing out some of the most important cultural norms.

Figure 5

Slide 5



Introducing Classroom Rules

- Discuss the rationale of each rule with students to ensure they understand the "why" behind it.
- Don't contradict the institution's classroom guidelines.
- Have the students contribute and generate some rules they think are essential to effectively function in the classroom.
- Let them set the punishments! " What do I do if …?"

6

Classroom control

Participants are asked the rhetorical question: Don't we all wish to have a remote control to control the flow of our classes? They are asked to reflect on past experience or, in the case of novice teachers, expectations (Figure 6).

While controlling classrooms with a remote control is impossible, attendees can follow some steps, as suggested in Stinson (2015), that could significantly enhance their control of the classroom and the overall flow of the lessons, such as:

- Grading and modifying teacher talk "language used to communicate with learners" to help learners to better understand instructions.

- Direct instructions so that students always know what is happening during the lesson (e.g., an explanation for a certain grammar rule is being provided, a task is being set or a discussion is being lead … etc.)

- Focus your attention on the entire class and avoid centring attention on excellent students only.

- Do not talk over chatters. If this is repeated frequently, it will become the norm.

- When learners' attention drifts, use a softer voice to gain their attention, so they really have to listen to what you are saying.

- Use authoritative speech and body language. Always remember that you are the teacher, so never let students make you feel as if you have lost control.

- "Fake it until you make it"– show confidence and control even if you do not feel it and you will eventually master it.

Figure 6

Slide 6

According to Education Support (2018), trying the PEP approach could also be highly beneficial in managing students' behavior. The PEP is an approach that consists of three elements: proximity, eye contact and posing questions (see Figure 7).

- **Proximity:** if you notice that a student is about to misbehave in any manner, you can walk around and stand by him/her. Standing close might make students feel uncomfortable and stop them from attempting to misbehave. However, you need to be careful not to stand too close that you invade their personal space as by doing so you may appear too intimidating or aggressive.

- **Eye contact:** holding your students' gaze and maintaining eye contact before, while and after you speak promote discipline in the classroom. This act expresses teachers' authority and will ensure that the class is taken more seriously.

- **Posing questions:** if any instructions are given and students were not following, instead of repeating them again you can pose questions such as (why have you not started writing yet?)

Figure 7

Slide 7

Classroom Control

Try the PEP approach, according to Managing pupils' behavior, 2018[1] :

" - Proximity: Walk around the classroom, stand by a student that may be about to misbehave. Stand a "little too close for comfort" but don't invade personal space. You don't want to come over as aggressive or intimidating.

- Eye contact: holding eye contact expresses dominance. What you say will be taken more seriously if you can maintain eye contact before, during and after speaking.

- Posing questions: rather than repeating instructions, pose a question, such as (Why have you not started your work)"

1 https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/life-guides/managing-pupil-behaviour 8

Reasons behind some classroom management issues

To have a better understanding of how to deal with classroom management issues, it is essential to know what might cause them. I first ask participants to brainstorm a list of causes they think are the reasons behind inappropriate classroom behaviours from students. I then draw their attention to some of the major reasons and discuss each in detail (see Figure 8).

Not all classrooms have the same classroom management issues and could be resolved using the same methods. Different classrooms certainly have different situations and needs (e.g., young, young adult and adult learners). While this workshop is aimed to benefit teachers of different learners ages and backgrounds, this section might be more beneficial for young and young adults' teachers where these types of behavioural issues might be observed.

Figure 8

Slide 8

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the varied reasons underlying common classroom management problems and have an adequate knowledge to be prepared, to some extent, to deal with them. These situations might be triggered by a number of possible factors. These factors may be social, physical or psychological. These reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- The students' social and cultural background - teachers cannot always have a full picture of each learner's background.
- Seeking attention is the reason behind many disruptive behaviours, especially with teenage learners.
- Lack of self-confidence – sometimes students' refusal to participate in activities is interpreted by teachers as rudeness, while it may be mainly caused by students' low self-esteem. In language classes, in particular, students may avoid sharing their answers out of fear of inadequacy.

- Physiological factors could greatly affect students' behaviour. For example, discomfort caused by hunger, classrooms that are too hot or cold, sickness, tiredness, or stress caused by exams.
- Poor seating arrangements – Seating arrangement is a key factor for successful classroom management. Teachers cannot just ignore it; instead, it needs to be well planned for what best serves the purpose of the lessons and activities.
- Boredom caused by long lessons or lack of interest in the subject.
- Frustration when some students feel left behind when the material being taught is too difficult for them.
- Monotonic drilling which kills learners' desire for creation and innovation.
- Uninteresting topics that do not suit learners' interests, age or cultural backgrounds, leaving them unable to engage or relate.

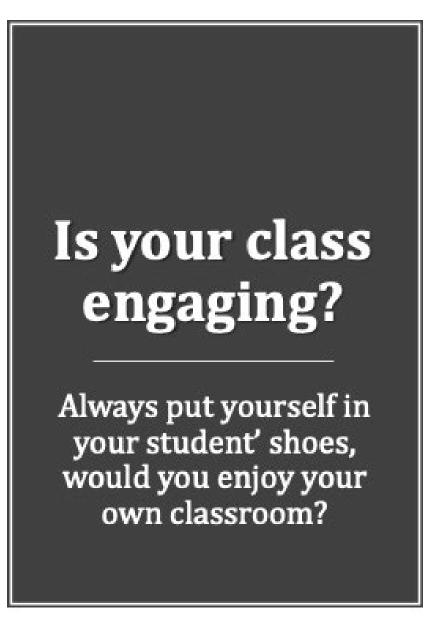
Is your class really engaging?

As the workshop proceeds, I pose another question that allows participants to reflect on their teaching and classroom management style "Always put yourself in your students' shoes; would you enjoy your own classroom?" (Figure 9)

Continuous self-reflection and development are essential to create an enthusiastic and energizing classroom atmosphere. Teachers need to continuously reflect on their classroom management and seek to improve this so as not to fall into a monotonic pattern of tedious routine.

Figure 9

Slide 9



10

Gain Their Trust and Respect

In Figure 10, I discuss with the attendees the different factors that could earn them their learners' trust and respect.

I explain that being unreasonably strict may grant you a quiet classroom, but it cannot guarantee you will earn your students' trust and respect. To gain learners' trust, teachers must appear to be confident in their teaching. By being prepared for each session with a well-thought-out lesson plan that includes enough activities to fill the class period appropriately, teachers will appear in control of their classroom and consequently earn their learners' trust and respect. In similar manner, teachers can gain students' respect and trust by making them feel important, responsible, respected, cared for and fairly treated.

Figure 10

Slide 10

Gain Their Trust and Respect

- Show confidence in your teaching
  - Be well prepared
  - Over plan your lessons to fully fill period time
- Make them feel important
  - Assign them possible responsibilities
  - Show them care and respect
  - Treat them fairly (do not show bias for attitude or level)

11

Teachers are not Robots!

