Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture

Special Inaugural Issue

Featured titles

Journal of the
Worldwide Forum on
Education and
Culture

Special Inaugural Issue

The **Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture** (ISSN: 1949-2774) is a multi-disciplinary academic journal that publishes original articles on research in areas such as:

Arts and Humanities
Business and Management
Capacity Building
Communities of Practice
Computers and the Internet
Curriculum Design and Enhancement
Distance and Online Education
Education-Industry Partnerships
Educational Policy
English as a Second Language
Entertainment and the Media
Entrepreneurship
Ethnicity
Government and Politics
Health and Recreation
Knowledge Management
Language Skills
Management of Educational Institutions
Religion and Philosophy
Science and Technology
Social Sciences
Society and Culture
Teacher Education

Manuscripts submitted may be based on research that is theoretical, practical, empirical, or exploratory.

The Journal aims to disseminate high calibre research to scholars across the globe through free on-line access at: http://www.theworldwideforum.org/1.html.

Each manuscript is submitted electronically to the *Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture* and it is evaluated to determine the suitability of topic and content. Acceptable manuscripts are reviewed by at least two referees in a double-blind peer review process. This is a process where the authors' and the referees' identities are kept anonymous. Referees are asked to evaluate the manuscript against ten criteria, including originality, methodology, relevance and contribution to knowledge. Based on the referees' reports the Editor-in-Chief makes a final decision on the manuscript and communicates with the authors, providing them with a copy of the referees' reports. The outcome of the refereeing process may result in the manuscript being either: **Accept** (minor revisions may be required); **Resubmit** (major revisions may be required); or **Reject** (manuscript not suitable for publication).

Additional information for authors is available at: http://www.theworldwideforum.org/1.html.

Roberto Bergami
Editor-in-Chief

Journal of the
Worldwide Forum on
Education and
Culture

Dear Friends of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture,

The publication of this journal represents the hard work and dedication of many individuals throughout the past nine years. Since 2002, teachers, scholars and professionals have met in Rome each year to discuss new ideologies and practices on international issues of race, culture and education. There has never been a greater need for such a dialogue and exchange across borders everywhere.

As the global community in which we live continues to grow, it also grows smaller. We have more interaction with one another; our views contrast and our traditions conflict. The differences are vast among cultures and nations, yet we must remind ourselves that we are the same in one simple respect. We are human beings who strive to cope with the demands of the 21st century. We long to live our lives in freedom and peace, without government repression or the constraints of poverty, hunger and oppression.

Education is the key to bringing about much needed reform in the world. Through education on every level – from preschool to Ph.D. – we can teach our students that cultures may be different, but our values are the same no matter the continent or the country.

The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture began with a simple idea. Three ordinary people met in a café in Rome one winter afternoon and talked about the extraordinary ways to improve both our schools and our lives. The result was a conference – one that drew a small gathering of people from a handful of countries. Nine years later, with this special inaugural issue of a juried journal, the Worldwide Forum attracts about 100 persons annually from dozens of nations.

We would like to thank all of those who have supported us and encouraged us through the years. We especially pay tribute to Dr. Rose Lee Hayden, who had the foresight a decade ago to recognize something needed to be done in higher education. The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture is making a difference all over the world today. Your contributions, both to this journal and to the congress, are changing our international society for the better.

Sincerely,

Bruce C. Swaffield, Ph.D.
Founder and Director,
The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture

Dear Readers of the Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture,

On behalf of the Editors and the Editorial Board, I present you with the Special Inaugural Issue of the Journal.

The Journal is a multi-disciplinary international publication, available online, that accepts manuscripts based on research that is theoretical, practical, empirical, or exploratory.

The authors of the featured titles in this issue come from eight different countries spread across North America, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Australia, a truly global representation. Likewise our Editorial Board features scholars from five countries across three continents.

The collection of works in this edition represents a sample of the academic papers presented at the VIII Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture held in Rome on December 3 and 4, 2009. These particular papers were chosen by the Editorial Board, for inclusion in this edition of the Journal, after a double-blind review process involving at least two reviewers.

Much time and effort went into the preparation of this issue of the Journal. From the planning stages, the development of reviewing criteria, to the authors who submitted high calibre papers, to the reviewers who diligently carried out their task of providing valuable feedback, and to the authors again for submitting the final version of their research.

There are too many to thank individually, but I express my gratitude collectively to all who have worked so hard to make the Journal become a reality. I especially acknowledge the contribution and the constant dedication to the Forum by Professor Bruce Swaffield. With this edition of the Journal one of his long held wishes has now materialised.

I encourage all the readers to consider making their own contributions in future editions of the Journal.

Sincerely,

Roberto Bergami
Editor-in-Chief
December 2009

Implementing Innovative, Interactive Technologies Among Teacher Candidates to Enhance Understanding of the Impact of Cultural Diversity on Learning

Inez A. Heath, Ph.D., Professor of Education, Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA, USA
iheath@valdosta.edu

Diane L. Judd, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education, Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA, USA
djudd@valdosta.edu

Abstract

This study researches the results of the acquisition of content using two different technology-based approaches in a required course on culture and diversity for teacher education majors. Test scores were compared between two groups using two distinct methodologies: traditional technology-based instruction, and interactive whiteboard instruction, to determine the effectiveness between the groups. Results between pre and post tests indicated significant gains in test scores by the teacher candidates in the Treatment Group, who received instructions with the use of the interactive whiteboard, compared to the teacher candidates in the Control Group, who received instruction using the more traditional technology-based strategies centered on PowerPoint lectures that are typically used in higher education. The research also examined how well teacher candidates related to what they had learned in the culture and diversity course and their reflections of how this knowledge would impact their futures as teachers and citizens.

Overview

The debate among educational researchers continues over the value of multimedia in the classroom to increase student learning (Moss, et al., 2007; Tate, 2002). New technology innovations to enhance teaching and learning over the past few years have been overwhelming and have often met with resistance from many educators. Additionally, the willingness of faculty to make the transition from the more traditional, tried and true technology methods, that are centered on PowerPoint supported lectures, that has been problematic, (Schneider, 2000; Weisman & Garza, 2002; Yun & Sinnappan, 2009) and there is a need for more research to provide educators with evidence of students' gains in learning when comparing the traditional teachings with the enhanced teachings using the new technologies.

Of the many innovations in educational technology the interactive whiteboard has been one of the most exciting because of the many possibilities for presenting instruction that is inclusive and open to a variety of learning styles (Milner, 2010; Sheehy, Nind, & Simmons, 2004). For example, Valiente (2008) observed that English Language Learners from various Asian cultures in the U.K. schools relied more on memorization as a tool for learning, while strategies that focused on learning through communication and collaboration were not as effective. Lee (2008) also emphasized the importance of teachers' ability to address range of diversity within human cultural communities, and how cultural and linguistic diversity affects cognition, perceptions, and emotions that influence human learning and development.

The question of how we learn and how diversity affects our attitudes about teaching and learning styles has been widely researched and continues to be a central issue (Landerholm, Gehrie, & Hao, 2008; De Vita, 2001). Valiente (2008) noted that the literature on learning styles suggests that although the behavior of some students may appear different from what is

defined as a 'high-quality learning process', their conduct does not demonstrate an 'inferior' approach to learning.

De Vita (2001) also points out that considerable research has been conducted on the classification and identification of learning styles but many teachers who wish to use learning style theory for classroom application are overwhelmed by this vast body of literature. He stresses that little attention has been devoted to the investigation of cultural influences on the development of individual learning style preferences, and how educators can use this information to diversify the way they teach to engage all students.

The need to explore a variety of ways to teach, especially given the increase in diversity in our student population, should be expanded to include courses in higher education. With new technologies, come new opportunities to explore learning styles and strategies related to teaching and learning. Pursell (2009) for example, found many advantages in using cell phones in innovative ways to teach concepts in his course in organic chemistry. Students created flash cards using their cell phones, and said that they were more convenient and fun to look at than paper cards.

During the lessons presented in this study, the teacher candidates in the treatment group were involved using the interactive whiteboard through hands-on activities. An interactive whiteboard is a large display that connects a computer and projector. The projector displays the computer's screen onto the board's touch-sensitive surface. This enables the interactive whiteboard to be controlled by touch or used as a writing surface with a special pen.

The hands-on activities can be developed for the interactive whiteboard with or without templates to incorporate the content. The activities, information, and Internet links can be saved and then implemented again with other students. There are several companies that produce interactive whiteboards. The interactive whiteboard used in this study was a SMART Board by SMART Technologies.

The SMART Board was introduced in 1991, and became known as the "world's first interactive whiteboard". The Manning Innovation Awards announced in 2002 that the SMART Board was the winner of their innovation award (Innovatis, 2002). Tech & Learning (2010) identified the year of 2010 as the year of the whiteboards. Noting that worldwide 750,000 interactive whiteboards were sold in 2009 and one million are expected to be sold in 2010 (Tech & Learning Editors, 2010).

To date, the majority of the research on the use of the interactive whiteboards has focused on grades K-12. Gatlin (2007) researched the use of the interactive whiteboard and the evaluation of students' performance in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Gatlin's study pointed out that students, who received instruction using the interactive whiteboard performed significantly better in a fourth grade mathematics class. He also found that sixth grade students in his study performed significantly better in their science classes.

There is a growing interest in implementing the innovative technologies in higher education. Tate (2002) advocates the need for more research that focus on implementing innovative technology-based instruction with students at the college level. Although the evidence for expanding the interactive whiteboard technology to the college level classroom seems apparent, the transition has been slow in gaining acceptance (Georgina & Olson, 2008; Schneckenberg, 2009), because instructors must rethink innovative ways to present knowledge within an interactive framework.

The course, *Exploring Perspectives in Socio-Cultural Diversity*, has been a recent addition to
the education core curriculum that is required of all teacher candidates in Georgia. As a state mandated effort, it reflects the growing national consensus to include more "stand-alone" courses on diversity. The development of the course was supported by many proponents, including Merrier, Irving, Dandy, Dmitriyev, & Ukeje (2007), who stressed the importance of

focusing on meaningful multicultural education that examines a variety of issues and involves students in reflecting on their own experiences living in a diverse society.

The goals of the course in this study reflect a wave of changes in attitudes about diversity across campuses that support reforms to expand pre-service teachers' knowledge. Jetton & Savage-Davis (2007) and Banks (1999) agree there are many diverse and confusing definitions of multicultural education, and they recommend that introductory courses consider Nilsen & Donelson's (2003) broader definition that encompasses many facets of multicultural education. They consider it important for students to glean from courses in multicultural education the philosophical concepts that are formed by the ideals of freedom, justice, equality equity, humanity, and dignity for all people, and these principles are based on numerous historical documents that are widely known, accepted, and have influenced political and social attitudes over time.

Policy decisions on core education courses are mandated by state education agencies; however their effectiveness is often questioned in terms of how they impact future teachers. Many of the concerns revolve around the effectiveness of the course in laying a foundation that is meaningful to teacher candidates (Weisman & Garza, 2002; Lee, 2008). Studies have found that pre-service teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education, especially those not exposed to other cultures, tend to be superficially positive and receptive towards multicultural education courses, however, their depth of knowledge and experiences are limited (Grace & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2006; Locke, 2005; Sleeter, 2001).

A major obstacle in teacher preparation programs arising from this mismatch of teacher and student cultures is the ability to facilitate a critical consciousness (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Many students may complete courses successfully, but they lack an in-depth understanding of the issues presented in the course especially as it relates to their overall professional development. Moreover, the consensus among many instructors is that the majority of students who "get through" these courses seldom understand how diversity impacts not only their lives but more importantly, they are unable to extend their learning and understand the connection as it relates to our expanding global society.

The primary goal of the course, *Exploring Perspectives in Socio-Cultural Diversity,* is to involve teacher candidates in discourse towards understanding the complex issues of teaching diverse learners. The challenges, for those students lacking prior experiences with ethnic minorities and diverse groups, lie in providing new experiences that encourage them to shed their preconceived ideas, and prejudices, allowing them to reflect beyond a superficial level towards deeper understanding of the issues involved in the sociopolitical factors affecting subordinate groups. Weisman and Garza (2002) and Lee (2008) emphasized the importance of teachers' ability to address range of diversity within human cultural communities, and how cultural and linguistic diversity affects cognition, perceptions, and emotions that influence human learning and development.

The course content presented in this study reflects the national standards in education that included preparing teachers to work in classrooms with diverse groups; being able to value cultural differences and pluralism. Topics centered on teachers candidates exploring their own histories and the histories of others in gaining a more positive and multidimensional (Jetton, 2005) understanding of diverse groups. Students also examined learning to work with students from diverse cultural backgrounds who may be oppressed by the dominant culture because of their race, ethnicity, gender, class, language, religion, ability, or age (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002).

Clearly, the challenge for colleges of education to prepare teacher candidates to work in diverse climates is a high priority. Jetton and Savage-Davis (2006) stress that teacher candidates will be facing many new challenges as teachers. As local school districts and

society at large grow, their awareness of the uniqueness, differences, and similarities among their students will be important in shaping their own professional growth and development.

Method

Research Questions:

1. Is there a difference between teacher candidates' test score gains in a course where instruction is enhanced by strategies that focus on integrating the interactive whiteboard, when compared to teacher candidates who receive the same instructional materials in which more

traditional media supported lectures?

2. How will teacher candidates relate what they have learned in the culture and diversity course both personally as well as professionally in their course program, towards becoming teachers?

This study included: (a) comparison of effectiveness of the two technology-based approaches, (b) ability to apply information about cultural diversity across contexts and disciplines that they would be teaching, and (c) ability to demonstrate in-depth understanding of the impact that cultural diversity has on teaching and learning for success in a global society,

Teacher candidates' classes in this study were randomly assigned to two groups prior to the beginning of the semester, according to the days their classes met. The students did not have any prior knowledge of the research before they registered for their classes. The class sizes were evenly distributed in both groups. There were 93 participants in four sections enrolled in the core course, *Exploring Perspectives in Socio-Cultural Diversity*. The treatment group consisted of 48 teacher candidates, and the control group of 45 teacher candidates. All of the students were teacher candidates whose majors varied across grade levels (K-12) and in various disciplines including music, art, foreign languages, kinesiology physical education, communication disorders, and deaf education.

The goals of this course reflect a wave of changes in attitudes about diversity across campuses that support reforms to expand teacher candidates' knowledge. Treatment group received instruction through course modules that were designed for the interactive whiteboard and were adapted from the latest edition of the text: *Human Diversity: An Integrated Approach* by Kenneth Cushner, Avero McClelland, and Phillip Safford (2009) which is aligned to the state and national standards on diversity. The instructional materials for the control group covered the same content as the Treatment Group, but were presented through PowerPoint supported lectures and teacher centered activities that were also aligned with the text and standards.

The teacher candidates in the two groups were given a pre and post test. The pretest was given at the beginning of the course and the posttest was given upon completion of the learning modules developed for this study. The pre and post tests data were collected using a classroom performance system (CPS). The CPS system that we used in this study was the *Student Response Systems* by eInstruction. The CPS student response pads are handheld devices, often referred to as "clickers" that allow students to respond to questions. The CPS software analyzed the data, and provided statistics for this research.

Preparation for this research included designing the learning modules for use with the interactive whiteboard. The educational technology specialist at our institution served as the consultant in developing the learning modules and provided training on the effective use of the interactive whiteboard.

The learning modules included opportunities for teacher candidates to reflect on the topics presented, with a goal of making connections between their personal experiences, and

prior knowledge. Emphasis was also placed on a learning environment that encouraged higher level understanding and expressing pre-conceived ideas, or biases. At the end of the semester, teacher candidates responded to a series of questions. The data were analyzed based on a rubric. Raters independently reviewed and graded teacher candidates' responses using a rubric to compare group responses.

Results

The classroom performance system used in this study aggregated the test data from the pre-tests and the post-tests. The Control Group that received traditional technology based instruction had a total of 45 students. The Treatment Group, which received instruction primarily using the interactive whiteboard, had a total of 48 students.

The first research question: Is there a difference of teacher candidates' test score gains in a course where instruction is enhanced with integrating the interactive whiteboard, when compared to teacher candidates taking a similar course in which traditional technology strategies are used? The data for the first question included comparing the pre-test scores and the post-test scores.

On the pre-test, the Control Group scored an average of 48.67% and the Treatment Group scored an average of 42.29%. On the post-test, the control group average was 64.56% and the treatment group average was 68.75% (see Figure 1). Both groups increased their test score averages from the pre-test to the post-test. The Treatment Group, however, increased their test score average by 26.46%, while the Control Group average only increased their test score average by 15.89%. Therefore, the Treatment Group had a test score average gain of 10.57% over the Control Group test score average gain (see Table1).

The results of the test scores did confirm the hypothesis for this study. The pre-post test score gains were significantly higher for the teacher candidates in the Treatment Group as compared to the pre-post test score gains of the Control Group. The 10.57% point difference was statistically significant (t=-3.2, df=91, p<.01). The effect size, 0.66, would be considered moderate by Cohen's (1988) criterion. The increase in tests scores in the Treatment Group concurs with the findings of Mohan (2009) in a study of the use of an interactive whiteboard in a biochemistry course.

Figure 1: Pre and Post Tests Data
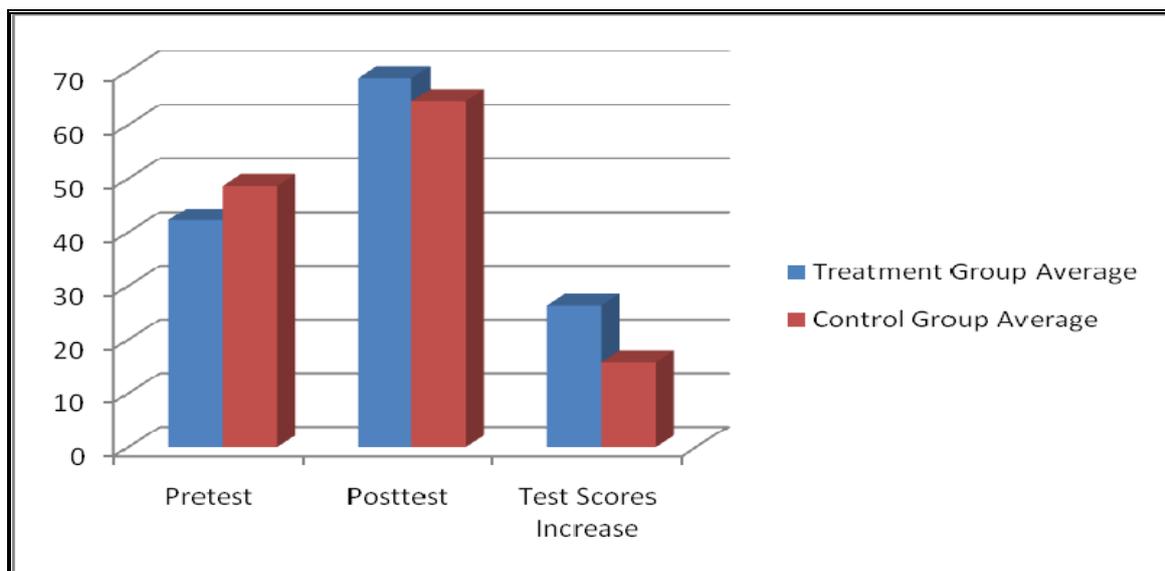
Table 1: Test Scores

	Treatment Group Averages	Control Group Averages
Pre-test	42.29%	48.67%
Post-test	68.75%	64.56%
Test Scores Increase	26.46%	15.89%

The second question examined problems and issues related to "mismatch" between what teacher candidates learn in class and how they relate their learning to the real world, as also noted by Hill-Jackson (2007). She emphasized the importance of facilitating what she referred to as "critical consciousness", which was addressed in this study by giving teacher candidates time to reflect on the topics presented in class. Toward the end of the semester teacher candidates were asked to reflect on the following:

> Reflect on the things you have learned in this course on culture and diversity. Emphasize how concepts of culture and diversity relate to you as an individual in your day-to-day life. Discuss how the things you learned have influenced your attitudes in your field experiences in the classroom and how you will approach teaching in diverse classroom settings in the future. Elaborate on your comments and focus on clarity in expressing your thoughts.

Teacher candidates were rated on a 10 point scale by three different evaluators. The three scores were averaged to determine a rating for each of the teacher candidate's responses. Prior to evaluating the teacher candidates' responses the three evaluators discussed the types of responses that would reflect higher ratings, and decided on the criteria that indicated depth of understanding. The most important was the ability to elaborate, interpret, and relate statements to personal experiences, as well as relating to others having similar situations within other contexts.

The evidence supported by responses on the reflective writing sample that was given towards the end of the semester indicated that teacher candidates who received higher scores were more reflective and were more likely to elaborate on their comments, demonstrating their understanding of the relevance of the course both in their personal and professional development. Figure 2 also indicated that the teacher candidates in the Treatment Group, whose scores averaged 7.6 overall, were more reflective, and demonstrated an ability to relate issues to their own experiences, as well as expressing consideration for how others within different contexts or situations might be impacted or affected. For example:

> I never thought about how one would feel being of mixed race. The video of the B/W high school student who talked about his racial identity, made an impression on me. His comments about his identity dilemma and how he was never accepted by either white or blacks and even being labeled Latino, (which made him feel worse, since he was not Hispanic) made me realize how difficult his life had been. Going through life, not being accepted because of your race (especially when you represent 2 races) made me think more about levels of diversity, and the students that I hope to be coaching in high school. Our president seems to have overcome his identity conflict, but I'm sure he too went through many difficult moments in his own life with regard to belonging somewhere.