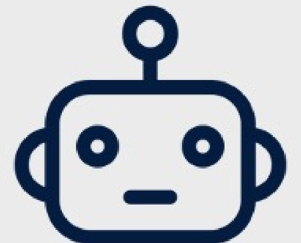
In Figure 11, I ask participants about which parts of their lives outside the classroom they share with their learners.

As a teacher, I have often observed that other instructors do not share many personal aspects of their life with their students, because they believe that this is an appropriate way to keep the relationship professional. Also, some think that by sharing personal information, students may become over-familiar, and teachers would lose their authority. In fact, remaining too impersonal only makes teachers seem like robots. They go to class, give their lessons and leave without having any real connection with their learners, thus obstructing a joyous learning atmosphere from naturally occurring. In contrast, teachers can maintain a remarkably professional rapport with their students and still build a personal connection. They can achieve this by simply choosing to share parts of their lives that characterize them as individuals, yet do not intrude on their privacy. This balance leads the way to effective classroom management. For example, teachers can talk about their

hobbies, interests and share photos or videos from their daily life. Moreover, talking about the teacher's own academic experiences and comparing it to learners' experience is usually a very engaging topic.

Figure 11

Slide 11

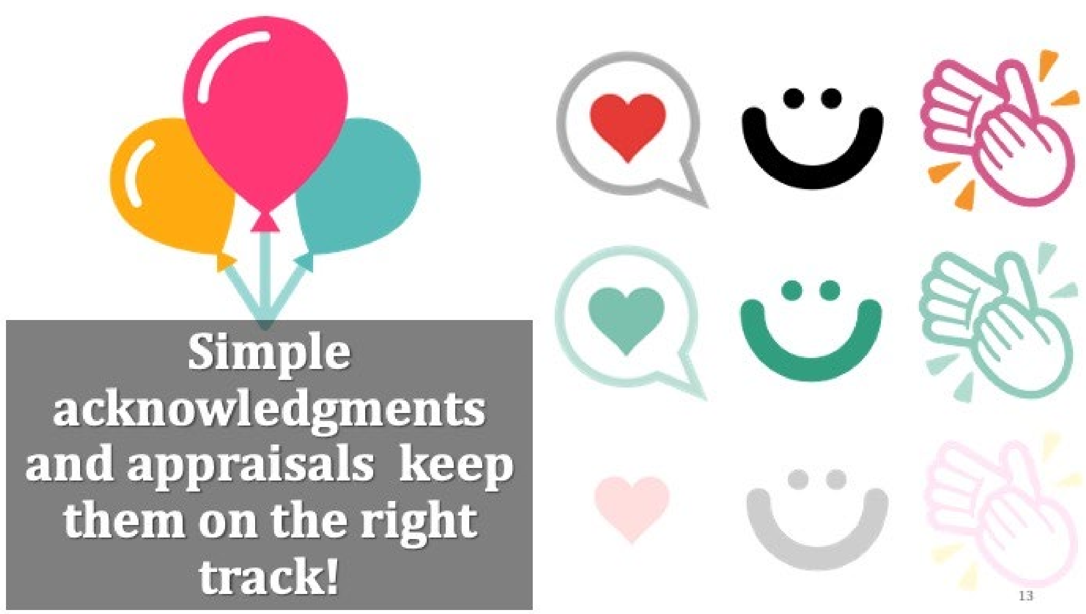


Rewards

In Figure 12, I discuss with the attendees the possible rewards they can use to motivate their learners and encourage classroom discipline. Verbal rewards like words of appreciation and praise or simple tangible rewards like trophies, appreciation certificates or fun planned activities with the teacher are certainly an excellent way to keep students motivated and on the right track for both positive classroom behaviour and sound academic performance.

Figure 12

Slide 12



Concluding activity

I distribute some cards (attached to this article) as a closing activity (see Figure 13). Each card displays a different disruptive classroom behaviour. In groups, the participants are asked to consider possible causes for such behaviours and try to brainstorm potential solutions for them. All the situations and suggested solutions are then shared with the rest of the session participants and discussed. This concluding activity was inspired by Rodriguez (2009).

Figure 13

Slide 13

14

THE AUTHOR

Ms. Rozan Kuryyim is a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Jeddah. She holds a master's degree in Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from the University of Sydney. Rozan has almost nine years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language. Her experience as an educator has included pre-service and in-service teacher training in professional development. She is passionate about innovative teaching and curriculum design that suits the continuously changing interests and needs for language learners. Her main research interests are classroom discourse and language teachers' education.

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APPENDIX 1 PRINTABLE SHEET

1- Undermining teacher's authority by frequently challenging what is being said
2- Leaving class too frequently
3- "Spacing out", clearly showing that they are not paying attention
4- Student is busy texting or checking mobile phone during class
5- Verbal or physical threats
6- Student sleeping in class
7- Refusal of participation or speaking in class

8- Flirting or other inappropriate behavior
9- Sharing or copying their work
10-Too much chit chat

Using Party Card Games in Adults EFL classrooms: A Communicative Language Teaching Pedagogy

Yen-liang Lu[1]

The University of Sydney

ABSTRACT

In search of innovation, integration of table-top games in EFL classrooms has been a sensation in recent decades. The author, who has three years of experience in integrating Party Card Games (PCG) in EFL classes, examined the overlapping nature of PCG and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and provided strategies for integration of the two as an innovative teaching practice. Explicit links were drawn between the characteristics of PCG and the teaching philosophy proposed by CLT. An example lesson plan has been provided to demonstrate the aspects of teaching and extra support that teachers should pay attention to while adopting PCG in class in terms of inducing desired learner-learner interaction and increasing motivation. The author also adopted the model proposed by Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) to provide strategies that allow teachers to support learners' motivation through the use of PCG.

INTRODUCTION

With Internet resources becoming largely available in the recent decades, the idea of a flipped classroom has been gaining the attention of younger teachers in search of innovation. To increase opportunities for learner-learner interaction in class, the author has been integrating table-top games with Communicative Language

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

Teaching since 2017. It has occurred to the author that if teachers fail to provide additional support for learners during gameplay, such integration could result in ineffective or even motivation-thwarting learning experiences. Therefore, the author aims to help teachers create a supportive learning environment for the integration of table-top games with this paper. Considering how broad and varied table-top games can be, this paper will instead focus on party card games (PCG), a subcategory of table-top games specifically designed for social gatherings to facilitate interaction, and provide entertainment and recreation.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF CARD GAMES APPLICATION IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

To provide rationale for such integration, explicit link between theories and PCG needs to be drawn. This section will be structured to firstly explain the theoretical background of CLT and to secondly elaborate on how PCG can fill the gaps between theory and practice.