In contrast, students in the Control Group whose overall scores averaged in the 6.5 range, tended to write comments that were more superficial; reflecting basic information from their notes, as seen in the following example:

As teachers, we need to be aware of diversity in our classrooms. When I teach, I will be more aware of diversity and will try to treat all my students fairly, no matter what their intellectual levels or ethnic background may be.

Additionally, teacher candidates in the Treatment Group were asked to respond to a survey about how the interactive whiteboard influenced their learning of the course content. We found the comments to be very encouraging. Some examples of the teacher candidates' answers are listed below:

- I was able to stay focused and get involved in the lessons.
- More hands-on and involvement.
- I felt more involved and I could stay focused better.
- Being involved helped me stay attentive in class.
- Keeps you focused and entertained at the same time.
- Since I felt like I was part of the lesson instead of listening to it.
- Keeps you focused and entertained at the same time.

Figure 2: Writing Sample

Reflecting on Culture: Writing Sample
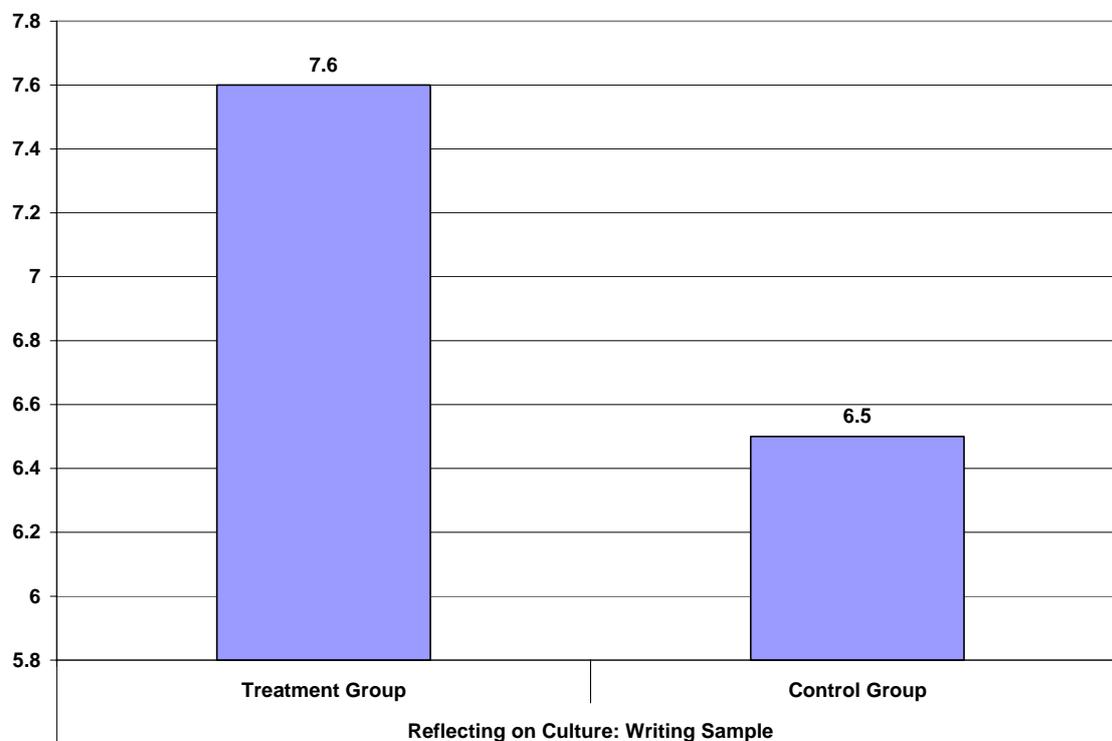
Conclusion

The integration of the interactive whiteboard in a required college level pre-service course was the focus of this research, proposing that teacher candidates in the Treatment Group would show greater gains when compared to the gains of teacher candidates' test scores in the Control Group who received more traditional, teacher-centered instruction of the same content. The findings were supported by Tate (2002), Gatlin (2007), and McNeese (2007), who reported positive results in students' teaching and learning process, when the lessons included the use of the interactive whiteboard.

Tate (2002) also noted the increase in communication among students and the instructor during the interactive whiteboard activities. The teacher candidates in the Treatment Group

listed similar responses to the question about how the interactive whiteboard influenced their learning of the course content. McNeese (2007) in her study reported similar comments and words such as *focused*, *attentive, involved*, and *entertained*.

Observations of the teacher candidates' in the Treatment Group provided evidence of the value of integrating interactive whiteboard technology in courses in higher education that can enhance students' analytical skills towards higher level understanding of the concepts taught. Students in the Treatment Group seemed more enthusiastic, and were more involved in discussion and activities related to the diversity topics. Landerholm, Gehrie, and Hao (2003) concur that a more interactive approach to teaching is needed. This "paradigm shift of the twenty-first century" is succinctly described in their introduction.

> Teachers for the twenty-first century for the global world need to be proficient in technology and skilled as reflective practitioners. They need to be able to reflect on diversity in myriad ways: learning styles, special needs, cultural differences, racial differences, developmentally appropriate differences, teaching styles and personality differences of children, teachers, parents, community members and administrators. (p. 594)

Way Forward

We recommend additional research in higher education to evaluate the impact of the interactive whiteboard on student learning. As noted by Tate (2002), there is a need for more research in higher education on how courses could be enhanced through implementing an interactive whiteboard approach for teaching college level students. In addition, research is needed to study teacher preparation courses where students are interactive learners, and the instructor models effective technology teaching strategies. A priority for future educational research should focus on integrating strategies that would assist students in the development of their ownership of learning through the use of innovative educational technologies.

References

Banks, J. A. (1999). *An introduction to multicultural education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Banks, J., Cookson, P., Gay, G., Hawley, W. D., Irvine, J. J., Nieto, S., Schofield, J. W. & Stephan, W. G. (2001). *Diversity within unity: Essential principals for teaching in a multicultural society*. 196-203.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2 ed.). Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

De Vita, G. (2001). Learning styles, culture and inclusive instruction in the multicultural classroom: A business and management perspective. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 165-174.

eInstructions. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.einstruction.com

Georgina, D. A. & Olson, M. R. (2008). Integration of technology in higher education: A review of faculty self-perceptions. *Internet & higher education*. 11, 1, 1-8.

Grace, C. & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, D. (2006). Is ignorance bliss? Preservice teachers'attitudes toward multicultural education. *High School Jour*nal. 89, 2, 24-28.

Hill-Jackson, V. (2007). Wrestling whiteness: Three stages of shifting multicultural perspectives among white pre-service tea*chers. Texas A&M University: Multicultural perspectives, National Association for Multicultural Education*. 9, 2, 29–35.

Jetton, T. L. & Savage-Davis, E. M. (2005). Preservice teachers develop an understanding of diversity issues through multicultural literature: Part III Creating multicultural classrooms. *Multicultural Perspectives*. 7, 30-38.

Landerholm, E., Gehrie, C. & Hao, Y. (2004). Educating early childhood teachers for the global world. *Early Child Development & Care*. 174, 593-606.

Latham, A. S. (1997). Responding to cultural learning styles. *Educational Leadership*. 88-89.

Lee, C. D. (2008). The centrality of culture to the scientific study of learning and development: How an ecological framework in education research facilitates civic responsibility. *Educational Research*. 37, 267-279.

Locke, S. (2005). Institutional social and cultural influences on the multicultural perspectives of preservice. *Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education*. 7, 20–28.

McNeese, M. N. (2007). Evaluation of smart multimedia classrooms-impact on student e-learning. *Proceedings of World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education*. 387-393. Retrieved from http://www.editlib.org/p/26357.

Milner, H. R. (2010). What foes teacher education has to do with teaching? Implications for diversity studies. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61, 118-131.

Morrier, M. J., Irving, M. A., Dandy, E., Dmitriyev, G. & Ukeje, I. C. (2007). Teaching and learning within and across cultures: Educator requirements across the United States. *Multicultural Education Research*. 31-40.

Moss, G., Jewitt, C., Levačić, R., Armstrong, V., Cardini, A., Castle, F., Allen, B., Jenkins, A., Hancock, M. & High, S. (2007). The interactive whiteboards, pedagogy and pupil performance evaluation: An evaluation of the schools whiteboard expansion (SWE) project: London challenge. Retrieved from http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR816.pdf\

Nilsen, A. P. & Donelson, K. L. (2003). Resolution and position paper: The definition of multicultural education. *National Association for Multicultural Education. Retrieved from* http://www.nameorg.org

Pursell, D. P. (2009). Adapting to student learning styles: Engaging students with cell phone technology in organic chemistry instruction. *Journal of Chemical Education*. 86, 10, 1219-1222.

Schneckenberg, D. (2009). Understanding the real barriers to technology-enhanced innovation in higher education. *Educational Research*, 51, 4, 411-424.Schneider, C. G. (2000). Diversity requirements. *Liberal Education*. 86, 4. 2.

Scott, K. A. & Mumford, V. E. (2007). Critical thoughts: reexamining teacher training, cultural awareness, and school reform. *Multicultural Perspectives*. 9, 54-58.

Sleeter, C. E. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 52, 94–106.

SART Technologies ULC. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://smarttech.com

Tate, L. (2002). Using the interactive whiteboard to increase student retention, attention, participation, interest, and success in a required general education college course. Retrieved from http://smarterkids.org/research/pdf/tate.pdf

Valiente, C. (2008). Are students using the 'wrong' style of learning? *Active Learning in Higher* Education. 9, 73-91.

Weisman, M. E. & Garza, S. A. (2002). Preservice teacher attitudes toward diversity: Can one lasso make a difference? *Equity & Excellence in Education*. 35, 1, 28.

Yinger, R. & Nolen, A. (2003). Surviving the legitimacy challenge. *Phi Delta Kappa*. 84, 386–390.

Yun Y. & Sinnappan, S. (2009). Emerging web technologies in higher education: A case of incorporating blogs, podcasts and social bookmarks in a web programming course based on students' learning styles and technology preferences. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*. 12, 4, 98-109.

Spanish in the United States:
Demographic Changes, Language Attitudes and Pedagogical Implications

Lucia Buttaro, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Adelphi University, One South Avenue, Garden City, New York 11530
Buttaro@Adelphi.edu

Abstract

This article examines the demographic changes, the socioeconomic issues, the sociolinguistic aspects of Hispanics in the USA, and the correlation and impact between these considerations and the acquisition and education of Spanish as a heritage language in the twenty first century. With such a significant increase in Latina/o population, the schools will have to make significant adjustments in their curriculum, instruction, academic and social services to meet the specific academic and cultural needs of these students. As the number of Latino/a students in the public schools continues to increase, schools and teachers must critically examine and further recognize other relevant factors in students' academic and social lives. They first need to be aware of who the Latina/o students are. Then they need to think about how the public school and the schooling experience must evolve to better serve the needs of the changing and changed population. In order to accomplish these goals, there are additional calls to improve the social and cultural environments in classrooms and schools to facilitate student engagement.

Introduction

Language is a vital commodity in our globalized world. Globalization implies and incorporates cultural studies and political economy (Jameson, 1998, Dorman, 2000). In the USA, the conglomeration of multicultural and diverse communities that characterizes it has created an evident and imperative need for individuals with highly developed language competencies not only in English but also in an array of other languages spoken by many of this country's inhabitants. Our nation's linguistic and cultural diversity implies a high demand for individuals with this linguistic disposition in the social, diplomatic, economic and geopolitical arenas. This tendency is specifically true with respect to our heritage speaking-Spanish population. The linguistically and culturally Hispanic ethnic groups are the fastest growing sectors of the total population communities for commercial, political and social ventures.

A close analysis of recent sociolinguistics and socioeconomic studies of US Hispanics, census data and marketing trends of Latinos establish a framework for the future composition and structure of heritage language acquisition classes of Spanish in the USA. With these Hispanics comprising a culturally, racially, politically and economically heterogeneous community, the ancestral language symbolizes an indispensable medium of identity and authenticity. The prominence of Spanish in the USA in the twenty first century context of globalization (and the inherent "Hispanicization" of the US economy) calls for an adequate restructuring of the traditional premises involved in the teaching and acquisition of Spanish as a heritage language in the USA. In order to transform these old guidelines, educators, linguists, researchers and other specialists have to take into consideration the new makeup of Hispanic heritage speakers and their range of language proficiencies in this country.

Se habla Espanol: The "New" American Voice

Over 400 million people in the world speak Spanish today. One of the greatest challenges facing the USA in the twenty first century is the demographic changes that are transforming and expanding the "new face" of this nation. The Spanish language and its speakers have long played vital roles in our country's history, economy, culture and education. However, it is not until the end of the twentieth century that the USA realized the tremendous impact of the Hispanic population in the different structural levels of the American system (Roca, 2000, viii). The Spanish speaking communities of the US Latinos and newly arrived Latin American groups have continued to grow, resulting in the increased use of the Spanish language.

Today the Hispanic phenomenon is an undeniable reality in this country. The Hispanic presence is prominent in every town, rural area, city and region in the USA. With respect to this phenomenon Hochmuth of CNN states *(Will Spanish Become America's Second Language? 2001):*

> It's not just your imagination. In cities from coast to coast, the use of Spanish is booming and is proliferating in ways no other language has done before in US history – other than English of course. It's a development that's making some people nervous. It's making others rich.

Immigration from Latin America contributes significantly to the continued growth and diversity of the US Hispanic population. Based on the 2000 census, Hispanics are the fastest growing segment of the population. It is calculated that there are currently well over 38 million Hispanics in the USA, a number that has surpassed the African-American population (34.6 million). The Hispanic population has risen substantially, making it the largest ethnic minority population in this country. It is predicted that by the year 2050 there will be 50 million Hispanics in the USA. At present, sixty six percent of Hispanics are of Mexican origin, nine percent are of Puerto Rican descent, about four percent are of Cuban ancestry, fifteen percent are from Central and South American origin and six percent come from other Hispanic backgrounds (US Census, 2001).

An interesting statistical study of Hispanics in this country indicates an increase in the number of US born Hispanics. A closer look at the table below will provide a clearer picture of the drastic demographic transformation in the United States Hispanic US born population.

Table 1: Proportion of US Hispanics Born in the US by City

City	Percent
San Antonio	85.5
El Paso	65.6
Houston	58.3
San Diego	55.1
Chicago	47.8
Los Angeles	45.4
San Francisco	43.2
New York	41.0
Jersey City	29.1
Miami	20.2
Source: Fradd & Boswell, 1999, p. 2	

Therefore, in addition to the foreign born Hispanics, the second and third generations of Hispanic descendants are increasing rapidly. As a matter of fact, Hispanic birthrates in the USA are quickly outpacing immigration rates. Presently, there are 13 million foreign-born Hispanics in this country, and they account for 36 percent of the total US Hispanic population (US Census Bureau, 2000). On the other hand, it is estimated that by the year 2100, more than 90 percent of all Hispanics in the US will be American born. The next section examines the impact that these demographic changes are having in the revitalization of the heritage language in all aspects of the American lifestyle.

Revitalization of Spanish

An outcome of the demographic trend is the prevalence of the Spanish language in every aspect of the American life setting. In the economic arena, the Latino market represents well over $350 billion in purchasing power. Because of this fact we can see an increase in signage in Spanish, Spanish-language television programs and network channels, radio stations, cinema, music, art, newspapers, books, advertisements and food markets. Hispanics are also making their cultural and linguistic presence felt in the political spectrum as seen in the 2000 presidential elections (Roca, 2000). In addition, a major factor that must be stressed is the continuous growth in the Hispanic middle class. The number of Hispanics participating in the corporate, professional and managerial environment is on the rise, while the number of those who are employed as laborers or service workers continues to decline (Brischetto, 2001; Carreria, 2003).

Professional opportunities available to the heritage speaker of Spanish in the USA are unquestionably favorable nowadays. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* documents the countless number of US companies that "are feeling the Latino talent pinch, not only to staff their operations in Mexico and Central and South America, but to serve the 38 million-strong Latino market at home, a sector whose population, purchasing power and businesses are growing faster than that of the USA as a whole" (Kraul, 2000). These opportunities represent important factors to be considered in the Spanish heritage language class.

In the area of language education, these demographic and socioeconomic statistics have major repercussions on the general linguistic profile of US Hispanics as well as on the profile of heritage speakers in particular. As a whole, second and third generation Hispanics are more likely than first generation immigrants to attend college. By the year 2000, two out of three Mexican immigrants did not obtain a high school diploma, whereas three out of four American born Mexicans did. In addition, twenty two percent of American born middle class Hispanics held college degrees. On the other hand, seventeen percent of foreign born middle class Hispanics earned a college degree (Brischetto, 2001, Carreira, 2003).

According to the latest sociolinguistic studies, foreign-born Hispanics play a major role in the development and preservation of the Spanish language throughout the USA. Lynch (2000) studies this particular phenomenon in the bilingual and bicultural city of Miami. He indicates that:

> The continuous influx of Spanish monolingual immigrants is quite significant. First, it points out to the continued use of Spanish at the societal level. Second, in a city where new immigration is at high rate and where Hispanics are the demographic majority, there is a high probability that already established immigrants and their offspring will have intimate social contact with recently arrived Spanish monolinguals (p. 279).

Garcia, Mori, and Rivera (2001) point out that the recent immigration of different Latino groups to New York City has helped the Puerto Rican community enhance and preserve its ancestral language as it communicates with other Hispanic groups. Hudson, Hernandez Chavez and Bills (1995, p. 182) suggest a similar finding in the Southwest. According to

these researchers, the maintenance of Spanish in the Southwest is "heavily dependent upon a steady transfusion of speakers from Mexico." Furthermore, the 2000 US Hispanic Market Survey also concludes that the "new immigrants will tend to refresh the use of Spanish language among those already in the country. As a result, new Latino immigrants are required to maintain the 'Hispanic-ness' of the segment" (p. 43).

Latinos are a heterogeneous group with their Spanish language as the dominant linkage. As Carrasquillo (1991, p. 60) states: "the principal characteristic that is widely shared by Hispanics is the Spanish language; it is the single most unifying element of Hispanics in the United States. The retention of Spanish in varying degrees of proficiency or even a form of "Spanglish" has become one of the most obvious and palpable signs of retained Hispanic cultural characteristics." As Carreira (2000, p. 333) indicates, "the Spanish language provides a link to their country of origin and serves as an essential tool for communicating with countless other Hispanics in this country, as well as abroad." The anthropolitican linguist Ana Celia Zentella (2,000, University of California, San Diego) concludes that language is a "window into people's views of themselves vis-à-vis the dominant group and vis-à-vis the other groups that they're often lumped with." She (2002, p. 410) further observes that "people will often use their particular regional variety of Spanish as a flag, emblematic of their national origin." At the same time she indicates (2002, p. 425) that "there are other times in which they refer to Spanish as the unifier of a much larger, disparate group of people across different class and ethnic and national backgrounds."

The Spanish-language media is helping preserve and disseminate the maternal language in this country. The number of Hispanic newspapers in the USA increased from 232 to 543 and circulation increased from one to 14.1 million readers. The report entitled "radio is Exploding" (2000) informs that the number of Spanish language radio stations nearly doubled from 312 to 600 between 1986 and 1999. While in the television medium, *Hispanic Business* reports that *Telemundo and Univision* are the two fastest-growing television networks in the USA. According to the Nielson ratings, Univision's stations regularly capture a larger share of the audience between the ages of eighteen and thirty four than NBC, CBS, Fox and Telemundo (Reveron, 2001, Carreira, 2003).

The Spanish-language media propagates the ancestral language by marking this language accessible and relevant to the numerous Hispanic audiences. AS US Hispanics are exposed to television, radio programs and newspapers in the maternal language, they come into contact with a range of topics, grammatical constructions and vocabulary that are outside the scope of everyday use in the home or the immediate community (Carreira, 2003, p. 60). In addition, the media, and television in particular, provide US Hispanics with access to the heterogeneous variant-linguistic forms from the different countries of the Spanish-speaking world.

According to a national study conducted by Univision in 2001, seventy five percent of Hispanic teenagers surveyed consider their Hispanic culture as "cool and hip" and have a close bond with their ethnic roots (*Young Hispanics Embrace Their Culture as Cool,* 2001). Another report carried out by Yankelovich Hispanic Monitor notes that sixty nine percent of Hispanics of all ages in the top seven markets in the USA find the Spanish language to be more important to them than it was five years ago (*Yankelovich Releases the 2000 Hispanic Monitor Report Results,* 2000). There is a close correlation between the economic advantages of knowing Spanish in the USA and the maintenance of the mother tongue. We see in cities as San Antonio and Miami, for example, that the Spanish language has acquired social prestige.

For further elaboration of the sociolinguistic aspect of Spanish in Miami, readers should consult this study, *Spanish-Speaking Miami in Sociolinguistic Perspective: Bilingualism, Recontact and Language Maintenance among the Cuban-Origin Population.* As a matter of

fact, the city of Miami has been transformed into a metropolitan area of more than two million people with a more diversified economy and a reputation for being the "gateway" to Latin America (for further information regarding Miami's rise to gateway city status see Poetes and Stepick 1993, Nijman, 1996, 1997 and Boswell, 2000). Boswell's study (conducted in Miami Dade County and Florida) found that Hispanics who know Spanish and can speak English well have an advantage in the labor force that translates into higher incomes, lower poverty rates, higher educational attainment levels and better jobs than Hispanics who know only English or speak English poorly.