CLT has emerged during a period of globalization, in which learning a language has been driven by a desire for learners to acquire the ability to use language to communicate, which later became known as communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). This involves learners engaging in interaction by using language communicatively for various purposes. Since traditional approaches that focus mainly on grammatical competence had failed to meet the urgent needs of such language proficiency, approaches that focus on meaningful interaction were needed (Richards, 2015). As a result, the emergence of CLT largely stemmed from the interaction hypothesis, which argues that comprehensible input is an essential part of language acquisition. Long (1983) pointed out that “the most important and widely used” method to make an input comprehensible is through negotiation of meaning, which is a key aspect of language acquisition through interaction (p.100; Mackey, 1999; Storch, 2002). Therefore, most activities adopted by CLT involve information gathering and opinion sharing to encourage learners to engage in interaction (Richards, 2015) and focus on the use of learners’ communicative resources in negotiation of meaning (Breen & Candlin, 1980). Such interaction can be found in many player-judge style PCG.

For instance, Pick Your Poison is a game that consists of hundreds of scenario cards that describe difficult situations. To win the game, players must make choices between two scenario cards and try to side with the majority. In the beginning of the game, one player (the judge) picks two cards from his/her hand

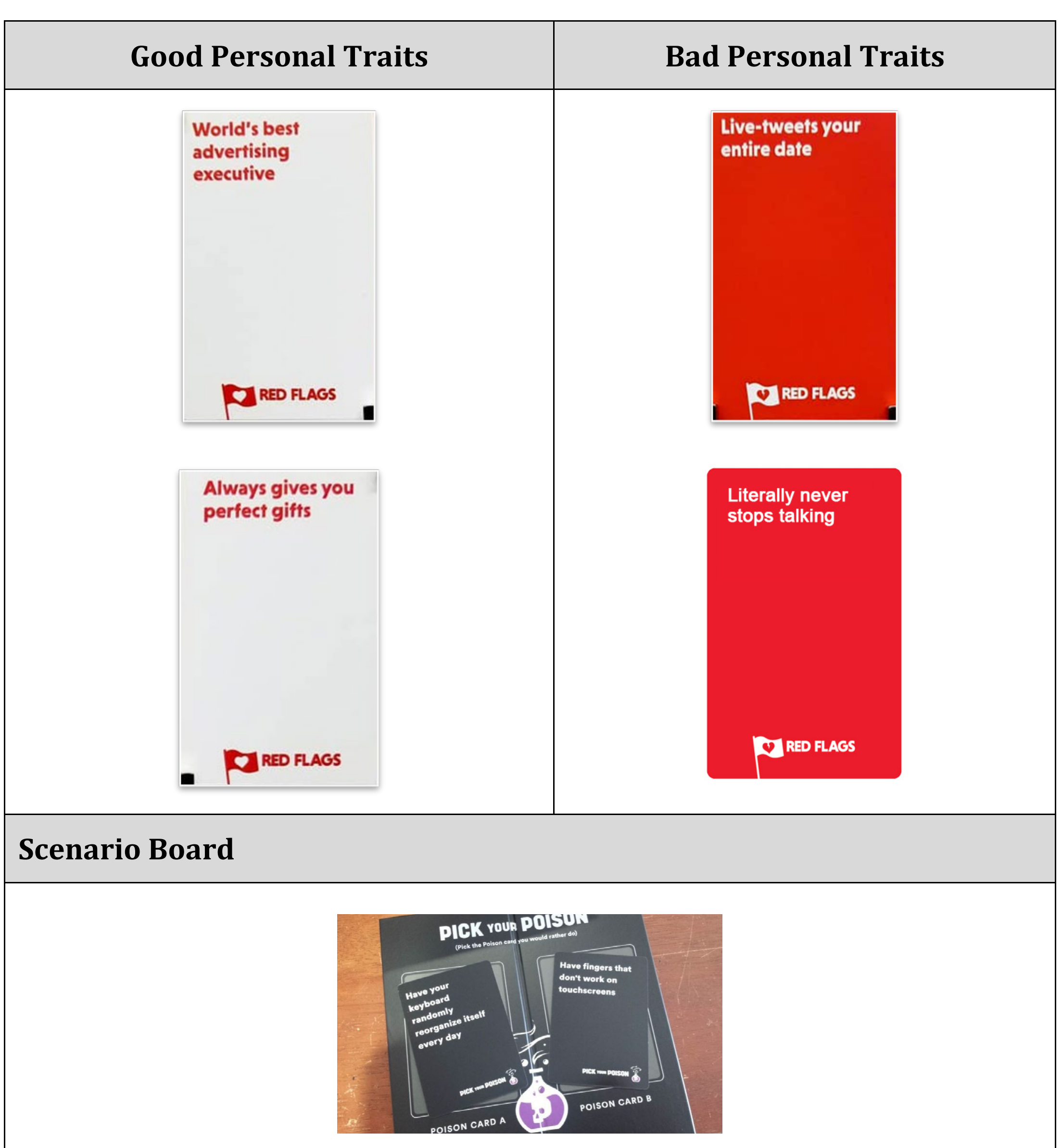
and puts them on the scenario board (See Table1). This creates two difficult scenarios from which the other players (the voting players) choose which they would rather be in. Then the voting players start asking questions about the details of each scenario (e.g. If my fingers don't work on touchscreens, can I use a stylis?) while the judge answers. Afterwards, the voting players reveal their choice simultaneously and whoever sides with the majority wins. During gameplay as such, learners need to gather information through interaction and skills in negotiation of meaning are used to ensure one has interpreted others' responses correctly to establish mutual understanding, so they can make an informed choice in order to win the game. This example demonstrates how the interaction found in PCG is consistent with the interaction patterns found in CLT activities.

Other than the focus on interaction patterns, CLT is also characterized by its focus on the integration of the four macro skills and the use of authentic texts as learning material (Richards, 2015). Such characteristics make PCG an effective candidate of CLT. First, in most PCG, the game requires players to use what they have read on the cards to engage in verbal interaction with others, prompting learners to integrate at least three macro skills (i.e., listening, reading, and speaking skills). Meanwhile, since PCG are designed for native speakers for high replayability, the average 200+ cards in each game provide abundant authentic text that can be utilized as materials. In addition, since PCG provides gameplay contexts, they can be used as real-world parallel activities in class (See Table 2 for examples).

According to Richards (2005), real-world parallel activities are the means employed by CLT to increase learners' communicative competence, including the ability to use language for various purposes, such as description, exposition, suggestions and debate. These abilities happen to be the skills used for the interaction found in some storytelling PCG. For instance, in the game, Red Flags: The Game of Terrible Dates, each player takes turns to play cards of good and bad personal traits (See Table 1) from their hands to create a date for a chosen player (the judge). Then, each player makes a case for the judge to choose the person he/she has created before the judge makes the final call to determine the winner. In games like these, learners can develop their language skills in description and persuasion. Such overlap in skills used in PCG and the communicative competence on which CLT focuses justifies the application of PCG in language classrooms.