The finding that Hispanics benefit more than non-Hispanics from knowing two languages (English and Spanish) emphasizes the importance of Spanish language knowledge in Florida for business. Therefore, "the overwhelming dominance of these two languages suggests that the state's educational policies should focus on them", as Boswell well emphasizes (2,000, p. 408-431).

A new survey of the nation's Hispanics conducted by the *New York Times/CBS News* (2003) suggests that Hispanics in the USA are far more optimistic about their lives, their language and their children's prospects than are non-Latinos in this country. Romero and Elder (2003) note that 64percent of Hispanics indicated that there was no specific instance when they felt discriminated against because of their ethnicity *(Hispanics in US Report Optimism*, August 6, 2003). Heritage language educators should consider all of the above statistics and data as they address the needs and issues of their heritage-speaking students in the Spanish language and literature classes. In the last section of this study, I shall examine some pedagogical implications in the heritage-speaking class that arise from all these transformations happening with respect to Spanish.

Pedagogical Implications

Heritage language educators need to understand the heterogeneity factor that characterizes the diverse communities of US Hispanics with regard to linguistic loyalty and preservation. For example, educators must consider the proportion of US Hispanics born in this country by their corresponding city.

Table 2: Americans of Hispanic Descent

City	Percentage
El Paso	65.6
Houston	58.3
San Diego	55.1
Chicago	47.8
Los Angeles	45.4
New York	43.2
New Jersey	41.9
Miami	20.2
Source: Fradd & Boswell, 1999, p.2	

In addition, different attitudes toward their mother tongue and their self identity are found in the heterogeneous Hispanic communities, depending on geographical and national lines. As Isabel M. Valdes (2000, p. 113) points out, "Cuban Americans are less likely than Mexicans or Puerto Ricans to report feeling discriminated against". However, studies done in the Southwest, such as the ones conducted by Hernandez Chavez and Bills (1995), River and Mills (2001) and MacGregor-Mendoza (2000) demonstrate and document the strong negative

impact the use of the Spanish language has had on the socioeconomic and linguistic strata of Hispanics in that region. Some Americans perceive Spanish as a threat to the cultural fabric of US society. In her article "*Aqui No Se Habla Espanol:* Stories of Linguistic Repression in South West schools", MacGregor-Mendoza (2000) reports on the humiliation, repression and psychological, emotional and physical abuse experienced by previous generations of school children in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Garcia, Morin and Rivera (2001) examine the Puerto Rican community of New York. They observe that "Spanish and English have reversed roles in the Puerto Rican community, with Spanish, most often associated with poverty, now being linked to a middle-class status, and English, most often associated with prestige, being also linked as English-speaking by New Yorkers" (p.259). Carreira (2003, p. 67) concludes:

> Puerto Ricans are increasingly perceived as English-speaking by New Yorkers, while Dominicans are now viewed as the Spanish speakers in this city. In this context, Puerto Ricans sprinkle in Spanish linguistic and extra-linguistic features when speaking English as a way to mark their ethnic identity.

As stated earlier, the attitudes of Hispanics specifically bilingual youths, towards their mother tongue, depends on geographical factors and ethnolinguistic considerations. In general, national surveys of Hispanic youths note that Cubans in Miami assign more instrumental than negative value to Spanish, while Mexican-Americans in San Antonio, Albuquerque and Los Angeles favor Spanish for instrumental and ethnic reasons. Puerto Ricans in the Bronx, Amsterdam Avenue and the South Bronx perceive Spanish as a language that is less important in achieving instrumental or integrative goals (Ramirez, 2002).

As a result of the above factors, pedagogical techniques, methodologies, objectives, curriculum and material in heritage-speaking classes of Spanish must be suitable to fulfill and address the needs of students, depending on their cultural, social and economic background. In addition, heritage language instruction should be regionally anchored.

The latest data about US Hispanics indicate a drastic transformation in the body and composition of the heritage-speaking Spanish class. The number of students with intermediate to low levels of fluency in the extensive gamut of variant forms of spoken Spanish is on the rise, while those with higher levels of Spanish language proficiency are rapidly decreasing. This phenomenon is due partially to an increase in the number of US born Hispanics and a projected decline in the number of foreign born Hispanics in this country. In addition, the rapid growth of affluence in second and third generation US Hispanics is also contributing to the decline of language proficiency in the maternal language. Most of these students possess minimal levels of reading and writing skills in the mother tongue. Therefore, educators will have to focus and enhance the many skills underlying literacy in this language, such as scanning, skimming and analyzing the organizational structure of a text.

On the other hand, since Spanish is now being perceived as a language of social prestige and a medium with which to achieve financial wealth and opportunity, the media and the economic worlds are disseminating the ancestral language even more vigorously.

Educators will have to incorporate reading and writing materials that are accessible and familiar to students, for example, magazines, advertisements, videos, Internet material and tools, e-mails, songs, *telenovelas,* interviews, charts, recipes, menus, personal ads, survey reports and other ventures. Because of the strong relationship of young Hispanics with the Spanish language media (particularly television), heritage language educators will have to integrate and create activities that incorporate programs from *Telemundo and Univision* and the material to be taught. Some examples would be issues and topics concering the Latino community, Latin American news, international news and comparisons and contrasts of talk shows, commercials, soap operas and game shows.

In general, the broad academic skills and English-language competence of Hispanic heritage speakers will become stronger. For the most part, heritage speakers of Spanish will possess intermediate to good academic skills in the official language of this country, in other words, English. The Spanish language classroom for most heritage speakers of Spanish will not be the first point of contact with mainstream Spanish. Students with basic to low levels of academic skills in Spanish will greatly outnumber those with solid academic skills in that language.

An important aspect that should be covered in heritage Spanish classes is the teaching of culture. As the proportion of second and third generation Hispanics increases relative to that of foreign born, the former will benefit greatly from exposure to lessons dealing with culture, customs, and the history of Latin America and Spain. The second and third generation Hispanic has for the most part a very limited knowledge of the culture of the Spanish-speaking world, including the US (the fifth largest Spanish speaking country in the world). After all, the US is a microcosm of the Spanish-speaking world and at the same time it represents the Mecca of the fusion of Hispanic traditions, linguistic variant forms and cultures with the particular characteristics that define this country.

Conclusion

In this age of globalization, the US has an unprecedented need for individuals with highly developed language competencies both in English and Spanish. More and more American companies and institutions are requiring individuals with advanced literacy skills in the Spanish language. After all, Hispanics currently represent $350 billion in purchasing power, and this market is increasing at an incredible rate. In fact, the need for individuals with proficiency in both Spanish and English for use in the social, economic, diplomatic and geopolitical arenas has never been greater (Brecht & Rivers, 2000).

Our heritage Spanish language speakers represent a largely untapped reservoir of linguistic competence that could help address the social, economic and political needs of our nation. The need for Spanish/English bilinguals in journalism, health, medicine, marketing, business, law, technology, translation and interpretation is undeniable. Developing the high levels of proficiency required for professional purposes possessed by heritage language speakers vary widely. However, current data suggest that the majority of heritage speakers of Spanish possess intermediate to low levels of proficiency in the maternal language.

The radical transformation of our heritage-speaking student body in Spanish classes has to be addressed seriously to instruct these individuals appropriately. As the profile of our heritage-speaking students evolves, educators must familiarize themselves with the sociolinguistic and identity issues affecting these students and mold their instructional practices to assist them.

Theoretically, languages and their practices are the most significant and meaningful way of being in the social world. Bilingualism as a social entity provides varied ways of expressing life. The education of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the United States poses interesting challenges to educators. A sound educational policy must provide insights into the many subgroups and local communities that comprise the U.S. population. The future is definitely not monocultural. People do indeed interpret themselves and others in a diversity of ways. Languages do intersect and interact with each other in many different ways. The same is true of cultures as people interpret others, and themselves. The implication for schools as that we, as educators, have a duty to acquire knowledge about diverse texts, contexts, and identities that will allow us to better serve bilingual students.

References

Acosta-Belen, E. "Spanish: A Case of Two Languages in Contact," pp. 151-158 in Burt & H. Dulay, eds. *New Directions in Second Language Learning, Teaching and Bilingual Education*. Washington, (DC): TESOL, 1975.

Alvarez, C. "Code Switching in Narrative Performance: Social, Structural and Pragmatic Functions in The Puerto Rican Speech Community of East Harlem," pp. 74-85 in C. Klee & L. Ramos-Garcia, eds. *Sociolingusitcs of the Spanish Speaking World: Iberia, Latin American and the United States*. Tempe (AZ): Bilingual Press, 1991.

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. *Spanish for Native Speakers: AATSP Professional Development Series handbook for Teachers K-12.*

A Handbook for Teachers. Vol. 1. Fort Worth (TX): Hartcourt College Publishers, 2000.

Aparicio, F. "Diversification and Pan-Latinity: Projections for the Teaching of Spanish to Bilinguals, pp. 183-198 in A. Roca & J. Lipski, eds. *Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Contact and Diversity.* New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993.

Bills, G. "Language Shift, Linguistic Variation and Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers in the United States," pp. 263-282 in M. C. Colombi & F.X. Alarcon, eds. *La ensenaza del espanol a hispanohablantes: Praxis y teoria.* Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Bills, G, & N. Vigil. "The Community of Change: Nahuatlisms in New Mexican Spanish," pp. 137-153 in A. Roca, ed. *Research on Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Issues and Challenges.* Somerville (MA): Cascadilla Press, 2000.

Boswell, T. *The Cubanization and Hispanicization of Metropolitan Miami*. Miami (Fl). The Cuban American National Council, 1994.

Brecht, R. D. and C. W. Ingold. *Tapping a National Resource: Heritage Languages in the United States.* ERIC Digest. Retrieved June 2008 from www.cal.org/ericcll/digest0202brecht.html (EDO-FL-02-02).

Broeder, P. & G. Extra. *Language, Ethnicity and Education: Case Studies on Immigrant Minority Languages.* Clevedon (UK): Multilingual Matters, 1999.

Carrasquillo, A. *Hispanic Children and Youth in the United States: A Resource Guide*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1991.

Carrasquillo, A. & P. Segan. *The Teaching of Reading in Spanish to the Bilingual Student,* 2nd ed. Mahwah (NJ): Lawrence Erlbaum, 1998.

Carreira, M. M. "Profiles of SNS Students in the twenty first century: Pedagogical Implications of the Changing Demographics and Social Status of U Hispanics," pp. 51-77 in A. Roca & M. C. Colombi, eds. *Mi lengua: Spanish as a Heritage Language in the United States.* Washington (DC): Georgetown University Press, 2003.

Cho, G. "The role of Heritage Language in Social Interaction and Relationships: Reflections from a Language Minority Group," *Bilingual Research Journal* 24 (2000): 333-348

Colombi, M. C. & F. X. Alarcon, eds. *La ensenaza del espanol a hispanohablantes: Praxis y teoria*. Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Cotton, E. G. and J. M. Sharp. Spanish in the Americas. Washington (DC): Georgetown University Press, 1988.

Cummings, J. *Bilingualism and Special Education: Issues in Assessment and Pedagogy*. San Diego (CA): College Hill, 1984.

Fishman, J. "Linguistic Heterogeneity, Civil Strife and Per Capita Gross National Product in Inter-Polity Perspective, " pp. 9-20 in A. Roca & J. Lipski, eds. *Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Contact and Diversity*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993.

Floyd, M. B. "Language Acquisition and Use of the Subjunctive in Southwest Spanish," pp. 31-41 in J.J. Bergen and G. D. Bills, eds. *Spanish and Portuguese in Social Context*. Washington (DC) Georgetown University Press, 1983.

Fradd, S. *The Economic Impact of Spanish-Language Proficiency in Metropolitan Miami.* Miami (FL): Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the Cuban American National Council, 1996.

Gaarder, A. Bruce. *Teaching Spanish in School and College to Native Speakers of Spanish.* Washington (DC): US Government Printing Office, 1972.

Garcia, O & R. Otheguy. "The Language Situation of Cuban Americans," pp. 166-192 in S. McKay & S. Wong, eds. *Language Diversity: Problem or Resource?* New York: Newbury House, 1988.

Garcia, O. & R. Otheguy. "*No solo de estandar vive el aula: lo que enseno la educacion bilingue sobre el espanol de Nueva York,''* pp. 156-174 in M. Colombi & F. X. Alarcon, eds. La ensenanza del espanol a hispanohablantes: Praxis y teoria. Boston, (MA): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Guitart, J. M. "Conservative versus radical Dialects in Spanish: Implications for Language Instruction," pp. 167-177. in J. Fishman & G.D. Keller, eds. *Bilingual Education for Hispanic Students in the United States.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1982.

Hidalgo, M. "The Teaching of Spanish to Bilingual Spanish Speakers: A 'Problem' of Inequity," pp. 82-93 in B. Merino, H. Trueba & Samaniego, eds. *Language and Culture in Learning: Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish.* London: Falmer Press, 1993.

Hidalgo, M. "*Criterios normativos e ideologia linguistica: aceptacion y rechazo del espanol de los Estados Unidos*," pp. 109-126. in M. Colombi & F. X. Alarcon, eds. *La ensenanza del espanol a hispanohablantes*: Praxis y Teoria. Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Hidalgo, M. "On the Question of 'Standard' Versus 'Dialect': Implications for Teaching Hispanic College Students," pp. 110-126 in J. Bergen, ed. *Spanish in the United States: Sociolinguistic Issues.* Washington (DC): Georgetown University Press, 1990.

Jensen, F. & T. Lathrop. *The Syntax of the Old Spanish Subjunctive*. The Hague (Netherlands): Mouton, 1973.

Lambert, W. & D. Taylor. : Language in the Lives of Ethnic Minorities: Cuban American Families in Miami," *Applied Linguistics* 17 (1996): 477-500.

Lobaco, J. "Spanish Language Use a Latino Favorite," *Vista* (September, 2000).

Lozano, A. "Teaching Standard versus Non-Standard Spanish," pp. 93-101 in R. St. Clair, G. Valdes & J. Ornstein-Galicia, eds. *Social and Educational Issues in Bilingualism and Biculturalism.* Washington (DC): University Press of America, 1981.

Lynch, A. "Spanish-speaking Miami in Sociolinguistic Perspective: Bilingualism, Recontact and Language Maintenance among the Cuban-Origin Population," pp. 271-283 in A. Roca, ed. *Research on Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Issues and Challenges.* Somerville (MA): Cascadilla Press, 2000.

Martinez, G. A. "Classroom Based Dialect Awareness in Heritage Language Instruction: A Critical Applied Linguistic Approach," *Heritage Language Journal.* Retrieved August 2007 from www.international.ucla.edu/lrc/hlj/article.asp?parentid=3621.

McCoy, F. "The Small Press Turns into a Big Deal." *Hispanic Business* (April 2001): 24-26.

Merino, B. H. Trueba & F. Samaniego, eds. *Language and Culture in Learning: Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish.* London: Falmer Press, 1993.

Peyton, J. K., V. W. Lewelling & P. Winke. *Spanish for Spanish Speakers: Developing Dual Language Proficiency.* ERIC Digest. Retrieved July 2007 from www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/spanish_native.html (EDO-FL-01-09).

Peyton, J. K, D. Ranard & S. McGinnis, eds. *Heritage Languages in America.* Washington (DC): Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics, 2001.

"Radio is Exploding," *Hispanic Market Weekly* (February 14, 2000).

Ramirez, A. "Linguistic Notions of Spanish among Youths from Different Hispanic Groups," pp. 284-295 in A. Roca, ed. *Research on Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Issues and Challenges.* Somerville (MA): Cascadilla Press, 2000.

Silva-Corvalan, C. *"El espanol hablado en Los Angeles: Aspectos sociolinguisticos,"* pp. 140-155 in M. C. Colombi & F. X. Alarcon, eds. *La ensenanza del espanol a hispanohablantes: Praxis y Teoria.* Boston (M): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Smead, R. & J. H. Clegg. *"Aztequismos en el espanol chicano,"* pp. 23-30 in J. J. Bergen, ed. *Spanish in the United States: Sociolinguistic Issues.* Washington (DC): Georgetown University Press, 1990.

Spolsky, B., M. E. Romero, D. Christian, O. D. Kaga, A. Roca & H. Schiffman. Papers presented during a colloquium entitled *National Policy Statement on Heritage Language Development: Toward an Agenda for Action.* October, 2002.

Torreblanca, M. *"El espanol hablado en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos y las normas linguisticas espanolas,"* pp. 133-139 in M. C. Colombi & F. X. Alarcon, eds. *La ensenanza del espanol a hispanohablantes: Praxis y Teoria.* Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Valdes, G. "Heritage Language Students: Profiles and Possibilities," pp. 37-77 in J. K. Peyton, D. Ranard & S. McGinnis, eds. *Heritage Languages in America: Preserving a National Resource.* Washington (DC): Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics, 2001.

Valdes, G. *Learning and Not Learning English: Latino Students in American Schools.* New York: Teachers College Press, 2001.

Valdes, G. *Teaching Spanish to the Hispanic Bilingual: Issues, Aims and Methods.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1981.

Valdes Bernal, S. & N. Gregori Torada. *La lengua Espanola en los Estados Unidos.* Havana: Editorial Academia, 1997.

Van Deusen-Scholl, N. "Toward a Definition of Heritage Language: Sociopolitical and Pedagogical Considerations*," Journal of Language, Identity and Education* 3 (2003): 211-230.

Varela, B. *"El espanol cubanoamericano,"* pp. 173-176 in A. Roca, ed. *Research on Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Issues and Challenges.* Somerville, (MA): Cascadilla Press, 2000.

Webb, J. B. & B. L. Miller. *Teaching Heritage Language Learners: Voices from the Classroom.* Yonkers (NY): ACTFL Series, 2000.

Zentella, A. C. *Growing Up Bilingual: Puerto Rican Children in New York.* Malden (MA): Blackwell, 1997.

Improving Reading for Middle School English Language Learners

Lauren Stephenson, Zayed University, Dubai, UAE,
lauren.stephenson@zu.ac.ae

Barbara Harold, Zayed University, Dubai, UAE,
barbara.harold@zu.ac.ae

Robin Dada, Zayed University, Dubai, UAE,
robin.dada@zu.ac.ae

Abstract

For several years now the College of Education at Zayed University has been involved in teacher professional development and research into teaching practice in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Our teacher education students are introduced to a variety of ways to teach reading within the language curriculum. However, evidence from the practicum indicates that the teaching of reading is problematic in UAE schools. Not only the students but also many classroom teachers struggle with the implementation and assessment of effective reading strategies. Reasons for this appear to include teacher insecurity about the teaching of reading, structural constraints within the classroom program and lack of understanding about the nature of reading resulting in an inability to teach reading as effectively as they could. With this in mind this paper reports on an ongoing longitudinal case study which aims to systematically evaluate current reading techniques used in middle school (Grades 6 and 7) in two government schools. The study identifies local issues in the teaching of reading including reading and assessment methods, variation in student motivation, teacher resistance to student-centered practice, teacher professional learning needs. A professional learning program that is site based, co-constructed, collaborative in nature and that emphasizes action research is proposed. Relatively little evidence exists, particularly in the Middle East, of the actual processes involved in a sustained program based on such a model, or on collaborative research between educational researchers and teachers using such approaches.

Introduction

The UAE are embarking on a wide-ranging reform of their education system that aims to move classroom practice from a predominantly teacher-directed and exam-driven system to a more learner-centered one based on varied methodologies, forms of assessment, and integrated with modern technology. Many teachers in government schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) struggle with the implementation and assessment of effective reading strategies. Evidence from practica and internship suggest that the teaching of reading is particularly problematic among older students who are not confident readers by grade 6. The following questions guided the study:

1. What reading approaches are currently in practice?
2. What are the outcomes of these approaches in the context of students' development of fluency and confidence in reading comprehension?
3. What are the teachers' perceptions of their professional development needs for the teaching of reading?
4. What are the implications of the above three for professional development programs?

Background to the program

The Madares al Ghad (MAG) 'Schools of the Future' program emerged as a joint project between the UAE's Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in response to the numbers of students (over 80%) who leave grade 12 in need of remediation in English language, Arabic language, quantitative reasoning, and technology prior to entry into the country's universities and technical colleges. There are 50 single gender government schools (some of which are multilevel) in the MAG program (18 elementary 13 middle and 22 secondary schools).

The purpose of MAG is to support systemic change through use of research on effective schools and educational change, identification and adaptation of the most promising curriculum resources that facilitate student development of knowledge, skills, and habits of mind in alignment with the newly adopted MOE standards, and development of teacher leadership capacity at the school level. Professional development of teachers is a major component of the MAG program and the building of capacity to support sustainability. One or two experienced master teachers are placed in a school and may mentor 6-10 teachers each to develop professional practices, learning strategies, sound assessment. The underlying approach to professional learning was a mentoring/coaching approach with a focus on action inquiry and collaborative problem solving to promote student learning.

Literature Review

Reading instruction in the UAE has largely focused on the early years. However, as the International Reading Association and National Middle School Association (IRANMSA, 2001) remind us, "a good start is critical, but not sufficient". Given that reading is a part of the way we use language in daily life for enjoyment, to gather information and communicate with others (Tompkins, 2005), continued and systematic reading instruction is essential in the middle school years because it is in these years that the ground work is laid for lifelong reading habits and preferences.

In the UAE, apart from the emphasis on the Holy Qu'ran, oral communication has historically assumed a more important role than written communication and as such less emphasis may have been placed on the use of written text, especially in the home. Current research tells us that reading is a complex cognitive process dependent on an interaction between information processing/decoding skills (bottom up skills) and background knowledge (top down skills) combined with social experiences. Thus the reading process involves much more than decoding from print to sound. It also involves cultural, social and personal knowledge, and the ability to map this knowledge to our understanding of a text.

More recent literacy approaches emphasize situating reading within a broader social and cultural context. In this view reading difficulties stem from a person's inability to access meaning of texts and can be remedied by focussing on a combination of decoding skills, cognitive processes and social experiences. Recent research findings (see Coltheart, 2005; Krashen, 2004) indicate that the foundations of literacy are laid in the early years and that reading programs should be student centered and individually appropriate for all adolescents with ample opportunities to read and discuss texts.

The Australian Government's National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy Report (2005) also advocates early, systematic, integrated and explicit teaching of reading as the most effective way of teaching all children to read, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, text comprehension and fluency.

Burns and de Silva's (2000: xi) four related roles of a reader provide a useful typology for middle school reading teachers. They suggest that throughout the reading process effective readers are code breakers (How can I make meaning of this?); text

participants (What does this text mean?); text users (What do I do within this text?); and text analysts (What does all this do to me?).

The related roles of reading suggest that teachers need to help their students develop strategies for approaching the reading process. This involves helping students to:

1. Understand that reading is an active process involving comprehension of meaning
2. Appreciate that reading involves evaluating and confirming predictions using our social knowledge
3. Recognize that we use different reading strategies depending on the text type and our purpose for reading
4. Identify different text structures, sections of text and the kinds of language used (Hood, Solomon and Burns, 2002)

Teaching quality has strong positive effects on students' experiences of language learning and schooling. Students want teachers who care and encourage them; know and understand their subject; treat each student as an individual; make learning the core of what happens in the classroom and manage distractions that disrupt and prevent learning (Ramsey, 2000).

Methodology

The project was an ongoing longitudinal study of grade six and seven reading instruction in English in two government grade 6-9 schools in the second year of the MAG educational reform program. The girls' school (with approximately 600 students and 50 teachers) serviced grades 6-9 in an established upper middle class neighborhood and the boys' school (with similar student and teacher numbers) was situated in a newly developing middle class home neighborhood. Teachers in both schools came from the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Syria. The two principals were very supportive of the MAG program and the girls' school had an excellent and well established professional development program of workshops for teachers.

Using case study techniques, in-depth analysis of the process of ongoing teacher professional learning was carried out. Data were collected through observations of teachers providing reading instruction, document analysis of curriculum and teaching materials and focus group interviews with teachers and instructional leaders in the two schools and the MAG program about their reading program. We also conducted further interviews with key leaders from the research sample to build upon data collected.

Data analysis was based on the identification of relevant categories using an inductive process in order to determine the categories. Referring to Miles and Huberman's (1994, p.9) set of "analytic moves" we used a cyclical process to analyze the data comprising of reading and rereading the data and highlighting significant categories; identifying commonalities and differences in the data; developing concepts; categorizing for interpreting the data and reviewing literature in the areas of teaching reading and collaborative professional learning. The following categories emerged:

1. Reading and assessment methods used
2. Motivation
3. Curriculum and resources
4. Professional learning
5. Professional development needs.

Findings

Current reading and assessment methods used in two MAG schools

Participants reported that reading is taught from once a week to every lesson in both schools. Student's preferences for texts were stated unanimously as short story with the boys' school adding 'pictures to support the text'. A range of strategies, either psychological or pedagogical in nature, were suggested to develop students reading skills. Psychological support mechanisms included reducing pressure on students, encouraging, and providing a safe environment for them to read.

Teachers at the boys' school claimed to use strategies such as modeling, echo reading, practice reading of sentences and paragraphs, developing micro-skills and the use of organizers. Teachers at the girls' school also used these strategies plus additional more specific strategies such as comprehension questions, guided reading prediction, brainstorming and retelling. However, during observation the researchers saw a much narrower range of strategies which emphasized pre- reading, during-reading and post-reading techniques. The researchers only observed one instance of a teacher reading aloud. Instead the stronger students were frequently asked to read aloud.

For the most part the observed lessons were teacher-centered. Active participation and discussion about the texts being read was limited to a more traditional approach where the teacher asked comprehension questions and children responded individually. Group and pair work involved silently scanning for answers and sharing individual answers rather than meaningful discussion about the new information in the text. When asked to comment on the main reading challenges **students** faced, the boys' teachers focused on the influence of Arabic and the lack of knowledge of the English alphabet whereas in the girls' school the focus was on weak grammar and pronunciation.

The challenges faced by **teachers** at the boys' school were related to proficiency level, lack of suitable resources and behaviour management. Proficiency level was also mentioned as a significant challenge at the girls' school, along with lack of participation. In dealing with these challenges teachers at the boys' school focused more on the feelings, emotions and support for the boys than teachers at the girls' school and in both cases they mentioned the creation of different questions and activities, simplifying the content. Teachers at the girls' school claimed to use group work; however observations indicated that this was in the form of seating arrangements rather than collaborative discussion and negotiation around text.

Teachers at both schools claimed to differentiate their instruction through different types of questions, different reading texts, grading material and calling on better readers to model text. However, apart from calling on the better readers, we did not see evidence of this. Comments from the boys' teachers tended to relate to the typical pre-text, text and post-text reading stages of assessment within a lesson. One stated that he identified expectations and tried to raise students' willingness "to have a go" and to believe in themselves as readers. Teachers at the girls' school claimed to use a wider range of more specific assessment strategies approaches than at the boys' school (e.g. quizzes, peer evaluation, group assessment and 'ongoing' assessment). Again these strategies were not observed by the researchers.

Motivation

At the boys' school teachers reported that a small number were motivated, a larger group were reluctant, but able to be encouraged as their confidence grew, and a majority feared reading and lacked skills and confidence. The girls' school reported that the majority

of students liked reading. Observations indicated that at both schools the children were lively and that many had an air of purpose during the lesson. In one class at the boys' school there were some children who appeared disengaged and disinterested in the topic, texts and tasks and who either ignored the teacher or engaged in inappropriate behaviour. In this and some other cases language proficiency impacted the level of engagement in the class. Although behavioral issues were apparent in the boys' classrooms the teachers were using some effective strategies to contain these. There were also some managerial issues around the kind of tasks that were being chosen. In one case, group activities seemed to have fewer instances of children off task.

Motivation strategies were largely extrinsic such as praise, encouragement and rewards/ gifts. The boys' teachers commented that some of the boys feared speaking and reading in English and two commented that parents should be more involved. Most teachers acknowledged that exposure to a greater range of text types would foster a greater love of reading but we did not see evidence of this in the classroom. There did not seem to be much encouragement for students to read for pleasure. We were told of one teacher who had scanned an appropriate text and introduced it to the boys in his class but such instances were uncommon. Teachers not only maintained control of text choice but also task design and interaction and there seemed few opportunities for students to take initiative in text choice. The classrooms observed had some charts, vocabulary lists and rules on the walls but were not print rich and had no areas to promote reading for pleasure.

Curriculum and resources

The researchers observed a perceived helplessness on the part of some teachers who felt that they could not have any impact on the relentless external expectations and drive of the curriculum and assessment. There was a tension between the amount of material to be covered in the syllabus and the speed at which the boys, in particular, could process this, which raised the frustration level of teachers and students.

Teachers at the girls' school commented that the primary curriculum needed to provide a better foundation for the teaching and learning of reading because by the time many of the students reached preparatory level they had developed negative attitudes about reading in English. As a counter some teachers commented on the importance of parental involvement but this was also problematic because some of the parents do not use English themselves.

Teachers were well aware of the limitations of the current resources. While teachers at both schools commented on the use of texts, Powerpoint and the Web and supplementary reading materials (as provided by MAG) the researchers only observed material taken directly from the limited text range of the Harcourt course book and, in some cases, from student made texts within the classroom. Teachers in both schools had mixed perceptions about the effectiveness of course book material ranging from concerns about the vocabulary level to cultural applicability. Both groups also commented on the need for opportunities for reading for pleasure where students are not being "tested'.

Professional learning

Schools in the MAG program were asked to schedule time for teacher professional learning. Interestingly teachers did not explicitly recognize the underlying philosophy of professional learning in the MAG structure and most thought time for professional learning meant workshops "done to you" by outside "experts". To counter this the teacher mentor in the girls' school began by encouraging weekly English department and grade level meetings for teachers to share together ways of improving student reading proficiency. Such meetings were a novel approach in the school as prior to the MAG program teachers had largely

planned individually and taught behind closed doors and observers were definitely not welcome. As such at the beginning of the program the teaching teams struggled to work effectively as teams because of an existing culture of individual performance, competition and lack of sharing. However this attitude had changed considerably by the time the researchers entered the schools.

Initially the teachers had expected the mentors to create lesson plans for them so some initial time was spent in clarifying the mentors' role. The mentors adopted a scaffolded approach and began by writing lesson plans and activities. Later, as the teachers' confidence improved, mentors encouraged teachers to become more autonomous and plan independently as a team. As a result both schools had built teams of teachers who were becoming more comfortable with sharing ideas and task distribution to create common lesson plans that enabled students to meet the reading standards, reflection on their own practice and peer observations.

Observations supported the mentors' reports that informal learning in communities of professional practice was becoming more of the norm. The teachers at the girls' school themselves commented on how much "more rewarding the reading teaching had become" as a result of the developing collegiality. The boys' teachers saw themselves as a 'culture within a culture'. In the focus group interview at their school a developing community of practice was evident where the teachers generated a range of possible strategies that if pursued could impact student learning (e.g. working with computer teachers to help students generate their own stories for reading; differentiating material more effectively; and scanning suitable texts to encourage student discussion before reading).

Professional development needs

The teacher mentor in the girls' school noticed that teachers were both unwilling and unable to articulate their own professional development needs at the start of the MAG program. She believed this stemmed from a fear of losing their jobs if they admitted they did not know how to teach and assess reading. When the researchers asked about professional development needs, teachers in both schools identified observations, communication with friends, accessing good resources, workshops on 'new' strategies, with time given to experiment with a range of strategies. Teachers at the boys' school also articulated specific program needs based on their assessment of the boys' reading progress including a need for strategies to deal with curriculum coverage and ways to engage students in more authentic texts and language.

Some teachers in the girls' school faced English proficiency/pronunciation challenges of which poor teacher modeling of written text was the most common. This was a sensitive matter that required careful handling by mentors to avoid raising teacher anxiety levels. In addition, most teachers in the girls' school had not used technology before. On the other hand, the male teachers were observed competently using projectors and computer technology in the classroom as part of the lesson. Teachers at the girls' school were not comfortable being observed and tended to view observations with suspicion and concern.

Discussion

What was evident in our observations and interviews was that teachers were operating from a 'bottom up' perspective and the approach to reading did not utilize the 'integrated' methodology suggested in recent research (e.g. Coltheart, 2005). In both schools teachers appeared to focus on the micro-skills of reading rather than comprehension and the approach emphasized the mechanics of reading. They were typically reading at the 'code breaker' level of Burns and de Silva's (2000) typology with some tentative forays into the 'text participant'

level. Rather than applying a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts students were asked to focus on pre-text, text and post-text activities for reading. However, there was no apparent focus on learning how skillful readers manage cognitive strategies before, during and after reading.

According to IRANMSA (2001) adolescents need opportunities to read material they choose and should be read to each school day. The findings indicate that students at both schools had limited reading experience during the week. The classrooms were not sufficiently literature rich to provide students with many opportunities to interact with texts of all types including fiction and non-fiction. Students were exposed to a narrow range of text types and genres. There were limited opportunities for students to listen to stories, read accessible and predictable books, enact dialogues or write texts. Free, voluntary, independent and sustained reading were not evident, a practice which is strongly linked with gains in reading achievement (Krashen, 2004).

Routman (2003) notes that reading aloud provides children with opportunities to hear language that they cannot yet read independently. However, the researchers did not observe an emphasis on this. Teachers at the girls' school commented that their students lacked the ability to pronounce words in print with an emphasis on productive skills rather than the comprehension of written text. Several teachers also faced pronunciation challenges when reading aloud thus presenting students with inaccurate models of English. There was an emphasis on assessment rather than encouraging a low risk environment. Readers need to take risks in a safe environment in order to develop their reading abilities. Success in reading builds reading power and fluency.

Research suggests that quality teaching be learner-centered (see Ramsey, 2000; Slade, 2002). The teachers we observed all appeared to care about their students and tried their best to foster learning in their classrooms and the majority believed student learning was improving as a result of improved teaching strategies and there was less teacher resistance to change. However, some resistance to student-centered practice still existed because of the external curriculum and assessment requirements. Coverage of curriculum content and a concern that students were unable to handle learner-centered techniques remained causes of anxiety. The researchers observed some classes where significant ground work was needed before students could work effectively in groups.

Among some teachers at the girls' school there was a defeatist attitude about their ability to affect learning. This appeared to reflect a disposition about the way children learn and an underlying philosophy about teaching and learning. For example, one stated "They just can't read so what can I do?" indicating a lack of recognition of the role played by the teacher. At the boys' school, however, teachers were aware of the negative attitude towards books/reading of many students but spoke of potential strategies to overcome this (e.g. making their own books for reading). Although these teachers could identify possibilities that could impact successfully with the students they appeared unsure about how to take the next step in operationalizing these ideas.

In Ramsey (2000) and Slade's (2002) terms, the majority of teachers in the study wanted to provide their students with caring, supportive, meaningful and well managed learning environments. The researchers in the current study observed less rigidity, greater attention to pre-text and post-text strategies; some teachers appeared to be much more open to more learner centered approaches; and several were willing to try new ideas. The mentor leaders clearly supported and encouraged the mentor teachers and worked together with them to create a culture of change in safe and positive ways. Ongoing feedback, praise and recognition of good work and progress occurred in the researchers' presence. Still, teachers appeared to require statistical evidence of how certain approaches improve student reading.

This may stem from the culture of the MoE where 'hard' statistical evidence is frequently preferred and qualitative comments or research are not as easily understood and utilized.

Another issue teachers and change agents face is the general impatience with giving **time** for an innovation to work. As a result the UAE gets caught up in a similar challenge faced elsewhere in the world, of `rapid fire' introduction of innovation and high expectations for immediate change without allowing sufficient time for implementation to occur.

What was evident was that teachers were at differing places on the change continuum according to their experience, knowledge self-efficacy and confidence to try out new approaches. It was also interesting to note that while they could readily define professional development as workshops and presentations, most had not really reflected on their own current position in the MAG program as an **ongoing** professional learning context. The male teachers were aware of this, to a certain degree, when they spoke of being a 'culture within a culture'. What they could see was that the new approaches they were using were impacting on the attitude of the boys towards engagement in the English classrooms. The extent to which they shared and reflected on this was not clear during the initial observations but the School Level Team Leader was instrumental in providing public feedback and positive commentary on classroom successes.

Recommendations

The study has indicated that the approach to professional development used in these schools has led to some changes in pedagogy, and reading instruction in particular. It has also indicated some improvement in student attitude. However it was obvious that some systemic factors were still influencing the timing and depth of change. The project findings highlight five areas where more professional development is needed. These are:

1. Developing cultures of learning
2. Dealing with struggling readers
3. Differentiating instruction
4. Instructional leadership support
5. Teacher professional learning support

Our recommendation is that the MoE provide funding for schools to implement high-quality literacy programs ensuring that young adolescents are surrounded in their classroom and school libraries by a range of new, interesting, and diverse reading materials and implement a professional development program that will prepare teachers to integrate identified reading instruction strategies and measure success of these strategies in their students' reading achievement across content areas and school settings. We further recommend that such a program builds on successful elements of the current MAG program and that it is site based, co-constructed, and collaborative in nature where action research is emphasized as the professional learning approach. Within this safer environment teachers who at first may reject a new idea may yet assimilate that idea and make it their own (Scherer, 2009). This approach has proven success in Emirati schools and institutions (see Stephenson and Harold, 2007, 2009). In developing this model, our previous learnings suggest some inherent guiding principles:

1. Participants work in collaboration to foster individual and collective learning
2. Participants define the intended learning outcomes and learning activities
3. Participants engage in learning activities in their own work place
4. Participants are given resources to plan and implement inquiry, reflection and evaluation
5. Participants recognize that professional learning is context specific, time consuming, messy, and fluid (Harold & Stephenson, 2006).

In the content specific areas (dealing with struggling readers, differentiating content) we recommend that action research is used as a method of classroom inquiry where teachers can identify specific concerns, plan an intervention and evaluate it through discussion with colleagues engaged in similar inquiry. This will allow for best practice approaches to be identified and further implemented. The current study has allowed for a brief but focused look at the teaching of reading inside English classrooms in two UAE schools. It has underscored the need for further ongoing research into a wider range of schools and for the urgent implementation of new approaches to professional learning and the development of effective communities of practice.

Conclusion

During the last three years of the MAG project significant learning has occurred at student and teacher programmatic levels. In both the boys' and girls' schools in this study the principals demonstrated instructional leadership and promoted ongoing professional learning. As a result these teachers are better able to teach reading.

Individual teachers range across a continuum of knowledge in their understanding and use of particular reading strategies and in feelings of self efficacy and confidence. The focus is still predominantly on production skills rather than on reading comprehension and that schools face systemic difficulties relating to curriculum rigidity and lack of resources. Further they struggle to overcome negative attitudes within the student body and a general reluctance to engage with English texts. What is also apparent, however, is the emergence from the MAG approach of the initial elements of professional learning communities which can be strengthened and built upon though the professional learning model suggested above. The project has enhanced individual and collective teacher professional learning and will continue to be of value as they continue in the profession. Educational reform continues in the UAE and the skills of collaborative planning and teaching will serve all teachers within the system. The authors advocate that principals continue to allocate collaborative time for planning and informal teacher learning through teaming, coaching and mentoring activities. In addition as policies are being reviewed principals need to ensure that time is given to collaborative planning, instructional design meetings and reflection on reading instruction delivery.

References

Burns. A. and de Silva J. (Eds.). (2000). Changing approaches to investigating and teaching reading. In A. Burns and H. de Silva Joyce (Eds.), *Teachers' voices 5: A new look at reading practices*, (pp x-xv). Sydney: NCELTR.

Coltheart, M. (2005). Quality teaching and the literacy debate, *Professional Educator*. 4 (1) 5.

Harold, Barbara, & Stephenson, Lauren. (2006). *A new model for teacher professional learning: The co-construction of communities of practice.* Paper presented at the BERA Conference, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK (6-9 September).

Hood, S., Solomon, N., and Burns, A. (2002). *Focus on reading*, Sydney: NCELTR.

International Reading Association and National Middle School Association (Fall, 2001) Position paper entitled *Supporting Young Adolescents' Literacy Learning*. Retrieved on 1 November 2009 from http://www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/PositionStatements/ReadingInstruction/tabid/284/Default.aspx

Krashen, S. (2004). *The power of reading: Insights from the research.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage

National inquiry into the teaching of literacy, *Executive Summary*. (2005). Australian Government, Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved on 29 January 2007 from http://www.dest.gov.au/nitl/documents/executive_summary.pdf

Ramsey, G. (2000). *Quality matters- revitalizing teaching: Critical times, critical choices*. Report of the Review of Teacher Education. Sydney. NSW: NSW Department of Education and Training [ISBN 0731078842].

Routman, R. (2003). *Reading essentials: The specifics you need to teach reading well*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Scherer, M. (2009). Perspectives/All teachers can learn. *Educational Leadership* 66 (5). 7.

Slade, M. (2002). *Listening to the boys: Issues and problems influencing school achievement and retention*. Series: Flinders University Institute of International Education Research Collection, Number 5. Adelaide, SA: Shannon Research Press.

Stephenson, Lauren & Harold, Barbara. (2007). *Creating a culture of action research*. Ticketed session presented by Dr Stephenson at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Conference, Anaheim, USA (17-19 March).

Stephenson, Lauren & Harold, Barbara. (2009). The impact of action research on teacher leadership and professional learning. *Journal of Research in Education* 19, (in press)

Tompkins, G. (2005). *Literacy for the 21st century*. New Jersey: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Italian-Canadian, Italian-Australian and Italian Adolescent Speech: A Contemporary Analysis

Biagio Aulino, EdD Graduate, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Biagio.Aulino@gmail.com

Roberto Bergami, School of Economics and Finance, Institute for Community, Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia
Roberto.Bergami@vu.edu.au

Abstract

This paper discusses the findings of three separate studies conducted at secondary schools in Canada, Australia and Italy. The main purposes of these studies were to identify the existence and use of adolescent-specific language and phrases with their distinct meaning, and discover whether commonalities exist in the development of these social dialects across the three different research populations.

The existence of commonalities would suggest the development of global social dialects linked to generational issues, whereas the absence of such commonalities would suggest a development of social dialects in discrete communities without links to others. Patterns of adolescent communication are evident in the data and these have been categorized as emotive, connotative and clique-coded language discourses. These categories allow cross-cultural comparisons of Italian adolescent discourse across the separate populations. The study reported in this paper is on adolescents who have been studying Italian for at least two years, regardless of variables such as heritage and physical location. The Italian language, therefore, becomes the constant factor for the cross-cultural comparison.