Table 1

Example cards



Good Personal Traits	Bad Personal Traits
World's best advertising executive RED FLAGS	Live-tweets your entire date RED FLAGS
Always gives you perfect gifts RED FLAGS	Literally never stops talking RED FLAGS
Scenario Board	
PICK YOUR POISON Have your keyboard randomly reorganize itself every day Have fingers that don't work on touchscreens POISON CARD A POISON CARD B	

An Example Lesson Plan

As the rationale behind the application has been established, it is vital for teachers to see the integration of PCG in a real-world lesson before the pedagogical values can be explained. Therefore, an example lesson plan that integrates the game, The Big Idea, into a Business English lesson, aiming to increase learners' lexical resource in sales pitches, is discussed in this section (See Table 3).

Table 2

PCG and gameplay context

PCG	Gameplay Context	Real-world Activity
Pick Your Poison	Life is full of difficult choices. What's harder than the choices themselves is when no one makes the same choice as you. In this game, try to make choices that side with the majority. By discussing the scenario on each card, all players try to reach a common understanding about each other's choice.	Discussion of important decisions where mutual understanding is essential, such as priority of tasks at work or which insurance policy to choose.
Red Flag	No one is perfect. We all make compromises when we are looking for a romantic relationship. In this game, players each create a person for the judge to choose to go on a date. Before the judge makes the call, players contrast their date with others' to convince the judge that theirs is the perfect (least horrible) one to date.	Persuasion that requires contrasting such as talking someone into buying a product from you instead of from your competitor.
The Big Idea	All innovative products were once crazy ideas one dreamed of. In this game, you play an insightful inventor who creates insane products that are pitched to other players and you convince them to buy.	Opinion sharing that requires reasoning such as what should be the company's next product.

Table 3

Example lesson plan

<table>
<tr><td>Class</td><td>Business English</td><td>Target Learners</td><td>Intermediate-level learners
from the sales department</td><td>Aim</td><td>Increase learners' lexical resource
in sales pitches.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Preparation</td><td colspan="5">Divide the cards in the game, The Big Idea, according to learners' level (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced, etc.).
Create a template for the sales pitch.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Pre-task Phase</td><td colspan="2">Assess learners' existing knowledge
&
Grouping</td><td colspan="3">Have learners fill in the blanks on the worksheet and check the answers.
Put learners of higher and lower performance in pairs and assign the role of senior developer (more dominant role) to the lower-level learner while assigning the role of junior developer (less dominant role) to the higher-level learner.
Put 3 pairs of learners into 1 group.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Pre-teach language features</td><td colspan="3">On the board, write down target vocabulary along with other business-related words that didn't appear in the sales pitch from the movie, The Wolf of Wall Street.
Play the video of the sales pitch from the movie, The Wolf of Wall Street.
Ask learners to circle the words they heard in the video on the board.
Explain the vocabulary with example sentences and check learners' understanding.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 3

Example lesson plan (continued)

	Explain Task & Goal & Provide Rationale	Explain to learners the following steps to complete the task: The senior developers choose the card that they will use to create a product. In pairs, they will create a product with the chosen cards. The senior developers will first explain their idea(s). Then the junior developer asks questions about the product if they don't understand and provide suggestions if necessary. After they reach a mutual understanding through discussion, they pitch their product to the group. After all pairs have pitched their ideas, the group decides which ideas they will adopt to create ONE final product and work on a presentation to pitch the final product to the entire class. During the presentation, they have to make it very appealing and interesting so they can beat the other groups. They can role play or act out scenarios to demonstrate how good their product is. Every group will vote at the end to determine the winning group. Explain how the game resembles a real-world sales pitch and that it requires learners' sophisticated use of lexical items that has just been taught.
	Modeling the task	Model a 1-minute sales pitch with the example sheet.
Task Phase	Provide Scaffolding	Provide a speech template that learners can use in the task.
	Monitor Performance	Check if learners are using the target language features.
	Provide assistance	Help learners with words they don't know.

Table 3

Example lesson plan (continued)

Post-task Phase	Report Back	Have each group pitch their product to the class.
	Peer & Teacher Feedback	Have the learners point out what they like about products from other groups and vote to decide a winner. If learners don't know how to provide feedback, examples can be given by the teacher first. The teacher gives learners feedback on their language performance and walks learners through the template and reviews the language features used in the class. Use learners' sale pitch as examples to explicitly demonstrate how they can use the target feature.

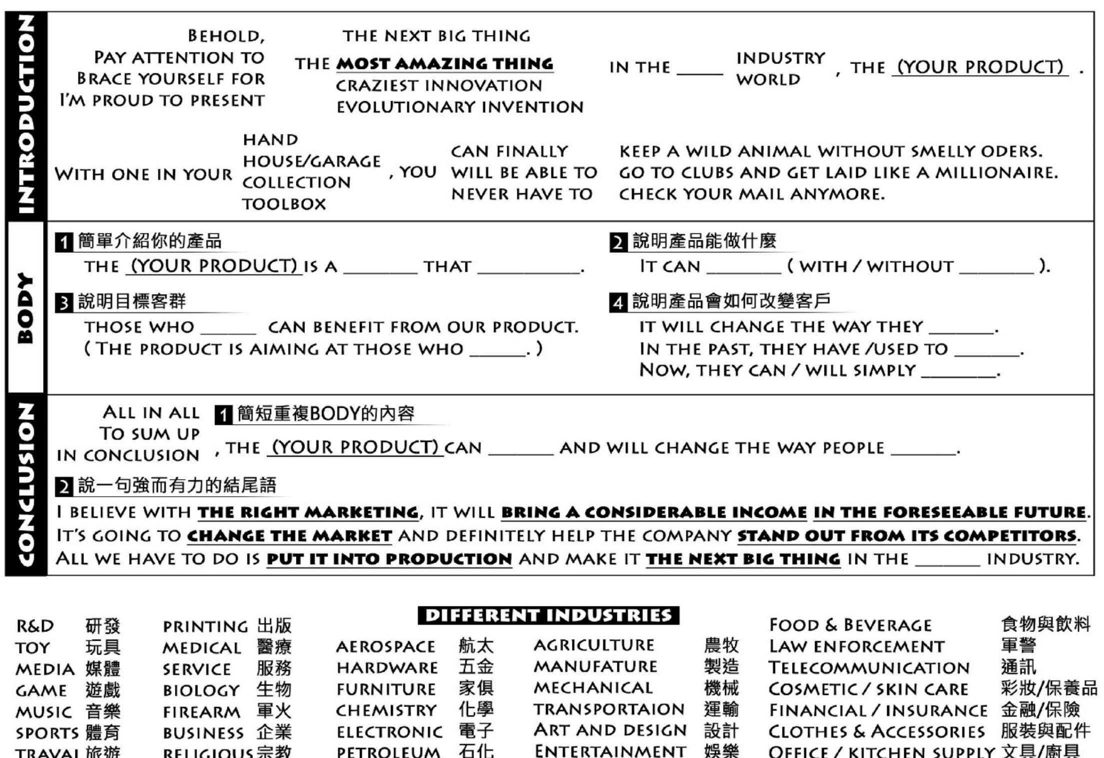
Before the class, cards with content that do not fit the learners' proficiency level are removed to fit learners' profiles. A template and examples (See Figure 1 &2) of sales pitches are created to help learners focus on the use of vocabulary, instead of worrying about the structure of the sales pitch during the task.

The lesson is structured using a weaker version of Task Based Learning (TBL). In the pre-task phase, a worksheet is used to assess learners' existing knowledge towards the target features so teachers can put learners of different levels in pairs and assign them different roles. Yule and Macdonald (1990) suggests placing advanced students in less dominant roles in paired activities to increase the frequency of negotiation of meaning. After grouping the learners, teachers pre-teach the target vocabulary and check learners' understanding before the task is explained. The design of the task is based on the game, The Big Idea, which requires each player to use the cards from the game to create a crazy product and pitch it to other players.

Several modifications are applied to the game to facilitate more learner-learner interaction than the original gameplay. First, learners will create products in pairs instead of as individuals. Second, each pair pitches their product in a group consisting of three pairs. Afterwards, together as a group, they adopt ideas proposed by each pair and create one final product to pitch to the entire class in the post-task phase. After explaining the task, the teacher provides rationale for learning by explaining how the task resembles a real-world sales pitch and requires the use of the target items. The teacher then models the task with the examples prepared before class.

Figure 1

Sales pitch template



In the task phase, the pre-written template is provided as scaffolding. The teacher then monitors the performance and provides necessary assistance to help learners complete the task. In the post-task phase, learners present their products to the whole class in groups using the sales pitch they have created during the task phase. Afterwards, they are asked to provide verbal peer feedback on the contents of others' sales pitches and to vote for a winner. The teacher then gives verbal feedback on each groups' language performance in front of the whole class and reviews the target features.

Figure 2

Sales pitch examples

Behold, The craziest innovation in the genetic-engineering industry, the amusing, pine-fresh monkey. With one in your house, you can finally keep a wild animal at home without the smelly oders.

The amusing, pine-fresh monkey is a wild animal that you can keep indoors. It can juggle and play tricks without any training. Those who love to watch animal do astonishing things can benefit from our product. It will change the way they watch animal shows. In the past, they have to go to a circus to see a monkey juggling on top of a lion. Now, they can simply sit in the backyard and let our well-trained monkey amuse them.

To sum up, the amusing, pine-fresh monkey can amuse people at their own house and will change how people watch animal shows. I believe with the right marketing, it will become the most popular home entertainment very soon.

EXAMPLE 1

Brace yourself for the evolutionary invention in the telecommunication industry, the magical, instant love phone. With one in your hand, you never have to worry about getting rejected by your crush.

The magical, instant love phone is a combination of love curse and electronic device that will turn sexy, out-of-your-league chicks into cute little kittens that purr for your love. It can help you get girls' full attention without any hustle. We are aiming at those who constantly get turned down at bars. It will change the way they date. In the past, they have to bend over backwards to get laid. Now, they can simply call girls they like and ask them out without getting shut down.

In conclusion, the magical, instant love phone can help people get their crush's attention and will change the way people date. All we have to do is put it into production and make it the next miracle in the telecommunication industry.

EXAMPLE 2

PEDAGOGICAL VALUES OF USING CARD GAMES IN EFL CLASSROOMS

As PCG align with the core concepts of CLT, they inherently reflect both the benefits and limitations of CLT. This section takes a closer look at the example lesson plan and explains how the integration of PCG in the lesson helps teachers conduct CLT and increase learners' motivation.

Larger class size is one factor that makes CLT far less practical (Richards, 2015). However, it can be compensated by breaking a bigger class into smaller groups during activities. PCG are a good resource for such a strategy since it is designed to facilitate interaction among 6-12 people in social events. Meanwhile, since each gameplay only uses about 1/6 of the cards provided by a game and the extra cards are only included for replayability, the large total amount of cards in PCG allows

teachers to use just one copy of a game for a class of 30-40 students by splitting the game into several sets. In terms of economics in teaching, PCG reduces the time and costs to create teaching props for group activities.

One great advantage of using games in class is the potential increase in learners' motivation. However, motivation is an experientially dependent factor that fluctuates as the environment deprives or satisfies one's psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Those psychological needs, addressed by Self-determination Theory as autonomy, relatedness and competence, can be effectively attended to with the integration of PCG if proper support is provided.

Autonomy can be supported if teachers work with learners' interests and provide rationale for learning (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Since PCG come in various themes with similar game mechanisms, teachers are provided with ample options to cater to learners' interests. For instance, in the example lesson, among many PCG that involve story-telling, The Big Idea, a game where players win by giving mind-blowing sales pitches, is chosen to align with the desired outcome and interest in Sales of a Business English class. On the other hand, since PCG provide gameplay contexts, teachers can easily adopt them as example uses of the target feature in the real-world to provide a rationale for learning.

To support relatedness, opportunities for learners to contribute and receive recognition in group work should be provided (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Since PCG provide general objectives to determine a winner, teachers can easily adapt those objectives into group tasks to facilitate individual contribution in Task-based Learning (TBL). During the post-task phase, positive feedback received from peers and the teacher will increase learners' perceived relatedness. That is why, in the example lesson, learners are put in groups to pitch their ideas and create one final product to work on a sales pitch. This process gives learners the chance to make a contribution. After each group has reported their sales pitch back to the class, learners are asked to provide constructive feedback to other groups. This can be done by giving learners a feedback template with guiding questions, such as "What do you like most about their product?" or "What do you think can be improved and how?" Learners are then prompted to not only point out the weakness of others' sales pitches but also give suggestions on how to improve, thus making the feedback more constructive. This not only creates more chances for learners to make contributions, but also allows learners to receive recognition from others.

In terms of competence, PCG may pose potential threats, resulting in negative learning experiences. Since PCG are not designed for teaching, contents on the card may contain cultural references or ungraded authentic texts that learners find unfamiliar. This unfamiliarity might thwart learners' self-efficacy in task completion. Nevertheless, through modeling and scaffolding, teachers can facilitate task completion and optimize the challenge to increase one's competence (Ryan and Deci, 2017). In the example lesson, a weaker version of TBL is adopted so teachers can pre-teach vocabulary and sentence structures before the task and provide templates and example speech as scaffolding and modeling to make the task less overwhelming. On the other hand, during class preparation, by using cards that fits the learners' profile, the teacher can optimize the challenge to cater to learners' perceived competence.