The paper firstly provides a short introduction, followed by a summary of the most relevant literature. A framework for the study is provided and the methodology is described.

The paper concludes acknowledging that the results of these studies support previous research findings in Australia, North America and Europe, that noted the manifestation of adolescent communication through a distinct and recognizable speech code.

Keywords: *adolescent speech; Italian as a second language; connotative language discourse; clique-coded language discourse; Italian-Canadian adolescent language; Italian adolescent language; Italian-Australian adolescent language.*

Introduction

Students undertaking second language studies of Italian in Canada and Australia, and English in Italy, at the secondary level, appear to display unique speech varieties constituting a particular discourse code.

In order to gain further understanding about these speech varieties and their meaning, exploratory research studies were conducted to learn whether Italian-Canadian, Italian-Australian and Italian adolescent communications display patterns that may be categorized as slang.

Slang refers to the coinage and use of an informal vocabulary that is different from the mother language's standard vocabulary (2005; Aulino & Bergami, 2008; Bergami & Aulino, 2009; Clivio & Danesi, 2000). Slang is often used in short lived coinages of words, with meanings changing over time. The research studies also explore changes in the meaning and usage of adolescent slang.

Research on adolescent speech

A wealth of researchers have contributed to the scientific investigation of languages over the past four decades. Among some of the most important contributions are the ethnographic research of Eckert (1986,1998,1989,2000) and Mendoza-Denton (1994,1996,1997) and the research by of Danesi (2008) and Savan (2005 on adolescent pop language, the works of Leona (1978); Munro (1989) and Shapiro (1985) on the language of teenagers, as well as McLuhan (1962) on the influence of the media.. Other contributions have also been made by Labov (1992) on teenage vocabulary, Jakobson (1960) on models of verbal communication and Aulino (2005); Aulino & Bergami, (2008); Bergami & Aulino (2009); Clivio & Danesi (2000); and Danesi (2003a) on connotative speech patterns. Canadian, Australian and Italian youth speech patterns and clique-coded speech patterns have been the subject of research by Aulino (2008); Chiro (2003, 2007, 2008); Cortelazzo, (1994); Danesi (1989, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 1999, 2003b); De Paoli (1988); Dinelli & Clulow (2002); Marcato (1995, 1997); Nuessel (1999); and Rizzi (1985). Clique-code speech patterns were researched by Bergami & Aulino (2009) and Danesi (1989, 1986a). Bakhtin's (1981) research resulted in the development of the 'carnival theory' that is helpful in understanding of social norms of youth culture. It is not possible to comment on each of these authors' work, due to the length limitations in this paper, however, the most relevant literature is referred to later in this paper.

An important aspect of adolescent speech varieties is the recognition of the importance of the usage of slang (Danesi,1997; Nuessel, 1999; Aulino,2005; Bergami& Aulino, 2009). Although the origin of slang is uncertain, there is evidence of its use by adolescents over many centuries. The use of slang is an attempt by adolescents to separate themselves from adults. They attempt to forge their own identity by using a different speech code. This behaviour has occurred since at least the Middle Ages, where 'lupi' (wolves) was synonymous with spies, as far as university students were concerned. The lupi were spies who reported people for using the vernacular instead of the main language of Latin (Eble, 1989, p. 11).

Clivio & Danesi (2000) define this special communication tool used by young persons as 'pubilect', (p.183) which is a social dialect of puberty, a contraction of puberty and dialect. Clivio & Danesi (2000) claim that pubilect is "simply the sociolect of teenagers" (p. 183), consequently, they regard pubilect as a primary vehicle for carrying out appropriate social interaction with peers

A framework for studying adolescent discourse

Adolescent speech patterns may be classified into three main discourse categories: Emotive Language Discourse (ELD), Connotative Language Discourse (CLD), and Clique-Coded Language Discourse (CCLD) (Clivio & Danesi, 2000; Danesi, 1989, 1994, 1997, 2003a, 2003b). This paper focuses on CLD only.

Adolescent discourse is part of Roman Jakobson's (1960) model of verbal communication. Clivio & Danesi (2000) listed *constituents* that determine different communicative functions according to Jakobson (1960). In relation to clique-coded, this is primarily about the themes and topics that are of direct interest to the specific cliques to which they belong.

Jakobson's (1960) analysis of verbal communication suggests that discourse is a much more complex situation than just a simple transfer – it is motivated and influenced by the participants, setting, message contents and the codes used (Clivio & Danesi, 2000). In other words, discourse makes an emotional claim on everyone in the social situation, as it is a form of acting, of presenting self through language. Jakobson's (1960) model clearly points out the role of communication.

Verbal communication among adolescents is based on diverse forms of expression-gestures, the vocal language, and the need to engage in shared action, all of which play an important role in communicative competence. Jakobson's (1960) model can be applied to any communicative interaction occurring in the second language (SL) classroom. It can serve as the basis for developing new methods and techniques for SL teaching of Italian (Danesi, 1989, 2003b). Consequently, the discussion of the research findings in this paper uses a framework of data analysis that focuses on aspects of CLD. Before considering the framework of analysis, it is appropriate to consider the methodology used for this research, and this is briefly detailed in the next section.

Methodology

After obtaining appropriate ethics approval, three separate studies were conducted, in Australia, Canada and Italy, as detailed below. It should be noted that the discussion of the findings in this paper are limited to Connotative Language Discourse.

The Australian study

Students from a secondary school in the State of Victoria, Australia, who had studied Italian for at least twelve months in Years 8 and 10, were asked to complete a written questionnaire. The survey asked students to complete a series of questions ranging from listing the most commonly used words, 'teenalect' items to describe other teenagers and providing synonyms for the word 'cool'. Participation was completely voluntary, and subject to prior written parental approval. Data were collected from twenty-five adolescents (nineteen males and six females) between the ages of thirteen and sixteen.

The Canadian study

The Australian study was similarly replicated with high school students in Canada. Students who were undertaking Italian studies at either grade 10 or 12 level or who had studied Italian language for at least twelve months were asked to complete a written questionnaire. Students who had any prior knowledge of the language were also invited to participate in the study. Participation was completely voluntary, and subject to prior written parental approval. Data were collected from fifteen adolescents (five males and ten females) between the ages of fifteen and eighteen.

The Italian study

A similar approach to the ones used in Australia and Canada was also applied to the research undertaken in Italy. Whilst the Australian and Canadian studies were seeking information from SL Italian students, the Italian study was seeking information from SL English students. A survey was distributed to secondary school students in two Italian regions. Participation was completely voluntary, and subject to prior written parental approval. In the Sicily region, in Palermo, nine adolescents (eight males and one female) between the ages of thirteen and fourteen responded to the survey. In the Lazio region, in Cassino, twenty-three adolescents (twelve males and eleven females) between the ages of sixteen and nineteen responded, and in Rome, data were collected from nineteen adolescents (seven males and twelve females). In total fifty-one written responses were obtained from SL English secondary school students.

Connotative Language Discourse (CLD)

Connotative language discourse (CLD) refers to the tendency of teenagers to coin words and phrases, or to extend the meaning of other word and phrases, in highly connotative and

suggestive ways. Connotation is at the core of the adolescent's linguistic modelling (Aulino, 2005; Bergami & Aulino, 2009; Clivio & Danesi, 2000; Danesi, 1997, 2003a, 2003b).

Apart from the coining of words, metaphors play an important role in CLD. Metaphors play an integral role in the social dialect of teenagers which can be referred to 'teenalect' (Aulino, 2005; Bergami & Aulino, 2009). The work of Lakoff and Johnson (1987; 1980) in linguistics is perhaps the most relevant to the discussion of CLD.

Most slang items enjoy a brief time of popularity (Eble, 1996). Each different generation of adolescents utilises a special 'lingo', a set of words and expressions that they use in their conversations (Labov, 1982). Consequently, to establish whether these slang terms are used, and to what degree they are used across the three surveyed cohorts, a cross-cultural comparison is necessary. Indeed, one of the principle aims of the studies was to undertake a cross-cultural comparison of responses between the Australian, Canadian and Italian research, based on earlier research by Aulino (2005).

The survey instruments used in these studies aimed to quantify the frequency of teenage vocabulary usage in the Labovian (1982) tradition by examining particular usage of certain phrases, words and metaphors. The results of the research findings are discussed in the next section.

Research findings and discussion

The research finding for each of the studies conducted in Australia, Canada and Italy are respectively presented below, together with a brief discussion of each.

Italian-Australian survey findings

Most popular words

Table 1 shows the most popular words used by Italian-Australian adolescent students that participated in this study.

Table 1: Most Commonly Used Words by Italian-Australian Adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Wassup?/Sup?	72
LOL (laugh out loud)	52
Tank	32
ROFL (rolling on the floor laughing)	16
Buon giorno	12
Ciao	12

The Italian-Australian data reveals the use of "net lingo" that Crystal (2006) defines simply as a language designed for efficiency of communication, so that a message can be sent in the shortest time possible. Australian adolescents are using abbreviations as part of their off-line communication with their peers. Among the words listed in Table 1 that can be categorized as a type of "netspeak" (Crystal, 1997, 2003) are the following acronyms: 'LOL', for Laugh Out Loud and 'ROFL' for Rolling On The Floor Laughing. "Acronyms are composed by the combination of the first letter of every word within a phrase" (Danesi, 2006b, p. 84). These abbreviations also reveal some of the features and characteristics of hip-hop style (Cook, 2004; Danesi, 2008; Savan, 2005) and manifest various CLD features.

Teenalect

Table 2 shows the top three responses of Italian-Australian "teenalect" items used to describe other adolescents.

Table 2: "Teenalect" items to describe other Italian-Australian adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Cool!	40
Tank	24
Muzza's	20

The word 'cool' was ranked first by the Australian respondents. In pop culture, the word "cool" is used in reference to rock singers, famous celebrities and rappers (Danesi, 2008), therefore, no matter their preference of music, style or lingo they all reported the same image associated with coolness. The word 'cool' in the Australian context connotes "*someone who wears tight clothes, usually from Italian or Latino descent, listens to freestyle music and speaks with certain Soprano type cadence*". A 'muzza' in the Italian-Australian study connotes "*someone of Southern European descent, Italian or Greek and born and raised in Melbourne and makes use of hip-hop lingo*".

Synonyms for cool

Table 3 summarizes the most commonly used expressions for the word 'cool'. Among the words produced by the Italian Australian teenagers were the following metaphors

Table 3: Synonyms for the word "cool" used by Italian-Australian adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Awesome	72
Mad	24
Sick	20
Sweet	20
Tank	20

The words 'awesome', 'mad' and 'tank display metaphorical meanings that are associated with pop culture (Danesi, 2008; Savan, 2005).The items 'sick' and 'sweet' were used as synonyms for the word 'cool'. The word 'cool' has staying power beyond teenagehood, in fact it is not limited only to youth, but also adults. The majority of synonyms provided by the teenagers will not be used beyond their early twenties. Historically in linguistics, the word 'cool' was also associated with teenagers as evidenced in youth literature such as Catcher in the Rye (Salinger, 1951).

Italian-Canadian survey findings

Most popular words

The words most commonly used by the Italian-Canadian adolescents that participated in the research are summarized at Table 4. The data in Table 4 show that more Italian words are being used by Italian-Canadian adolescent students in this study than in previous studies (Aulino, 2005; Aulino & Bergami, 2008; Bergami & Aulino, 2009; Clivio & Danesi, 2000; Danesi, 1994, 1997).

Table 4: Most Commonly Used Words by Italian-Canadian Adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Ciao! (Hi!)	57
Come stai? (How are you?)	50
Bro (Friend)	36
Bene! (Well!)	21
Che cosa fai? (What are you doing?	20

It can be noted from Table 4 that there is only one English word appearing in the five most commonly used words. This the word 'Bro" that derives from hip-hop culture (Danesi, 2008) and is also used as an abbreviation for the word 'brother' (Bergami & Aulino, 2009).

It is interesting to note that although the borrowing of Italian words was evident as part of their daily communicative exchanges, for both the Australian and the Canadian groups, their ranking varied widely. Among the Italian words used by the Italian-Australian teenagers were 'buon giorno' and 'ciao', but these words have comparatively low usage. One explanation for this variation, it is argued here, is the difference among the surveyed populations.

Among the Italian-Canadian students surveyed, as shown in Table 4, the use of the words 'ciao' and 'come stai' rank one and two respectively. One explanation for this variation, it is argued here, is the difference among the surveyed populations. The Canadian cohort appears to exist among a more homogenous group of people, where the Italian influence may be higher than in the comparatively more ethnically diverse Australian environment. It is generally accepted that there is a link between culture and environmental factors and, this being the case, the higher the concentration of a specific cultural group the greater the likelihood of that language's use, regardless of the generational differences.

Teenalect

Table 5 shows the top five responses of Italian-Canadian "teenalect" items used to describe other adolescents.

Table 5: "Teenalect" items to describe other Italian Canadian adolescents

Synonyms	Percentage
Rocker	(67)
Gothic/Emo	(53)
Bro	(47)
Ripped/Jacked	(40)
Gino/a	(20)

The word 'rocker' was ranked first by the Canadian respondents. This would be similar to the Australian respondents selection of the word' cool' which can also refer to rock singers (Danesi, 2008). The second most popular word used by the Canadian students to describe other teenagers was 'Gothic', also referred to as 'emo'. The word 'emo' connotes "*someone who dresses in black clothes, has dark hair, pale skin, dark make –up and listen to hardcore music*". The word 'ripped' or 'jacked' would be similar to the word provided by the Australian respondents as someone who is "cool", "muscular" and 'awesome". The word 'gino/a' has a similar meaning to the word 'cool' as used by the Australian-Italian adolescents. In the Italian-Canadian context, sometimes the word 'guido/s' is used as a

substitute for the word 'gino/a'. The Canadian respondents, like their Australian counterparts, make use of words that are associated to pop culture.

Synonyms for cool

Table 6 summarizes the most commonly used expressions for the word 'cool'. The aim was to compare these responses, as much as possible, to the earlier work of Danesi (1999; 2003a; 2003b; 2008). Among the words used by the Italian-Canadian teenagers were the following metaphors: 'sick', 'mint', 'That's bomb!' and 'That's hot!'. The word 'cool' crystallizes an example of the essence of pop language, which is the language of pop culture (Savan, 2005).

Table 6: Synonyms for the word 'cool' by Italian-Canadian adolescents

Synonyms	Percentage
Sick	64
Mint	36
That's bomb!	29
That's hot!	21

The Italian-Canadian students make use of pop language mainly as a 'metaphorical' meaning.

Italian survey findings

Most popular words

The CLD categories in the Italian-Australian and Italian-Canadian studies show a high degree of correlation to the Italian Adolescent Speech (IAS) data. In the Italian survey, students were asked to give as many words or expressions that they use when they dialogue with their friends either online or offline, and this is summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Most popular words used by Italian students

Word Use	Percentage
CMQ- Comunque (however)	53
N'ZiZa'-Non si sa (unknown)	31
XCHE/XK- perche' (because/why)	28
IAMMI- Andiamo! (let's go!)	25
Bello/a (beautiful)	23

The data show that Italian teenagers make use of "net lingo" (Crystal, 2006) and "linguanet" (Danesi, 2008) when exchanging messages with their peers. Linguanet is the language used for online communications, across a wide variety of media, such as email, instant messaging and virtual social networks (Danesi, 2008). The findings of the study tend to support recent research that shows that Italian teenagers make use of many text messages in e-mails and blogs (Abatantuono et al., 2006).

Teenalect

Participants were asked to describe other teenagers and to provide a definition for these descriptions. A summary of the data is shown at Table 8.

Table 8: "Teenalect" items to describe other Italian adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Figo/fico	45
Ganzo	37
Secchione	35
Truzzo	33
Wappo/Uappo	31

A 'wappo' and a 'ganzo' (ganzo and figo/fico are also used as a synonym for cool, as discussed in the next section) were defined by the participants as someone who is "*bello, simpatico, divertente, forte and as a persona alla moda*" (good-looking, charming, amusing, strong and a person in vogue). In previous research (Aulino, 2005) 'ganzo' and 'togo' were defined as someone being "*stupendo, spettacoloso and forte, divertente, affascinante and 'bello*" (stupendous, spectacular and strong, amusing, fascinating and good-looking). The IAS data reveals a new synonym for the teenalect items 'ganzo' and 'togo' – this is 'wappo', and it is widely used among Italian adolescents today. 'Truzzo' as someone who "*si veste male, fuori moda, non elegante*" (dresses badly, not in fashion, not elegant).

The teenalect item a 'secchione' defines as someone that "*pensa solo a studiare*" (only thinks about studying) has remained unchanged when compared to previous studies (Aulino, 2000; Aulino, 2005; Clivio & Danesi, 2000; Danesi, 1994, 1997).

Synonyms for ganzo and figo (cool)

The Italian adolescents were asked to list as many possible synonyms for the word 'ganzo' and 'figo', both of which mean 'cool'. Like their Italian- Australian and Italian-Canadian counterparts, the Italian students were able to provide a comprehensive list of words, a summary of which is shown at Table 9. Among the words provided by the Italian teenagers were the following metaphors: bono/buono, wappo, figo, diverente, bello and forte.

Table 9: Synonyms for the word "cool" by Italian adolescents

Word Use	Percentage
Bono/Buono (good)	35
Wappo (cool)	33
Figo (cool)	32
Divertente (amusing, funny)	29
Bello (good looking)	29
Forte (strong, tough)	29

In summary, CLD is a means by which adolescents make value judgments about others without commitment in discussion (Danesi, 1994). As a matter of fact, 'cool talk' allows teenagers to "draw verbal pictures of others, make condensed commentaries on significant events in their lives that are meaningful to them, and to them alone" (Danesi, 2003b, p. 60). From the analysis of the survey data, it appears that, when dialoguing with their peers, Italian-Canadian, Italian-Australian and Italian adolescents use a unique language (lingo) consisting of '**net lingo', 'linguanet'**, '**metaphors**' and 'n**etspeak**'.

Conclusion

The cross-cultural comparison discussed in this paper provide some evidence that 'teenalect' categories are apparent in any culture where adolescence constitutes a distinct social category (Aulino, 2005). McLuhan (1962) was convinced that in the global village, the world's languages would connect and interface in various ways. Indeed, this research shows the convergence of languages in online communication as a prime example of McLuhan's (1962) claim. Teenagers are the major users of new gadgets of technology and are attracted by images of 'cool' that technological advertising promotes, therefore, this is likely to influence youth culture in the future and, perhaps, even transform it radically (Danesi, 2006b). Adolescent speech has become the unique 'social dialect' of the world, connecting youth across different continents previously unimaginable ways (Aulino, 2005).

Further research into this area is warranted, to discover the transnational phenomenon of adolescent speech varieties, across a wider distribution of languages and countries, to discover just how social networks in socioliguistics are changing the way in which adolescents are beginning to express themselves in the new transnational spaces.

References

Abatantuono, M., Navigli, M., & Rocca, F. (2006). *1000 SMS coati*. Milano, Italy: Mondadori.

Aulino, B. (2005). *Italian Canadian adolescent speech: analysis and pedagogical implications*. University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Aulino, B. (2008). Sitologia sul linguaggio giovanile per i docenti. *Cultura & comunicazione, II*(02), 23-24.

Aulino, B., & Bergami, R. (2008). *Italian-Canadian and Italian-Australian adolescent speech: a comparative analysis*. Paper presented at the Seventh Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, Roma, Italy.

Bakhtin, M. M., (translated by C. Emerson & M. Holquist),. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bergami, R., & Aulino, B. (2009). Teaching and learning Italian abroad : a comparative pilot study of Italian-Canadian, Italian Australian and Italian adoelscent speech. *The International Journal of Learning, 16*(8), 596-614.

Chiro, G. (2003). Cultural maintenance and ethnic identity: a model of cultural types. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism, 3*(2), 2-19.

Chiro, G. (2007). *Cultural values, identity and language maintenance in humanistic sociological perspective*. Paper presented at the Third Symposium on Language Policy, Linguistic Diversity and Welfare.

Chiro, G. (2008). Evaluations of cultural identity in the personal narratives of a group of tertiary students of Italian ancestry in Australia. *Fulgor, 3*(3), 17-30.

Clivio, G., & Danesi, M. (2000). *The sounds, forms, and uses of Italian: an introduction to Italian linguistics*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Cook, V. (2004). *Why can't anybody spell?* . New York: Touchstone.

Cortelazzo, M. (1994). Il parlato giovanile. In Serianni L. & T. P. (Eds.), *Storia della lingua italiana, Vol. II, Scritto e Parlato* (pp. 291-317). Torino, Italy: Giulio Einaudi Editore.

Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a global language*. New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2 ed.). New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2006). *Language and the internet* (2 ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Danesi, M. (1989). Adolescent language as affectively coded behaviour: findings of an observational research project. *Adolescence, 24*(94), 311-320.

Danesi, M. (1994). *Cool: the signs and meanings of adolescence*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Danesi, M. (1996a). Il linguaggio degli adolescenti come comportamento codificato affettivamente: storia di una ricerca. In R. Titone (Ed.), *Come parlano gli adolescenti* (pp. 37-48). Roma, Italy: Armando.

Danesi, M. (1996b). Teen talk: what are the implications for second- language teaching? *Mosaic, 3*(4), 1, 3-10.

Danesi, M. (1997). Investigating Italian adolescent talk: are there any implications for the teaching of Italian as a second language? *Italica, 74*(4), 455-464.

Danesi, M. (1999). *Of cigarettes, high heels, and other interesting things: an introduction to semiotics*. New York, NY, USA: St. Martin's Press.

Danesi, M. (2003a). *Forever young: the teen-aging of modern culture*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Danesi, M. (2003b). *My son is an alien: a cultural portrait of today's youth*. New York, NY, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Danesi, M. (2006a). *Eternamente giovani. Il mito dell'adoelscenze nella cultura moderna*. Roma: Armando Editore.

Danesi, M. (2006b). *Perspectives on Youth Culture*. Boston, MA, USA: Pearson Custom Publication.

Danesi, M. (2008). *Popular culture: introductory perspectives*. Lanham, MD, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

De Paoli, M. (1988). *Il linguaggio del rock italiano*. Ravenna, Italy: Longo.

Dinelli, R., & Clulow, V. (2002, 7-10 July). *An exploratory study of students' learning strategies in a first year university Italian language course*. Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic variation as a social practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Jakobson, R. (1960). Linguistics and poetics. In T. A. Sebeok (Ed.), *Style and language* (pp. 34-45). Cambridge, MA, USA: MIT Press.

Labov, T. (1992). Social language boundaries among adolescents. *American Speech*(67), 339-366.

Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire, and dangerous things: what categories reveal about the mind*. Chicago, Il, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, Il, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Leona, M. H. (1978). An examination of adolescent clique language in a suburban secondary school. *Adolescence*(13), 495-502.

Marcato, C. (1995). Fare cestil nel parlare giovane di Udine. In Coman Lupu & Lorenzo Renzi (Eds.), *Studi Rumeni e Romanzi* (pp. 598-606). Padova, Italy: Unipress.

Marcato, C. (1997). In para totale…..una cosa da panico…. sulla lingua dei giovani in Italia. *Italica*(74), 560-575.

McLuhan, M. (1962). *The Gutenberg galaxy*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Mendoza-Denton, N. (1994). *Intraethnic and interlinguistic rivalries: High school Chicanas' language attitudes*. Paper presented at the Cultural performances: Proceedings of the Third Berkeley Women and Language Conference, Berkeley.

Mendoza-Denton, N. (1996). *"Muy macha": Gender and ideology in gang-girls' discourse about makeup*. Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Association of Applied Linguistics.

Mendoza-Denton, N. (1997). *Chicana/Mexicana identity and linguistic variation: An ethnographic and sociolinguistic study of gang affiliation in an urban high school*. Stanford University, Stanford.

Munro, P. (1989). *Slang U*. New York, NY, USA: Harmony.

Nuessel, F. (1999). *The impact of diversity, communicative grammar, technology, and self-study on the Italian curriculum*. Paper presented at the Canadian Society for Italian Studies Conference.

Rizzi, E. (1985). Note sul linguaggio dei giovani studenti Bolognesi. *Rivista Italiana di Dialettologia, 9*, 89 - 102.

Savan, L. (2005). *Slam dunks and no-brainers: language in your life, the media, business, politics, and, like, whatever*. New York, NY, USA: Alfred A. Knopf.

Shapiro, T. (1985). Adolescent language: its use for diagnosis, group identity, values, and treatment. *Adolescent Psychiatry, 12*, 297 – 311.

Enclosures: Cultural Communication at a Modern American Zoo as a Reflection of Emerging Perspectives on Global Citizenship

Howard D. Walters,
Associate Professor of Education, Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio, USA
hwalters@ashland.edu

Abstract

This paper considers a modern zoological park as a location for cultural exchange and education. Of specific interest is the open curriculum, where cultural knowledge, values, and identity are embedded in teaching and learning experiences planned by zoo staff for the public. The author has identified three categories of emphasis that have been infused at one specific zoo in the Midwestern United States: 1) the identification of global, ecological values as an idealized goal for visitors, 2) the situation of the visitor inside the ecological system, in relationship with the animals and broader ecosystem, and 3) the conception of the visitor as a de-nationalized, global citizen, in a world where political boundaries are transcended by geographical and biological ones. These themes are discussed with select narrative data and relevant literature.

Research on Learning in Zoos

Zoological parks and similar institutions constitute an important location for science learning and entertainment, and potentially for cultural exchange and transformation. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (2004) indicates that 89% of U.S. adults visited a zoological park in 2002, approximately 100 million individuals. By 2009, that estimate had risen to 150 million Americans visiting one of 6,000 accredited zoological parks and aquariums annually (AZA, 2009). Hanson (2004) compiles a similar statistic and notes that this number exceeds the attendance of all sporting events in the U.S. annually. Globally, it was estimated that approximately 600 million individuals visited zoological parks in 1995 (Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2002). This attendance demonstrates the scale of social communication that takes place in these settings, as well as the sociological, cultural, and historical breadth of communication possible. As two authors have written:

> Every aspect of humanity's relationship with nature can be perceived through the bars of the zoological garden…. histories of colonization, ethnocentrism, and the discovery of the Other; violence in human relationships and the moderating effect of the civilizing process on morals and behavior; the creation of places of collective memory such as museums; the complication of social practices; the development of leisure activities. To tour the cages of a zoo is to understand the society that erected them (Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, p. 13).

Yet there remains a substantive lack of effort to fully describe the various impacts of these institutions on these visitors, as well as basic groundwork to describe the significant efforts of zoo education and interpretive activities to instill and inculcate cultural values, ethics, and cross-cultural information between and among the various people who visit. This gap seems difficult to justify given the historic transnational and cross-cultural activities associated with, initially, zoos' collecting activities and ethnographic interpretive efforts and, later, their efforts at international species conservation, survival plans, and associated educational activities. Of numerous texts available, for example, mention of culture associated with zoological parks is observed only briefly in the historic connotation of colonialism vis a vis culture brokers in Africa, the role of zoos in negotiating international treaties such as CITES (Conventions on the International Traffic in Endangered Species), the

participation of zoos in ethnographic exhibits of pre-modern people and artifacts in the late 19th and early 20th century, and the increased internationalism associated with conservation and environmental stewardship (Hanson, 2004; Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2002; Hancocks, 2001; and Rothfels, 2002). Yet this history alone would merit careful attention to zoos as cultural arbiters.

Elizabeth Hanson's (2004) important history of the American zoological park, and the first such history in book length, concludes with a view of the American transition from rural and agricultural to urban and industrial. Unfortunately, abbreviating the history at this point dilutes the position of the United States within the global system, and ignores changes in the modern zoological park with respect to cultural communication that have accompanied the emerging dominance of the environmental habitat and ecological model of presentation that she addressed in later chapters in her text. Her primary interest in the science of the zoo, and not on education for visitors, explains this omission, but only barely.

My research over the last fifteen years at a variety of zoos, aquariums, and science museums has centralized constructivism as the essential theoretical framework for exhibit design and educational programs. It is clear to me that the inclusion of the "I" within the exhibit functions symmetrically to other constructivist elements. Exhibits which invite the individual to enter into dialog, exhibits which consider the "brought culture" of the zoo visitor, exhibits which create a cognitive intersection between the individual identity of the visitor and the story on exhibit – these exhibits function constructively. The visitor assumes a position as both subject and object (as Tony Bennett (2007) discussed about museum visitors) of the exhibit. In this way, the visitor is invited to consider cultural change through life choices, values, and participation in an ethic as one outcome of the zoo visit. This observation thus frames the potential of the zoo as a cultural agent, where capturing and centralizing visitors' identities positions them to learn content associated both to the exhibit and in context with their personal lives. The emergence of an ethic or value system associated to environmental stewardship becomes a significant contribution to this current manuscript further along.

Zoos and Cultural Education

My research on exhibit design reveals a fundamental shift in the content of exhibits at zoos and science museums (Walters, 2006, and this paper) toward increasing inclusion of human cultural content. At a large, urban zoological park in the Midwestern U.S., exhibits dating from 1960 through 1980 reveal a preponderance of biologically oriented signage as the basis for communication with visitors. Exhibits dating from 1980 through 2009 reveal an increasing preponderance of cultural, ethnographic, and anthropogenic content in exhibits, and particularly cross-cultural and multi-national content. This transition from species to biome orientation, with the inclusion of sociological and ethnographic content, reveals that this zoological park is an increasingly important vehicle for cross-cultural, ethnographic communication.

Nevertheless, communicating to visitors the connections between physical, biological, and cultural spaces is a noteworthy, albeit problematic development. It is noteworthy in light of the significant participation rates associated with these locations as described above. Much has been written regarding the transmission of culture in public spaces, a construct that arguably applies to zoological parks and similar venues. It is potentially problematic – at the least worthy of study and consideration – with respect to the embedded tensions associated with cultural education in an era of emerging globalization and transitional perspectives in the national identity of many guests, as well as of the individual zoo itself. A consideration of

cultural communication within the boundaries of the zoo reveals as many problems and inconsistencies as it does successes and exemplars.

From 2003 and forward, there has been progress in understanding dialogic and cultural activity in museums and zoos, built around Piaget's and Vygotsky's (1986) work on constructivism, and including symbolic interactions with the planned exhibit environment, the objects exhibited, and the learner's culture (Ash and Wells, 2007; Piaget, 1952; Walters, 2006). Ash and Wells (2007) note

> "Museum examples of socio-cultural learning are only now becoming available…although *to date no one has explored the interrelated roles of dialogue, inquiry, object, and outcome, nor have they based their underlying generalizations across learning environments on cultural historical activity and theoretical perspectives* [italics supplied by author for emphasis]" (p. 36).

This gap in the research on cultural learning is unfortunate because these institutions are fertile fields for such analysis and understanding: "Moving beyond science as facts and information, many science museums seek to catalyze fruitful encounters between the public and various research communities by often focusing on the social, cultural, and ethical implications of science" (Bevan and Xanthoudaki, p. 217). And again: "Ethnically-specific museums and exhibits about cultural groups in natural history museums, for example, remain an untapped resource for potentially important work on how people learn about what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic or cultural group" (Martell, 2008, p. 218).

It is this need for further exploration of cultural learning in zoos, and the relationships between the learners, the environment, the discourses, the objects, and content, that motivates this paper.

Cultural Education in the Zoo

I have been embedded as a researcher at a large, mid-western United States zoological park for the past six years, seeking to understand the interactions of the many populations who make use of the physical space or resources of the zoo. Annual visitation at this organization includes approximately 1.5 million individuals, including approximately 500,000 individuals who participate in structured educational programs. These numbers include significant representation from the approximately 90 language and ethnic groups from the surrounding metropolitan area. Analyses have focused variously on the characteristics of the created spaces and exhibits, and the pedagogies employed for communication of science and cultural content to visitors. Further work has looked at the use of zoo resources on- and off-site to further the goals of private corporations to demonstrate inclusivity and diversity in their community development goals, by funding partnerships with the zoo education departments for off-site education programs in urban schools.

This current analysis looks specifically onsite at the constructed exhibit space of this zoological park to identify cultural communications. It is hoped that such an analysis will ultimately assist the education and conservation communities within this zoo to better understand their practices. It is noted that this current paper is not construed as a comprehensive analysis of this zoo's exhibits and communications. The observations are my effort to construct an accurate story narrative of the zoo's cultural communication efforts based on a reasonable and typical selection of exhibit and textual information.

Didactic: The Official Cultural Curriculum

The zoological park in view in this paper began and continues to function with strongly held perceptions of itself as an education organization. Signage and graphics are prominent and include carefully selected sequences of information with the intent of changing

knowledge, behavior, and values. My analyses demonstrate that the process of cultural infusion is at work and cultural communication is being realized. I use the term *didactic* to reference the open curriculum: the intentional process of selecting culturally, socially, or ethnographic content and including this content in programs and graphic panels or other media as a learning objective. Three particular selections of cultural content seemed to be major themes in zoo education programs:

1. First, the visitor or program participant should view herself as a global citizen with obligations to the planet, to nature or the environment, or to humanity, to "think globally and act locally." This instructional content centralizes environmental stewardship and the inclusion of humans in the biological habitat.

2. Second, the habitat exhibit itself becomes symbolic and instructional of the "real" ecological structure of the world in which we live, with animals, plants, and humans interacting in ecological balance – or imbalance – and each performing in relation to the other. Visitors and participants are thus provided suggestions for local behaviors that have global significance and are encouraged repeatedly to view oneself as a member of the ecosystem.

3. Third, the visitor or participant is identified as a citizen of a de-nationalized global geography, where the map lines are blurred or erased to accommodate ecological zones with their associated conservation strategies, species survival plans, and international conservation agreements. In this manner, geographical boundaries transcend political boundaries and environmental organizations are presented as also transcending these political boundaries—or even acting to erase the national ones.

The first element concerns itself with the construct of global citizenship. As a relatively new concept with a complex meaning, it is worth a digression to explain the authors' conception and framework for this term. This is a relatively new idea in the history of citizenship studies, generally construed (by Gaige (2008) for example) as emerging in the 1990s as a point of inquiry and discussion. Gaige (2008) tracks this emergence from the post-World War II era and "increasing criticism directed toward the traditional model of nation-state citizenship, viewed by some as outdated in an era of far-reaching and deep sociopolitical changes. The claim is that novel developments are superseding an exclusive focus on the nation-state as the cynosure of citizenship" (p.123). Hudson and Kane (2000) identify the emergence of environmentalism as a significant feature in the development of this conceptualization and emergence of globalized and denationalized citizenship. Gaige (2008, p.126) discusses this shift away from national citizenship to geospatial regions for purposes of new social relationships around cultural expressions and values. Finally, McDonogh (2008) also takes up the idea of global citizenship as geospatial or regional: "For us, space does not simply coincide with a physical space. It is, in fact, a social construction of relations" (146). So within these contemporary discussions of an emergent global citizenship over national citizenship, we can observe space for a culturally or ethically bounded citizenship, circumscribed by spatial regions and not national boundaries, and further described by shared cultural values associated with environmentalism – as one possible, emerging citizenry for the planet. It is from this academic discussion that this author sees the theme of global citizenry emerging in the zoo.

Thus, with respect to the first element above, viewing oneself as a global citizen with obligations to the planet, signage demonstrates that this zoo views itself as a citizen of the planet, regularly posting its commitment to conservation prominently on signage. This commitment is described as a responsibility, as an ethical choice. Furthermore, the zoo is careful to communicate that not only has it made this choice, but it is proving successful in measureable ways. It is producing stories to substantiate its claim for itself. One story, found at the exit to the Australian exhibit complex, focuses on the Tree Kangaroo Conservation

Program (TKCP). Upon encountering this graphic exhibit, one has just left an exhibit hall that highlights a living tree kangaroo – a physically attractive and "huggable" animal. In fact, one can purchase her very own, and indeed huggable, toy tree kangaroo at the zoo gift shop so as to remember this experience. The exhibit then describes, in some critical ways, how this animal is thriving because of the conservation ethos and specific actions the zoo has chosen. These actions include developing no-hunting lands in the ecosystem where the kangaroos live and training local people to better manage the living population of kangaroos. The exhibit also shows how the zoo has reached out to the people who are indigenous to this same region – providing education materials for the locals to presumably learn how to better take care of their animals. Left unsaid is that the substantive threat to these animals are the forces of global trade, logging, and fur industries that are beyond the influence of these local people. Signage, reinforcing the message that the zoo is a successful environmental citizen, is ubiquitous across the zoo space.

Paralleling this message of the zoo as an environmental citizen are the messages that visitors should be environmental citizens: *do as we have done*. Making correct decisions is embedded with a moral virtue – there is a "right path"; "conservation does matter." There is a relationship between "you, palm oil, and sun bears" [Quotations from signage transcripts.] Even my material consumption can be reframed to make a difference: "proceeds from the sale of zoo gift shop items will benefit the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance"; a sign which is posted on a table of merchandise ranging from t-shirts, keychains, and stuffed gorillas, to plastic gorillas, table coasters, and note cards. The visitor is thus the recipient of consistent messages that there is an appropriate behavioral response to the moral and ethical imperative of saving threatened and endangered species.

The second element of didactic content asserts the human visitor to be an essential element or member within an ecological habitat that includes animals, plants, and physical space. The specialized, habitat exhibit emerged in 1907 in Germany under Hallenbeck (Hancocks, 2001). In the modern zoo, it has continued to evolve by adapting the global environmental stewardship message with its invitation to visitors to participate in their ecological space by adopting an ethical value system. These exhibit spaces display the animals, not singularly in cages, but in social groupings in a space prepared to emulate the "natural world". Readers who have only visited newer, modern zoos are familiar with these attractive living habitat exhibits: rocks, living plants, scenic artifacts, flowing water or other water elements, trees. This shift in zoo technology, architecture, and philosophy accompanied the emergence of the constructs of the food chain, the food web, ecology, and biological systems that were derived from the evolutionary conceptions that grew from the work of Darwin, Linnaeus, and Lamarck in the 19th century. If the individual species did in fact live in relationship with a broad social community in a coevolved physical space, then the zoo would objectify that world for accuracy.

This shift from the taxonomic collection to the habitat was paradigmatic. Whereas earlier zoo collections would display all possible examples of large cats with appropriate biological information on associated graphic panels, modern zoos display a single example cat appropriate to a selected geographic habitat – say a puma from North America displayed alongside a black bear, a moose, and a grey wolf, with signage and artifacts from North American first people's cultures that impacted or co-occurred with these animals. In this way, the discourse of geographic space and timelessness subsumes the discourse of western progressivism and the improving state of the earth under human developmental conditions. As Hall (2006) notes, "in this way, message is everything and the object [animal] is illustrative of an interpretation of the world" (p.75). It should be observed, however, that it is possible to observe "all times" in modern zoos. Because zoo exhibitry is generally on a very large scale with respect to architectural requirements and fiscal costs, an exhibit area in a zoo

is likely to serve for 50 years or longer. These exhibits thus compress time, allowing multiple exhibition theories and philosophies to coexist within the same zoo space – thereby communicating mixed and competing messages to visitors. At the zoo studied for this paper for example, while the Australia and Asia exhibits rely on habitat ecology as the basis for organization, the reptile house remains an exemplar of a one hundred year out-of-date philosophy, i.e. exhibiting individual species in small, rectangular enclosures with little relationship to ecological space and ecological communities.

Bennett (2007) describes the historic transition of the history museum through this same period, roughly 1850 through 1950, as it moved from exhibiting the remarkable, the unusual, the atypical masterpiece, toward exhibiting typical life of ordinary people and ordinary cultural objects. Likewise, zoos transitioned along these same lines: the more exotic (lions, tigers, and bears – or in some contexts, two-headed calves and five-legged frogs and other deformed creatures) were displaced by normalized depictions of geographic and ecological regions with typical populations of animals and plants that would be encountered there. The individual animal was displaced by the geographic location.

A short skip later, and the humans who also inhabited that geographic location became part of the exhibit. By 1906, for example, the Bronx Zoo was hiring indigenous African people to stand around inside enclosures with African animals – in "authentic" village scenes that were more likely to represent highly distorted beliefs about "village life" and less likely to capture or model actual life in villages in Africa (Baratay and Hardouin-Fugier, 2002; Hancocks, 2001; and, Hanson, 2002). While these types of human exhibits – which would correctly be viewed with horror today – have vanished, the underlying concept, i.e. that humans inhabit a biological niche that impacts the biotic and abiotic elements in the ecosystem, endures. In the modern zoo, the human is presented as having an "ecological footprint" that both competes with and most generally outcompetes, the "other" animals. Thus the relationship between "you, palm oil, and sunbears" must be continually reinforced in zoo cultural messaging. Human culture is one component of a broader global system that is interrelated. Human values and ethical choices – and behaviors – influence, impact, or indeed inhibit the sustainable conservation and protection of this broader global system that includes the animals and plants "with which we live".

The third content area which pertains to cultural understanding which emerges in an examination of this modern zoo is that of global human society. The graphics and signage describe a global culture in which all humans are participants with a shared value system – the protection and preservation of endangered and threatened species and habitats. Neglected in these exhibits, generally, are the substantive economic tensions between the developed and developing nations – as well as the systematic marginalization of indigenous people's use of animals within cultural rites.

Hall (2006) observes this phenomenon at Disney's Animal Kingdom

> having toured the conservation center and appreciated the animals and the work of its staff, the guest now shares a moral domain with the postcolonial citizens of Harambe and the international conservation organizations that are determined to save Africa's wildlife" (p. 88).