CONCLUSION

PCG are an effective resource and can be conveniently adopted in class due to their overlapping nature with CLT. That being said, however, it is of utmost importance for teachers to utilize grouping techniques, provide extra support and modify the games in order to maximize the desired interaction pattern in CLT and facilitate learners' autonomy, relatedness and most importantly, one's self-efficacy in task completion. It is unrealistic to expect the gameplay to completely take over the teachers' role in teaching. After all, while PCG are like trampolines, with each gameplay experience resembling a jump that allows learners to gain height and see farther into the world of English learning, it is one's responsibility, as educators, to ensure learners 'land safely' and do not 'injure' themselves throughout the process. Hence, later, they can maintain the momentum, and gain more confidence and strength for their next and higher leap in learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to show my gratitude to Dr. Rosmawati, my supervisor, whose support and assistance to my work should be acknowledged. If it weren't for her consistent enthusiasm and support, this paper would not have been written. I would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback and detailed comments which significantly improved the quality of this paper. Any error in the resulting work remains mine.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this paper to Dr. Jeremy. C. Sykes, who passed in late 2020, and to thank him for all his help and inspirations. Without him, I would never have pursued my career as an educator. It is his love and passion in language teaching that have been constantly reminding me and inspiring me to perfect my teaching all along.

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Interview with Brian Paltridge

Judy Fernandez and Adam Steinhoff[1]

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

INTRODUCTION

Brian Paltridge is Professor of TESOL at the University of Sydney. His research areas include English for specific purposes, discourse analysis, genre analysis and second language writing, especially dissertation writing. He has published extensively in these areas. He has authored over 60 journal articles in peer-reviewed journals such as *Applied Linguistics*, *English for Specific Purposes*, *ELT Journal*, *System,* the *Journal of Pragmatics*, the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes,* the *Journal of Second Language Writing,* the *Journal of English for Research Publication Purposes, Linguistics and Education* and *Language Teaching.* He has also written 27 books (and counting) and over 50 book chapters.

At the University of Sydney, Brian teaches courses on writing for publication, thesis and dissertation writing, discourse analysis, research methods, and English for specific purposes. Thus far, Brian has supervised over 60 MA and PhD students' theses amidst his busy teaching and writing schedule.

Brian is the general editor of this journal. He is also, with Sue Starfield, a series editor for the *Routledge Introductions to English for Specific Purposes* and the *Routledge Research in English for Specific Purposes* series. Brian is an emeritus editor of the journal *English for Specific Purposes* and a former co-editor of *TESOL Quarterly*.

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

As an outstanding professor, writer and researcher, Brian has been and continues to inspire many of us and this interview presents an insight into his professional life.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview.

EARLY ACADEMIC LIFE

We notice that your bachelor's degree was in Italian and French and a master's degree in Applied Linguistics, in addition to your PhD.

1. What attracted you to study those languages and later do research in the field of TESOL and Applied Linguistics?

Like many people in my area, I was interested in languages because I wanted to travel overseas, so I majored in French and Italian in my bachelor's degree and did courses in Russian and Spanish. As part of my degree, I did a course on second language acquisition which got me interested in how languages are learnt. When I moved to Australia, I did an interpreters' course in Italian and English at the University of Western Sydney and, wanting to travel to Italy, did what is now known as the CELTA, the Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Adults. I went to Italy to teach English and when I came back taught at the language school where I had done my CELTA. I remember on the very same day I was offered two full time jobs, one as an interpreter and another as an English teacher and had to decide which one I would take. I chose the job as an English teacher and this led me to what I am doing today, working in the area of TESOL at the University of Sydney.

2. Have you always wanted to be an academic or did you have other interests? (When did you decide to pursue a PhD in Applied Linguistics?)

I have always been interested in language teaching - from both practical and theoretical perspectives. It was for this reason that I enrolled in the MA in Applied Linguistics at the University of Sydney and then went on to do my PhD, also in Applied Linguistics, at the University of Waikato where I was working at the time. It was there I met Winnie Crombie who became my supervisor and inspiration. My PhD was in the area of academic writing, in particular writing for publication, an interest that has continued in my teaching and research since then.

TEACHING

We know you've had an extensive teaching career.

3. What has been the most rewarding aspect of teaching for you?

The most rewarding aspect of my teaching is when my students succeed at what it is they are wanting to do. It may be getting a job, becoming a better language teacher, or having gone on to do things I didn't know about until much later on. Once I was giving a talk at a conference in the United States and a Japanese woman came and spoke to me who had done a first-year course with me when I was on sabbatical at Sophia University in Tokyo. She graduated from Sophia then went on to do a Masters and PhD at the University of British Columbia and had just got her first academic position. I was delighted for her and so glad she had come and spoken to me.

4. What are some of the changes and challenges you've experienced in teaching over the time you have taught?

Nowadays, there are many more electronic resources for academic teaching than there were when I first started out. In the early days, I would put together sets of readings for students which were then copied and sold to the students. We don't need to do this now and can give links to readings in e-reserve in the library. And we can add extra readings as we are teaching very easily which we weren't able to do in the early days. We also use online resources such as Canvas now which weren't available until relatively recently. A challenge, of course, is learning what resources such as these can do and how they can be used to support our teaching. It all seems strange at first but as time goes on it's not so difficult. And this is not just for me as an academic but also for TESOL teachers who now are very often expected to know how to use these kinds of resources when they arrive on the first day on a new job, and if they don't, they have to learn in a hurry!

5. Currently, there is a lot of teaching happening online. What are your thoughts on this development in terms of teaching effectiveness (benefits and drawbacks for teachers and students alike)?

Teaching online is obviously different from face-to-face teaching but you learn as you go that you can make online teaching as interactive as face-to-face teaching. There isn't the physical connection with students with online teaching, however, in the same way there is in a classroom which is a drawback in my view. And there

isn't the possibility for a student to come up to you after class to ask a question. There are, however, other ways they can do this, such as staying in an online meeting after the rest of the class has left or setting up a separate online meeting to ask the question, or simply by emailing me, all of which I encourage my students to do.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

We know that you have several areas of research interest and are currently working on a number of projects.

6. One of your areas of interest is English for Academic Purposes (EAP). What has attracted you to EAP as an area of research?

My experience as a language teacher has been that the more you prepare students who are going on to university for what is expected of them the better, and this is the crucial role of EAP teaching and, in turn, research. Even when students get to university, however, there are new genres they need to learn and take part in. Two key genres research students need to write are theses and journal articles. These have, thus, been my main areas of interest for quite some time. What I have learnt, however, in teaching these genres is that it is not just second language students who have difficulties with them. There is a lot that all students need to know in order to succeed with these genres, whether they are native speakers of English or not, and it is this that much of my research has focussed on.

7. We realise that you have also published prolifically in the area of dissertation writing. What is it about dissertation writing that attracts you to this area of research?

I am interested in both the what and why of dissertation writing; that is, what dissertation writers need to do but also why they need to do it. My research, thus, focusses on textual and contextual aspects of thesis and dissertation writing. Within all this, there is my interest in genre that originates in the work I did as a student at Sydney University and my later doctoral studies, and how this notion can be taken up in successful thesis and dissertation writing.

8. Can you explain what your project on the Discourse of Peer Review entailed? What are some potential benefits of this research (e.g., pedagogical implications)?

In my project on the discourse of peer review, I examined reviewers' reports on submissions to academic journals and what there is about these reports that make them difficult for new academic authors to interpret and, as a result, respond to.