An example of this emerging global citizen at my study site is provided at the entrance to an African habitat that showcases the various apes. A large entrance area was built to mimic a grass hut. The inside walls of this entrance contain quotations from E.O. Wilson and others, asserting that "all life is beautiful" and "worth saving." That by "working together" we can save life on the planet. This entrance exhibit makes use of typical counter-clockwise motion through exhibit space and a "turn wall," a place where generally all visitors are going to physically congregate. At this turn wall, the exhibit tells the story of two people who exemplify global citizenship: "Michael and Veronica are your typical American

couple….except that they've spent many years living and working in the African rainforest, leading night-time excursions to capture bongo antelope on film, supplying a local Congolese soccer team with custom uniforms and shoes, nursing scars from a scuffle with a forest elephant, and providing vegetable seeds to local villages". It is difficult to see, from this text, how Michael and Veronica are in any way typical of American married couples. They are, however, typical of the type of global citizen that the zoo seeks to create. Michael and Veronica are presented as Ivy League educated conservationists who can afford, by virtue of education and the benefits of their personal economic advantage, to work in Africa, where they possess capital resources far above the local people. They may have come from America, but their commitments are to Africa as a continent, to the children of the Congo who are just as European as the rest of the world's children: soccer players who need uniforms and athletic shoes. The story mixes easily between African agrarian cultural issues, vegetable seeds, scientific research, nighttime photo excursions, and western perceptions of children-as-soccer-players who just need a team sponsor. The specific nationalized frames of reference: American educational and economic advantage, food concerns in the Congo – are romanticized through the lens of "jungle science" and kids playing ball. The commonality is the animals who are about to appear in the zoo setting, which objectify both Michael and Veronica's work and the physical space of the African people.

The use of a human story gives the visitor a face for the research that the zoo is sponsoring and an explanation of why the animals are now at the zoo: they are the object of Michael and Veronica's research and Michael and Veronica are good people who take care of kids and villagers. The zoo is "good" for showcasing Michael and Veronica and by extension being concerned with kids and villagers. The animals are an afterthought to the cultural message: you too can be a good person by focusing across national borders. If Michael and Veronica could make it, you can to – they are only *typical* Americans.

This message of a de-nationalized planet organized by ecological zone is emphasized in ways other than through global citizenship. The organization of the zoological exhibit space into continental divisions, i.e. Africa, North America, Asia, the Arctic, serves to reinforce a globalized and de-nationalized vision of the planet as belonging to all humans collectively. The visitor is able to move in and out of these regions – without the unfortunate imposition of nationalized borders and concerns. The animals are presented in terms of their historic relation to indigenous people-groups stripped of national identity. The historic progression of civilization from deep archeological history to early human civilization to modern history and the nation-state is deconstructed to eliminate the nation-state, or to marginalize these governments as only examples of the work of humans that have damaged the unfettered biological functioning of the environment and its animals. Progress is viewed as transnational and, in some respects, as mitigating the damage that humans have done in their unenlightened past. Human civilization is, in this view, necessarily the optimized outcome for evolution, social, biological or otherwise.

Hall (2006) and Kubin (1998) have both described Disney's Animal Kingdom Zoo in these same, geographic, de-nationalized terms. Hall (2006): "a spatial design that directs the visitor through a sequence of installations. The concept is of four "lands" that lead off from a central hub, marked by the Tree of Life". Africa – the largest of the lands – is reached by a bridge across the Discovery River" (p. 87). The voices of the interpreters and graphics are visually and audibly ethnic-African, serving to reinforce "the assumption that real people from Africa are experts on animal life" and to "reinforce the ethic of Disney's Africa as a whole – the invitation to join a crusade to save the animals of this part of the planet". [I transcribed these quotes during a personal visit in 2009.]

Conclusion

It is clear to me that this zoo and the many others like it which I've had the pleasure of visiting over the years are contributing to cultural change, or at the least they are mirrors in which global change can be observed. The emergence of environmental conservation and stewardship in full force in the US in the 1970s and since has created substantive change in zoo exhibits and teaching programs. The selection of the habitat as the primary design and architectural basis for zoo exhibit design has helped conceptualize human identity in biological terms – as members of a biological population, community, ecosystem, and habitat. By reframing the natural world as ecological zones, it becomes easier to frame the political world in ways that deconstruct national borders. As the World Wildlife Federation observes: animals don't recognize national borders. By extension, perhaps the modern, global human citizen who is concerned with animal conservation will no longer recognize national borders either. Time will tell.

Within the complexity of the globally connected planet, how we define citizenship and empower citizens for action will be contested in numerous socio-cultural contexts, including places such as zoos. John Williams (2002), writing about this new citizenship, notes that the fluidity and current ambiguity for terminology – the contestation – allows "its advocates to search for evidence of its influence or applicability in a divergent range of situations and circumstances" (p.11-12). I believe that I have observed evidence of the influence of this emerging, de-nationalized global citizenship in the narratives of this zoo. These themes—the visitor as a global citizen who shares a common value set, organized around environmental and ecosystem membership – seem clear to me. These themes are consistent with the academic emergence of global citizenship as discussed by theorists cited above in this paper such as Gaige (2008) and McDonough (2008). They also resonate with conceptions of cultural education, and demonstrate a number of ways that the modern zoo can function as an arbiter and even creator of cultural understandings.

Pushing forward, it will be important, in the pursuit of this line of inquiry, to identify within the various zoo narratives and across the thousands of institutions, the sources for such a robust and already-well-explicated narrative on global citizenship as can be observed in the exhibits and graphics of modern zoos. Given the nascence of the literature, I am interested in the social path which has foregrounded such global conceptions in practice. Finally, it will be important to trace the incongruities in the development of this message, as the contestation of the global narrative is not only between the zoo and other organizations, but between and among the thousands of zoos – most of which exist in non-western nations, and in nations more directly and negatively influenced by the neoliberal economic structures driving much of the discussion than the American zoo studied for this paper.

References

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (2004, 2009). Organization fact sheet. www.aza.org.

Ash, Doris and Gordon Wells (2007). "Dialogic inquiry in classroom and museum". In Bekerman, Zvi, Nicholas Burbules, and Diana Silberman-Keller (2007) *Learning in Places: The Informal Education Reader*. Peter Lang: New York.

Baratay, Eric and Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier (2002). *A History of Zoological Gardens in the West*. Reaktion Books: London.

Bennett, Tony (2007). *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics. Routledge: London and New York*.

Bevan and Xanthoudaki (2008). Professional development for museum educators: Unpinning the Underpinnings. *Journal of Museum Education*, 33(2). Summer 2008.

Gaige, Mark P. (2008). Citizen: Past Practices, Prospective Patterns. In Jose V. Ciprut (2008) *The Future of Citizenship*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Goodall, Jane (2008). Quote obtained in author visit to Disney's Animal Kingdom from a graphic panel.

Hall, Martin (2006). "The reappearance of the authentic". In Karp, Ivan, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tomas Ybarra-Grausto (2006) *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Hancocks, David (2001). *A Different Nature: The Paradoxical World of Zoos and Their Uncertain Future*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hanson, Elizabeth (2004). *Animal Attractions: Nature on Display in American Zoos*. Princeton University Press: Princeton and Oxford.

Hudson, Wayne, and John Kane, Editors (2000). *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kubin, Jacquie (1998). "Disney, Dinos, and Company—Animal Kingdom, at Walt Disney World." *Insight on the News*, December 21, 1998.

Martell, Sandra Toro (2008). Of cultural tools and kinds of knowledge: Investigating field trip-based learning about art, culture, and the environment. *Journal of Museum Education*, 33(2). Summer 2008.

McDonogh, Gary W. (2008). Differentiated Citizenship: Compound Complexities in Evolution. In Jose V. Ciprut (2008) *The Future of Citizenship*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Rothfels, Nigel (2002). *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

Piaget, Jean (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*, M. Cook Translation. International University Press: New York.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1934/1987). "Thinking and speech". In R. W. Rieger and A.S. Carton (Eds.), *The Collected Works of L.S. Vygotsky, Volume 1: Problems of General Psychology*. Plenum: New York.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1986). *Mind in Society*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

Walters, Howard (2006). "Constructing Scientific Understanding at Aquariums, Zoos, and Nature Centers". *Current: The Journal of Marine Education*. Spring 2006.

Williams, John (2002). Section Introduction, in Nigel Dower and John Williams, Editors, *Global Citizenship: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Building bridges through industry placements: perceptions from Malaysian academics

Roberto Bergami, Senior Lecturer, School of Economics and Finance, Institute for Community, Ethnicity and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia
Roberto.Bergami@vu.edu.au

Annamarie Schuller, Lecturer, Centre for Advanced Business Studies (Business and Administration), Chisholm Institute, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Annamarie.Schuller@chisholm.vic.edu.au

Jason Cheok, Senior Lecturer, School of Business Sunway University College, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
cheokbc@sunway.edu.my

Abstract

This paper reports on an exploratory study, conducted at a Malaysian university in 2009 on the perception of the value of industry placement for business disciplines academics. An industry placement requires an academic to be seconded to a relevant industry host organisation, for a pre-determined period of time to undertake agreed-to specific tasks.

The main aim of this study was to gather information about the perceptions that Malaysian business disciplines academics would place on an industry placement experience, in terms of professional development, capacity building in teaching and learning and the development of networks as catalysts for the formation of communities of practice (as described by Lave and Wenger 1991).

The paper firstly provided some contextual background on the current higher education environment globally, and in Malaysia. This is followed by an explanation of a previously developed industry placement conceptual model. The model is 'tested' for relevance through the discussion of the findings of this study. One of the outcomes of the discussion is a suggestion that a scheme similar to the Australian 'Researchers in Business' program may be appropriate to the Malaysian university community, particularly in the context of building capacity and increasing social capital.

The paper concludes that the implementation of industry placement programs, although desirable from the academics' perspective, will require a specific approach in Malaysia, taking into consideration not only local cultural nuances, but also government educational policies.

Introduction

It is generally accepted that university education is witnessing unprecedented focus from governments and industry alike on a global scale. The traditional role of these places of learning is being challenged, as the relevance of their theoretical platform is increasingly being questioned in the context of producing 'job-ready' graduates. A number of factors have contributed to the current environment, including the influence of globalisation and the consequential changes in business practices, labour markets and work practices, as well as new technologies and the organisation of work – all these are "changing conceptions of knowledge skill and learning" (Chappell, 2004, p. 1).

In recent years, universities have been transformed from entities, whose main purpose was to contribute to "the public good and the community" (Star, 2007) to corporate entities, because education is business. This has resulted in universities being "conceived as

corporations providing a private good for individual consumers" (Star, 2007). In this environment, universities are under pressure to increase their community engagement, particularly with industry sectors, thereby being more open and 'accountable' for their educational activities.

At a conference of European Ministers responsible for higher education, employability was one of the key considerations in the continuing roll-out of the Bologna Process towards 2020:

> higher education should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional lives …we aim at … maintaining and renewing a skilled workforce through close cooperation between governments, higher education institutions, social partners and students. This will allow institutions to be more responsive to employers' needs and employers to better understand the educational perspective (Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, 2009).

It is clear from the above statement that a degree of co-operation must ensue to bring the desired long term effect to fruition.

The "Malaysian Government provide[s] 60% of the tertiary education, with the private sector providing the balance [of] 40% (Goodrich Harwood, 2008). Although a significant proportion of programs of study in Malaysia are conducted via twinning arrangements between local private universities and foreign universities, usually from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America - these countries commonly regarded as the 'three power-houses of international higher education' - the majority of higher education institutions are public organisations. Consequently, these are subject to government funding and controls.

A summary of the Malaysian education system hierarchy is shown at Figure 1.

Figure 1: Malaysian education system hierarchy
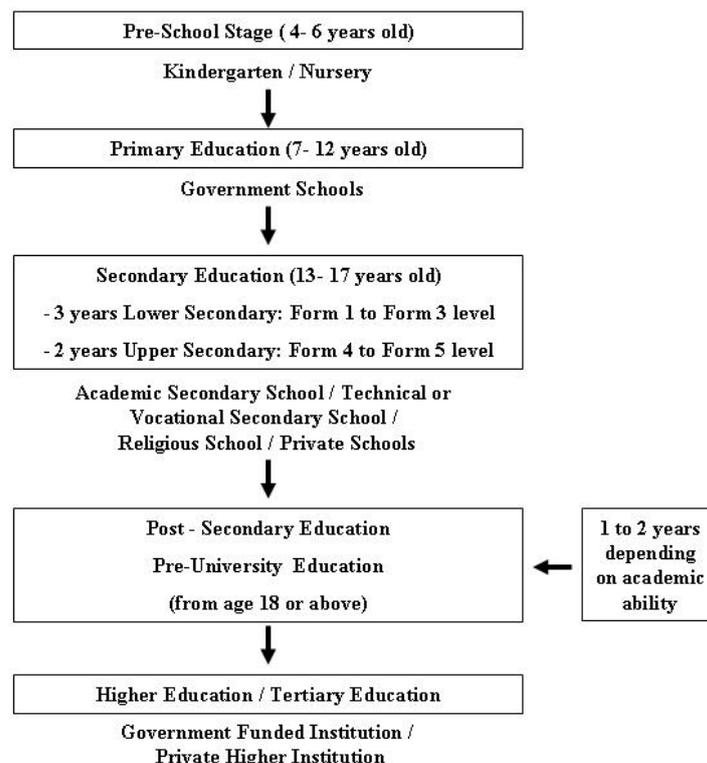
It should be noted that, at the time of conducting the research, the Malaysian education system was under review by UNESCO, by invitation from the Malaysian government (Wo, 2009), and at the time of writing this paper, the results of that review were not available.

According to the Malaysian National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010

> greater collaboration between HEIs [Higher Educations Institutions] and leading local and multinational corporations, and top international institutions will be forged to build staff development programmes. These programmes will be designed to benefit academic staff from both private and public HEIs and may take several forms such as training, joint research, attachments and staff exchange programmes (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 24).

As in the case of the EU, cited earlier, the above statement signals a move to forge closer links with industry, for staff development. This approach will create an expectation that universities will increasingly align their teaching and learning practices to contemporary industrial processes, and invariably this means a shift in the curriculum through a diminution of theoretical content and an increase in the practical component.

The recognition of the need for staff development in Malaysian academics is of relevance and importance to the discussion in this paper, because industry placements are a form of professional development consisting of an arrangement whereby the academic spends a predetermined period of time working in industry in a previously agreed to job role.

The key stakeholders in an industry placement are: the academic, the university, the host firm and the student. The industry placement may be viewed as an activity that is conducted within an environment that is heavily influenced by government policies and the higher education context, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Industry placement relationships (Bergami & Schuller, 2009, p. 64)
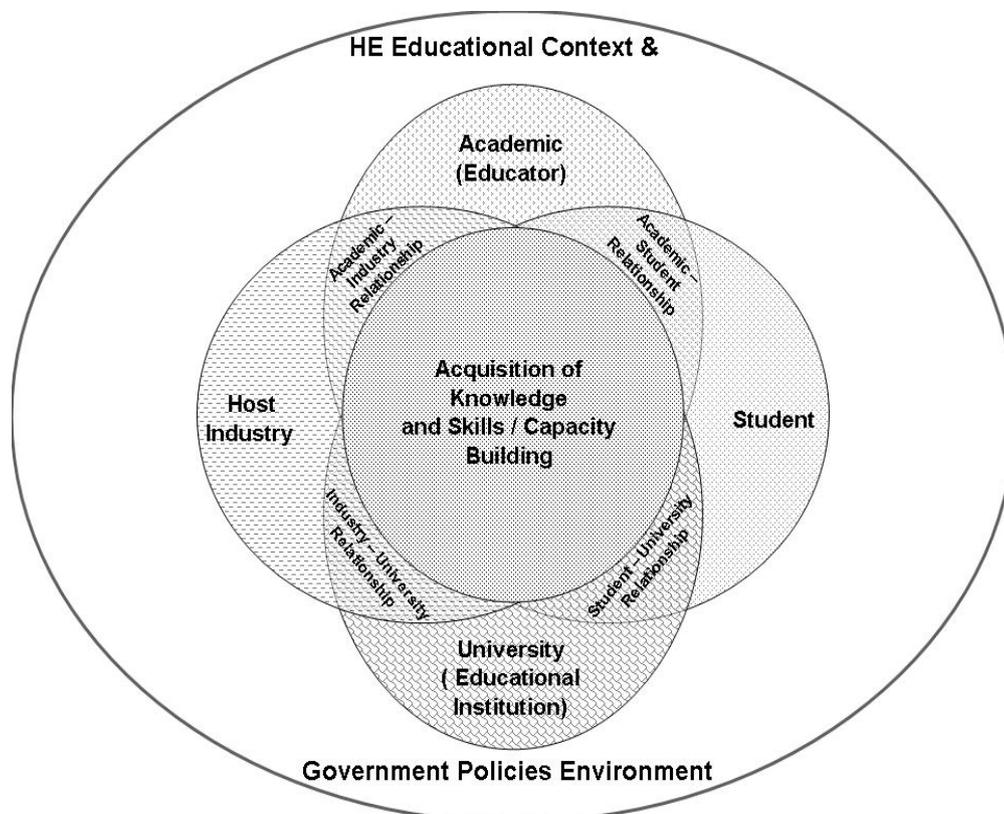
At the centre of the relationships that may be formed among the key stakeholders through an industry placement activity is the scope for individual and social capacity building that should result from the acquisition of knowledge and skills, as discussed in the next section.

Industry placement theoretical model

An industry placement theoretical model is shown at Figure 3. This model was previously used for some exploratory studies in Australia[1], and research conducted in Malaysia aimed to explore, *inter alia*, whether this model would still be relevant in an educational environment abroad and within a different cultural context.

Figure 3: Teacher industry placement: theory into practice (Schuller & Bergami, 2008, p. 201)
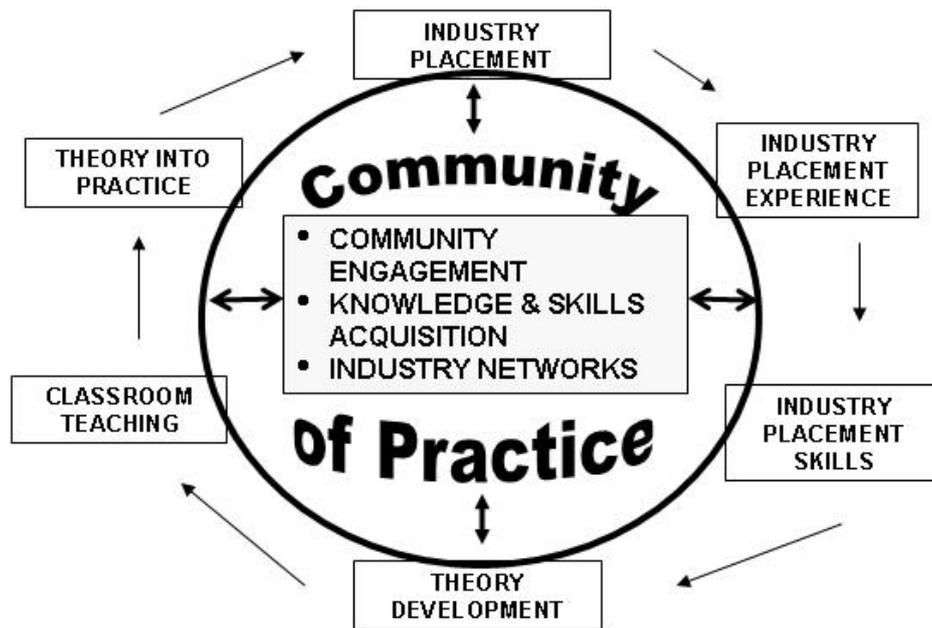
The description of the model begins with the boxes connected by the circle and then considers the community of practice aspects that may arise from this form of activity.

- **Industry placement.** Arrangements are made for the academic to undertake an industry placement. These arrangements include the 'terms of engagement', that is, where the academic will be physically located (site, building, office, etc.); the duration of the placement; the job role and functions; and the expectations of both the academic and the host firm from the industry placement activities (Gela, 2004; Meadon, 1990).
- **Industry placement experience.** The placement experience enables the academic to witness industrial processes and practices. The academic, *in situ*, is immersed in the culture of the host organisation, and the industry sector in which it operates. This is an important aspect of the placement as it enables the academic to contextualise learning in practice (Arnold & Smith, 2003). An understanding of the nature of the host firm and the environment in which it operates is important for the academic as this may

---

[1] For more discussion of this model see: Schuller, A., & Bergami, R. (2008). Expanding the Profession - Industry Placement for Teachers. In Swaffield B. & Guske I. (Eds.), Education Landscapes in the 21st Century: Cross-cultural Challenges and Multi-disciplinary Perspectives (pp. 196-205). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing and also Bergami, R., & Schuller A. (2009). Perceptions on Industry Placements: A Scoping Study of Academics in Australia. The International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Change Management, 9(9), 61-82.

assist in making a meaningful contribution to the host industry's processes. (Brown & Chalmers, 1990; Haigh, 1997; Ireland, 2002).

- **Industry placement skills.** The academic should acquire new knowledge, or enhance their existing knowledge, as part of the industry placement experience. Whilst working in the industrial environment the academic will be able to reflect on the host firm's practices and processes (Ireland, 2002). This reflection should enable the academic to progress to the next step within the model.
- **Theory Development (from practice).** The *in situ* experience with the host firm should enable the academic to consider the relevance and applicability of existing theories to practical applications, and explore ways to improve the status quo of such processes and practices. Thus, existing theories may be challenged, resulting in their adaption to contemporary practices, where possible, or alternatively, new theories may emerge from the *in situ* experience. Accordingly, this environment should enable the academic to enhance teaching and learning practices (Haigh, 1997).
- **Classroom teaching.** There are opportunities for the academic to enrich curriculum content through the use of authentic materials, case studies and guest speakers (Ireland, 2002). The classroom environment may also be used as an 'experimental laboratory' where new theories are tested. These activities should result in bridging the theory versus practice gap and produce a closer alignment between teaching and learning practices and industrial processes. (Brown & Chalmers, 1990; Haigh, 1997; Ireland, 2002; Klein, 2001; McGavin, 1996).
- **Theory into practice.** There may be opportunities for the academic to contribute to the improvement of industrial practices and processes through the introduction of new theories and ideas. For example, a new theoretical approach may be developed by the academic as a result of their *in situ* experience, and this may be 'tested' in an exploratory fashion within the classroom environment, before exploring pilot testing opportunities in an industrial setting. The placement host firm may be the willing industrial partner for this process as, after all, if the new idea or process works, it is presumed the host firm will reap the benefits from its full scale implementation.