One of the matters I examined was how reviewers ask for changes to be made to the submissions that they review. While a good number of changes, I found, are requested directly, a large number of them very often are not. That is, reviewers, for reasons of politeness, often avoid saying directly what they want authors to do and so give the impression that the changes they are asking for are optional when very often they are not. When I am teaching writing for publication this is one of the things I focus on when we are looking at reviewers' reports. I bring reviews to class I have received on submissions I have made to academic journals and get the students to look at the reviews for these kinds of features in the reports. What they find is that reviews are very often indirect and, at times, difficult to interpret. I get them to discuss what changes really need to be made in order for an article to be published, and the answer is nearly always everything, a point that many beginning authors do not understand.

9. Your current project with Sue Starfield, Change and Stability in Thesis and Dissertation Writing: The Evolution of an Academic Genre, is the latest in a series of books you have both written collaboratively. What can students involved in dissertation writing expect from this book?

In this project, we are looking at changes in thesis and dissertation writing over time. We start by examining the first doctorates that were awarded in English medium universities then compare them with doctorates that have been awarded more recently in the same universities in the same or similar areas of study. We also examine more recent developments such as practice-based doctorates, professional doctorates and PhDs by publication. What we are finding is that there is a number of ways in which doctoral theses can be written and that the choices students make in their writing are often very local. That is, there are institutional requirements that students need to follow but also disciplinary, and sometimes departmental, expectations they need to understand in order to make the writing choice that is right for them.

LOOKING AHEAD

10. One of your major research areas is dissertation writing. What future developments do you foresee in this area?

As part of our project on change in thesis and dissertation writing we are looking at what has been termed the 'PhD of the future'. Antony Paré from the University of British Columbia has argued that doctoral education needs to serve students as they move into their futures, not prepare them for forms and practices of the past. Our question then is: What will the PhD of the future look like and how might it better prepare students for a diversity of careers, not just for ones in the academy?

11. What future developments do you foresee in your other areas of interest (e.g., EAP or ESP)?

Multimodal resources and digital technologies are having a dramatic influence on both EAP and ESP teaching as well as the genres that our students need to produce and take part in. And these changes will continue into the future. It is no longer 'business as usual' in the teaching and learning of academic and specific purpose genres. From the point of view of genre change, this is extremely interesting and a direction in which I see my future research heading.

ADVICE FOR OUR READERS

12. The process of writing a dissertation happens over several years. What advice would you give to students to complete this dissertation writing process efficiently?

My advice to dissertation writers is simple: write early and write often. And don't be discouraged if at first you can't get it right. You might look at completed PhD theses and wonder if you can ever write a thesis this well. What you have to remember, however, is that the thesis you are looking at has been through many rounds of revisions and sometimes changes in direction. That is, what you are looking at is the finished product of many years of writing, researching, thinking, and re-thinking. What is hidden is how the student got there.

13. Could you share any advice for early academic researchers on their future career development, on publishing, or do you have any other general advice for them?

Publish as soon as you can. You don't have to wait until your PhD has been awarded to do this. I published a number of articles from my PhD before it was examined. I even wrote an article on a theoretical point I thought my examiners would raise (which they didn't!). Publications can make the difference between

getting an academic position and not. Not every publication, however, needs to be in the number one journal in your field. What appointment committees are looking for is a research and publication trajectory which moves progressively upward and which shows where you are going in your academic work.

Thank you for your time in sharing your experience and thoughts with our readers.

Book Review: L. Woodrow (2019). *Doing a master's dissertation in TESOL and Applied Linguistics.* London & New York: Routledge.

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For student researchers, a master's dissertation is a high-stakes and daunting academic activity where their studies of course work culminate. Given the significant consequences of dissertations, many volumes have been published to provide guidance on completing dissertations in general disciplinary areas (e.g., Biggam, 2011) or specifically in applied linguistics (e.g., Bitchener, 2010) in various degrees of detail and scope. Woodrow's book is a distinct contribution to the field with its unique focus on TESOL and applied linguistics and comprehensive coverage of the dissertation process from the beginning stage of choosing a topic all the way through to the very end of surviving the examination, viva, and dissemination of research findings on conferences or in academic journals. Included in this book are rich examples taken from the UK-, US-, and Australia-based master's dissertations, thinking activities, editing checklists, and useful resources, which offer readers immediate hands-on experiences. This book will be of interest to a wide audience such as master's candidates, supervisors of master's theses, MA program directors, as well as emerging researchers in this field.

This book consists of four parts preceded by an introduction chapter. The first part, comprising five chapters (Chapters 2–6) concerns project design, ranging from choosing a topic, reviewing the literature, considering methodological approach, drafting a research proposal to settling down on supervision. These preludes to a dissertation project, albeit important, may not receive sufficient attention from students. In Chapter 2, Woodrow notes that course modules or

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ISSN 1834-4712 (Online)

assignments, professional needs or supervisor expertise could be sources informing topic selection. The selected topic should be researchable and worthy of investigation. She emphasizes that topic selection is based on wide reading and solid knowledge in the topic-related area. A particularly practical piece of advice is to consult the sections of conclusion, implications, or recommendations for future research in previous dissertations or related journal articles. Upon giving advice on topic selection, in Chapter 3 Woodrow walks readers through the process of reviewing literature, starting from a broad review for the purpose of getting familiar with the topic, to locating sources in various academic databases and managing citations using software such as EndNote or Mendeley. She points out the importance of critical reading and keeping track of reading by supplying an example template for reviewing the literature.

An important component in Part I is the chapter on Methodological Approach (Chapter 4). This chapter starts with an elucidation of the difference between the methodology of a study and research methods, the former referring to research paradigms stemming from different ontological and epistemological assumptions whereas the latter being the actual means of conducting a study to solve research problems. This clarification is useful in that beginning researchers may mistakenly view these two concepts as being the same. Research designs, according to Woodrow, generally use quantitative methods (e.g., descriptive, experimental, quasi-experimental and correlational studies) or qualitative methods that investigate issues in question in natural settings. She further introduces four types of research design typically adopted in TESOL and applied linguistics: survey, action research, ethnography, and case study. Following this, Woodrow elaborates on six data collection methods: questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, corpus linguistics, and discourse analysis. Quintessential characteristics of these methods are succinctly presented. For instance, questionnaires are quick to administer and commonly take the forms of a Likert scale, can-do scale, semantic differential scale, true/false questions, and open-ended questions. Of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews, the semi-structured type is the most common due to its versatility. In focus groups, the researcher as a moderator needs to ensure no dominance of the floor or “a dominant subgroup dictating views that others are afraid to challenge” (p. 41). Techniques for analyzing quantitative and qualitative data are then introduced, with a table aptly used to expound the otherwise complicated notions and techniques in quantitative data analyses (e.g., standard deviation, ANOVA, and factor analysis). What is noteworthy is that researchers in qualitative studies should carry out data collection and analysis (including transcribing data)

themselves to ensure they stay close to the data. The remainder of this chapter deals with sampling techniques in quantitative and qualitative studies, ethical clearance sought from relevant institutions and prospective participants, and reliability and validity of the research project. Types of reliability and validity in quantitative studies and their corresponding qualitative counterparts, as well as potential threats to them are juxtaposed in a table. An understanding of all these aspects is indispensable at the planning stage of a dissertation.

Part I is concluded with two chapters respectively on dissertation proposal (Chapter 5) and supervisors and supervision (Chapter 6). Woodrow introduces the components of a proposal in detail, which is supplemented with concrete examples illustrating generic moves in proposal introduction and well-conceived research questions. She then gives down-to-earth advice on supervisor selection and supervision. As is often contrary to some students' expectations, the selection of supervisor in course-work master programs usually does not rest with students but with the department. Students are also advised to refrain from contacting their supervisors over the weekend and from expecting a response to an email inquiry within several hours. International students will particularly benefit from this book in knowing that their supervisor is not expected to choose a topic for them, to be directive or substantively involved in their research process, or even to correct their language in dissertation drafts. Being equipped with such a prior knowledge is essential for establishing a healthy, professional supervisor-student relationship.

Part II has two chapters respectively on the data collection procedure (Chapter 7) and data analysis (Chapter 8). Chapter 7 concerns the practical procedures in doing research including recruiting participants, collecting data, and analyzing the data. Woodrow notes that beginning researchers may assume that prospective participants would be interested in taking part in the research, which is often contrary to reality. Survey fatigue (Porter, Whitcomb, & Weitzer, 2004) is commonly observed in the current fast-paced lifestyle; therefore, measures such as posting flyers in prominent places, making contact over email or social media, or offering an incentive with the permission of the ethics committee may be adopted. The author presents a detailed guideline for drafting a participant information sheet. She then introduces three types of data: existing written or spoken textual data that sometimes is analyzed using corpus-based techniques, questionnaire data collected via mail, email, online or face-to-face, and interview data. Questionnaires designed by the student should be piloted, and translation, if applied, should be validated by a translator or fellow student. Woodrow even addresses unforeseen circumstances such as not getting permission to recruit

participants, not receiving a response from participants or inadequate or noisy research site. These meticulous considerations, which are not commonly found in other research methodology textbooks, apparently have derived from the author's years of experience as a researcher and supervisor.

In Chapter 8, Woodrow first emphasizes the importance of keeping a research diary, which functions to encourage students' reflexivity in the research process and push students to write from the very beginning rather than postpone the writing to the end of the program study. This is an insightful metacognitive strategy for MA candidates. While detailed instructions on running many types of quantitative data analyses are beyond the scope of the book, Woodrow effectively introduces the procedures of screening data, preparing a codebook, and performing descriptive and inferential statistics. She then describes five analytic approaches to qualitative data (e.g., documents and transcripts of interviews): content analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and narrative analysis. She concludes this chapter by pinpointing areas where students may or may not be allowed to get external help. For instance, external help in analyzing transcripts and interpreting data are not acceptable. An unequivocal knowledge in this regard is necessary to prevent any violation of academic principles.

Part III deals with dissertation writing and contains five chapters (Chapters 9–13). In Chapter 9, Woodrow reiterates that writing as an integral part of the research process should be initiated early and elucidates strategies to beat procrastination. She goes on to map out the general structure and requirements of a dissertation. Consistent with the view of writing as interactive (Hyland, 2005), her advice for student writers to pay heed to the audience, purpose, and expectations of a dissertation is rightly raised. This chapter also covers features of academic writing style in respect to vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, which provides immediate references especially for students whose native language is not English. In Chapter 10, Woodrow emphasizes that the literature review chapter should provide theoretical and empirical underpinnings for the current study. Critical evaluation of previous sources should be demonstrated to form coherent arguments and establish a research gap. Techniques like using headings/sub-headings and meta-text are introduced to facilitate the organization of the chapter and the progression of argument. Upon comparing characteristics in high-scoring and low-scoring literature review chapters, she highlights the importance of citation for expressing an authorial voice or portraying an authority, and cautions that student writers should avoid over-using direct quotes or close paraphrasing

which could obscure authorial voice. Common mistakes such as the literature review being a list of authors or too descriptive pointed out at the end of this chapter should warrant novice writers' attention.

In the following two chapters, Woodrow stresses that the methodology chapter needs to present details of the research design and justify the methods used. Information about participants and the selection of participants should be presented and their identities not revealed. Furthermore, the use of instrumentation (e.g., questionnaire or interview protocol) requires justification with authoritative sources in the specific discipline instead of introductory research method textbooks. When writing the results and discussion chapters, student writers are advised to organize the results chapter according to the research questions. Tables and graphics are instrumental in summarizing results and should be placed close to the corresponding text, but tables and graphics not of immediate relevance to the text can be placed in appendixes. Different from quantitative results, qualitative findings are often presented in text. The general way, according to Woodrow, is to present a claim and then support it with excerpts from the data. She then elaborates on several aspects: distinguishing participant quotes from his/her claim or interview questions, reporting quotes verbatim, assigning identifying name or code to each quote, and using pseudonyms for ethical considerations. Woodrow gives special prominence to the discussion chapter, noting that this chapter is directly related to assessment of the caliber of the whole dissertation but often receives unduly less attention from students. She foregrounds that in the discussion chapter the writer needs to provide explicit answers to the research questions, compare and relate the results to existing literature, and proclaim the significance of the study. This is further illustrated with example descriptors at a distinction level used in some universities for assessing the discussion chapter of a MA dissertation. The writing of the introduction, conclusion, and reference list is addressed in Chapter 13.

Part IV, which consists of three chapters, attends to such issues as the writing of remaining components of a dissertation (the abstract, table of contents, acknowledgements, and appendices), the process of examination (assessment of the dissertation and viva), and post-dissertation issues such as resubmission, applying for PhD enrollment, presenting findings on a conference, publishing in journals, or applying for a dissertation award (e.g., the one offered by The British Council). The last chapter provides enormous, helpful resources, including references and websites related to the whole process of a dissertation journey covered in this book.

This book has several commendable characteristics that distinguish itself from its counterparts. First, its thorough coverage of all aspects involving dissertation research and writing in the TESOL and applied linguistics is invaluable, which renders this book a handy and informative guideline for master's degree candidates. The stages in the dissertation process are explicitly anatomized into feasible components, which makes the daunting process largely predictable and manageable. Besides, each chapter is complemented with ample examples and thought-intriguing tasks. In particular, the sections of "Common mistakes" and "FAQs" at the end of each chapter supplement readers with useful information, from both the standpoint of the author as a seasoned researcher and supervisor and of student writers as new-comers struggling with many uncertainties and misgivings. The author's use of lucid and accessible language greatly stimulates engaged reading of this book and can enhance students' confidence in following the steps and suggestions offered in this book.

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