As Figure 3 shows, the next step starts the process again. This is because the industry placement experience should not be limited to a single occurrence, indeed, it is argued here, that this form of professional development should happen regularly to maintain up to date knowledge that ought to be reflected in teaching and learning practices.

The engagement between academics and industry should enable the formation of a Community of Practice (CoP). Lave and Wenger (1991), who define a CoP as a group of individuals who "have different interests, make diverse contributions to activity, and hold varied viewpoints" (p. 98). Lave and Wenger (1991), acknowledge that the level of participation by the membership of the CoP may differ and that, furthermore, the CoP does not comprise a "well defined identifiable group" (p. 98). However, a CoP implies participation in "an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and their communities" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). In the context of the discussion in this paper, the CoP, as shown in Figure 3, comprises three major elements:

- **Community Engagement.** Primarily this involves the academic, the host firm and the university. Engagement with industry is important as it enables the university to showcase its programs of study and the calibre of its students. Additionally, opportunities for student internships may be pursued with the host firm. In offering internships the host firm gains first hand knowledge about student capabilities and is able to assess individual internees for potential future employment.

- **Knowledge and Skills Acquisition.** The new knowledge and skills gained through the industry placement are collective and multi-directional. For the academic there are professional development gains and opportunities to use the new knowledge and skill to improve the students' educational experience. For the host firm there may be gains from having its processes challenged and questioned by a 'neutral' outsider, with a view to suggesting improvements over current processes and practices (Ireland, 2002). For the university there are potentially better study programs, closer links with industry, and a higher calibre of graduates.
- **Industry Networks.** There are opportunities for the academic to foster a CoP with colleagues from the host firm and, perhaps, the wider industry sector. The Cop membership, therefore, has the potential to become an important classroom resource. There is no reason for the CoP to end on completion of the industry placement. Indeed, it is desirable for the CoP to carry on, for as long as it exists, it will continue to be a possible classroom resource for the academic.

The industry placement model, shown at Figure 3, was 'tested' through a pilot study in Malaysia and the findings from that study are discussed in the next section.

Research findings and discussion

The gender of respondents, as shown in Figure 4, is heavily biased towards females, accounting for two thirds of participants. In the context of the Malaysian education environment, this appears to be common, as there is "a preponderance of women in teaching" (Aminah, 1998, p. 22). The survey sample, therefore, appears to be consistent with the general academic population.

Figure 4: Gender profile
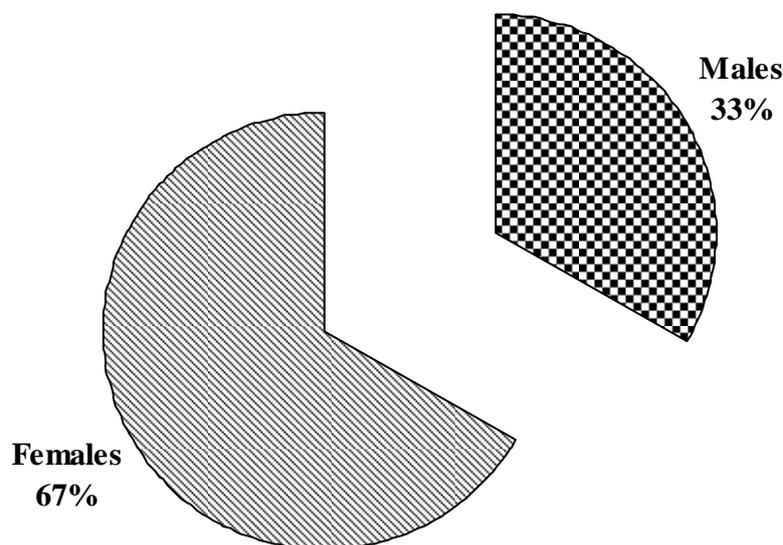
The age profile of the respondents shows a relatively young workforce, with over 80% in the 30-49 age groups, as shown in Figure 5. It is interesting to note that no respondent was aged above 59 years of age.
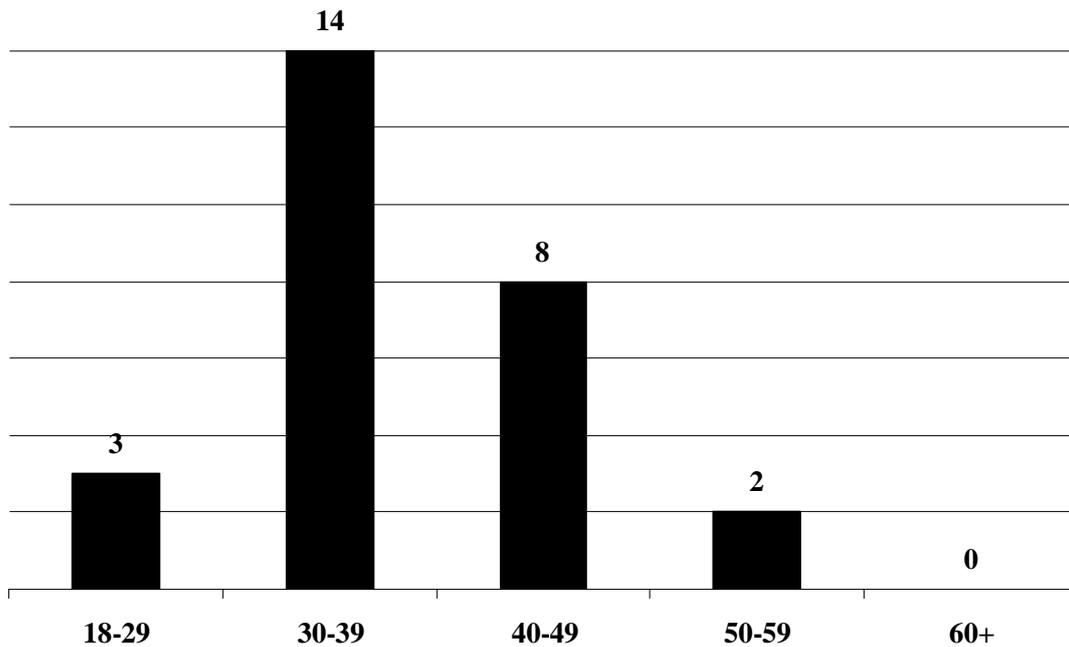
The relatively short teaching experience reported by respondents reflects the youthful profile of the sample. Approximately 75% of respondents have less than ten years teaching experience and in 88% of cases the only experience has been in higher education. In more than 85% of cases respondents have been with their employer for less than 10 years. In terms of academic qualifications, there are no Ph.D. graduates, however, 74% hold Master level qualifications and approximately 10% of these claimed they are pursuing a Ph.D. It can be observed, therefore, that this cohort is predominantly composed of new entrants to the academic world, with relatively low qualifications and a short teaching experience, the bulk of which is limited to higher education only.

Interest in an industry placement experience was quite high, as shown in Figure 6, with 70% indicating their interest in pursuing this opportunity.

Figure 6: Interest in pursuing and industry placement opportunity
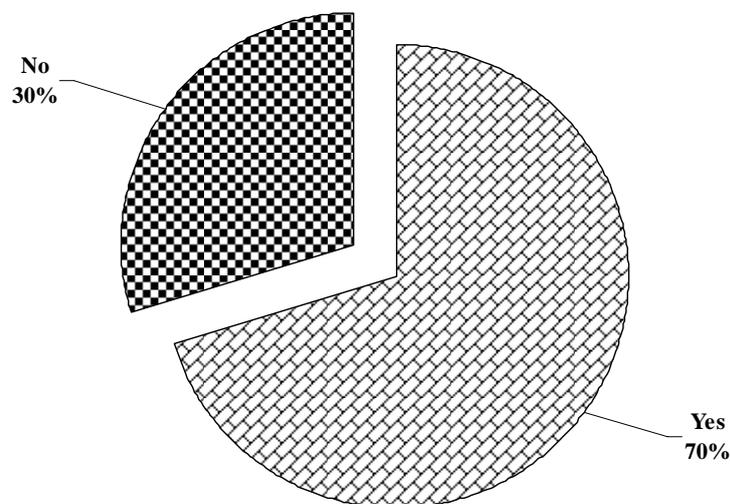
However, notwithstanding the high level of desire for an industry placement option, barriers to this professional development and capacity building opportunities were reported by two thirds of respondents. This indicates a desire from the respondent to engage with the industry community, establish industry networks and generate bilateral skills and knowledge – these are the essential elements of the CoP in the model shown at Figure 3.

It appears that, as summarised at Figure 7, the primary barriers to an industry placement opportunity are around workloads and the lack of encouragement/provision for this activity by the educational institution. It should be noted that all participants provided a response to this question.

Based on the responses form this study, it is evident that without employer support and funding, by way of back-filling any absences caused by an industry placement activity, this type of professional development and capacity building opportunity will be effectively stifled. Government funding, therefore, is a critical element in building societal and human capital, a point that will be discussed later in the paper.

Figure 7: Barriers to pursuing and industry placement
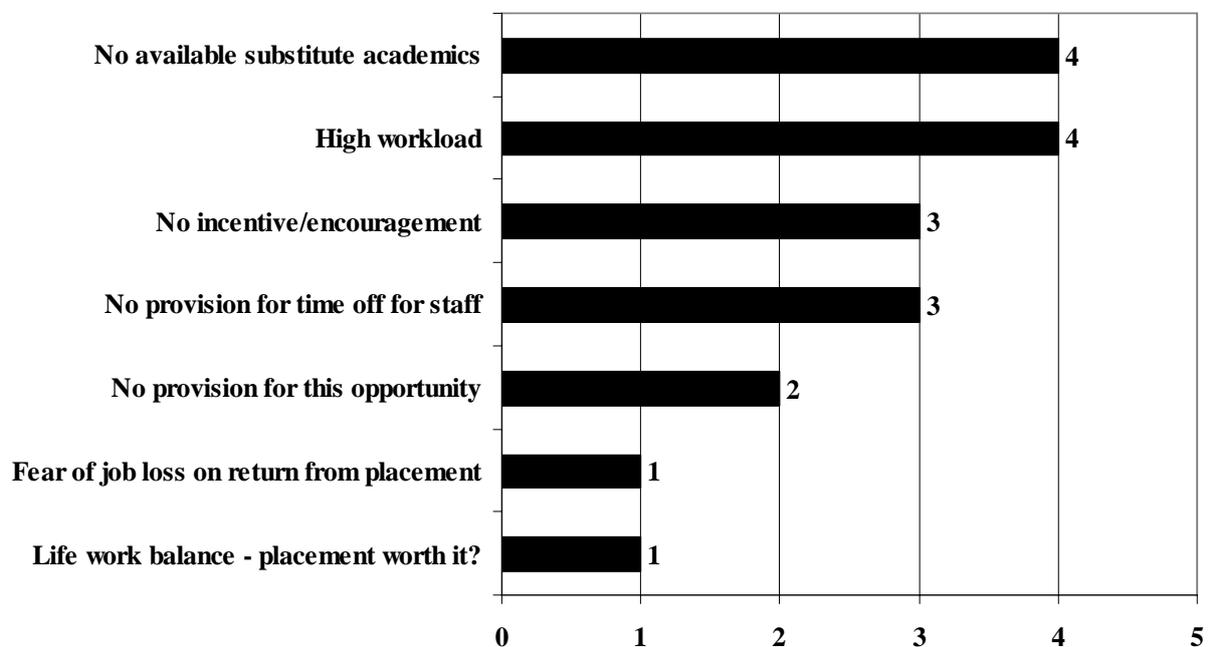
Yet, responses clearly indicate that academics in this cohort perceive an industry placement opportunity as a very positive and valuable activity, as shown in Figure 8. As this was a free text question allowing for multiple responses, a total of fifty seven responses were received. The top four highest ranking benefits, accounting for approximately two thirds of responses, are shown at Figure 8. These responses clearly indicate that, for this cohort of participants, teaching and learning activities rank very high and this supports the 'industry placement skills', 'theory development', 'classroom teaching' and 'theory into practice' boxes from the model shown at Figure 3.

The enhancement of teaching, learning and research; the linking/testing of theories with practice; and the sharing of new knowledge with student and colleagues (respectively cited as the first, third and fourth reasons) are all indications that an industry placement ought to produce an enriched curriculum and a better educational experience for the student. The second most cited positive reason is the additional knowledge the academic may gain as a personal outcome of the industry placement process. It is argued here that all of the positive

perceptions identified in response to this question indicate a desire by academics to increase human capital in the communities they serve.

Even though the literature on industry placement benefits correlates with the research findings in this study, some tension can be observed in the responses, between the lack of financial support to enable industry placement activities to be pursued (Figure 7), the interest in pursuing such a placement (Figure 6), and the perceived benefits (Figure 8).

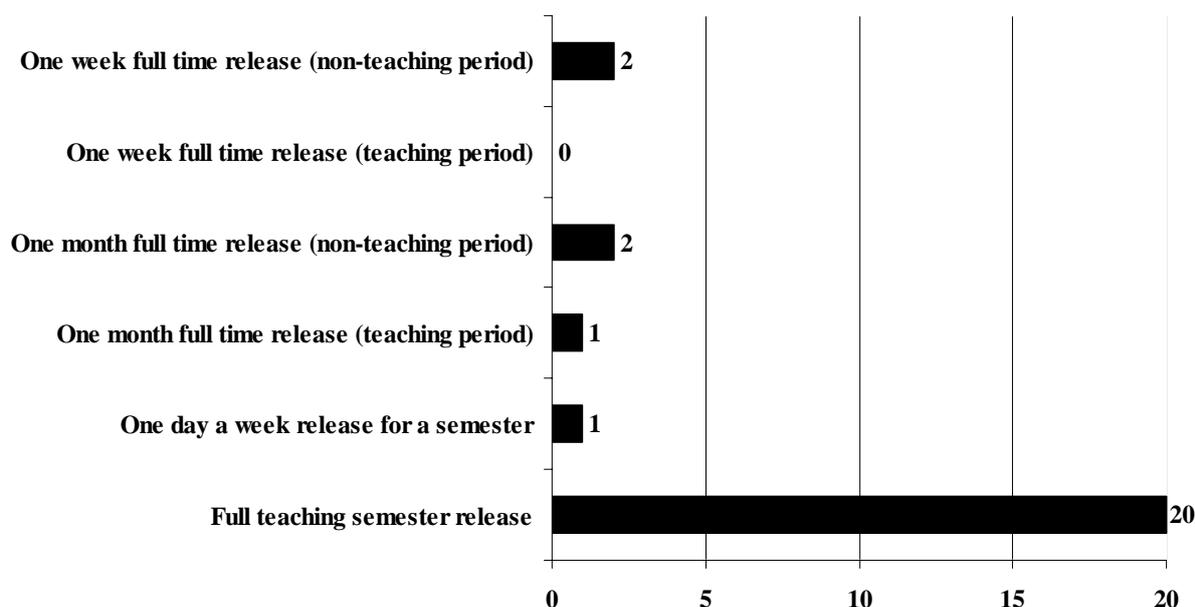**Figure 8: Perceived benefits from an industry placement experience**
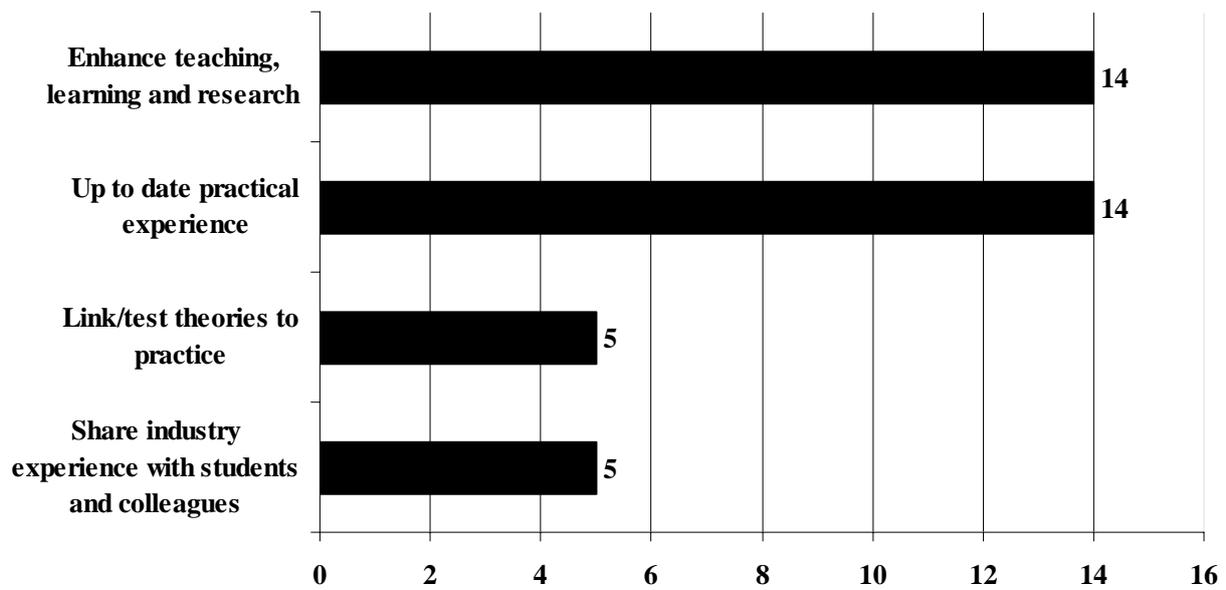
These tensions are of concern because in order to introduce a more practically oriented curriculum, a considerable resource investment needs to be made. This investment needs to be made by the government where public education is concerned, because public higher education reflects a commitment by the government to the people of the nation (Garland, 2009, p. 1).

The likely magnitude of government investment can be estimated by the preference of the academics in terms of the duration of the industry placement, as summarised in Figure 9. The preferred duration for an industry placement is clearly a full teaching semester release, accounting for more than three quarter of responses. There is support in the literature for longer term placements, as "deep learning often proceeds slowly" (Gela 2004, p. 8) and time is required for both mastery of processes (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and development of "partnerships based on bilateral contributions" (Meadon, 1990, p. 28).

Clearly, the release of an academic into an industry placement program for a whole semester means that another individual has to be employed to fill the teaching gap during that time. Whilst this is likely to be significant in monetary terms, it is argued here that governments need to reconsider how they view expenditure on education. An ideological shift is required to recast education expenditure and not regard it merely as an expenditure item on the budget, but rather, recognising that the funding of education is a beneficial investment for the future of the very communities the government was elected to serve. Such investment should enhance capacity building and increase societal and human capital.

Figure 9: Preferred placement duration

Category	Value
One week full time release (non-teaching period)	2
One week full time release (teaching period)	0
One month full time release (non-teaching period)	2
One month full time release (teaching period)	1
One day a week release for a semester	1
Full teaching semester release	20

There are examples of government funded projects, such as the European Erasmus program, that facilitate cross border exchanges of staff, but it is argued here that capacity building needs to happen at the local level, for this to benefit local communities. This is not to speak against Erasmus, but rather to argue for localised capacity building schemes. A recent innovation introduced in Australia, the "Researchers in Business" program, may be an option for the Malaysian government to consider in the facilitation of industry placement activities. The "Researchers in Business" program supports the notion that universities have the "task of critically transmitting knowledge, bringing together teaching and research in an inseparable union" (Roversi-Monaco, 1998, p. 3), and do so by making funding available for academics to research *in situ* within a host firm.

The main aims of the "Researchers in Business" program are to:
- help break down the cultural divide between business and the research sector;
- speed the dissemination of expertise;
- accelerate the adoption of new ideas and technologies; and
- increase competitiveness of firms (Enterprise Connect, 2009).

This scheme, with a budget of 10 Million Australian Dollars, provides funding for fifty per cent of salary cost, for up to twelve months, and is particularly aimed at the smaller enterprises. A critical component of this program is that the researcher must spend a significant time period working on-site within the firm.

Ideologically, this appears to fit well with the Malaysian National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010 that refers to programmes "designed to benefit academic staff from both private and public HEIs [Higher Education Institutions] and may take several forms such as training, joint research, attachments and staff exchange programmes" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 24). Consequently, consideration should be given by Malaysian higher education policy makers towards the implementation of a program similar to that operating in Australia.

Conclusion

The relevance and usefulness of university education is being vigorously challenged by industry and governments alike and this is resulting in an increasing move towards the vocationalisation of higher education. This trend is expected to have a significant impact on the role of academics, and teaching and learning practices in the future. One way to assist academics in the transition towards this change, may be through professional development programs such as industry placements.

Research in this area highlights a number of benefits that the key stakeholders (academic, host firm, educational institution and students) may receive from this type of activity. The research data presented and discussed in this paper provide support for the industry placement conceptual model, shown at Figure 3, particularly in relation to the willingness of academics to pursue an industry placement (Figure 6) and the benefits they perceive they would derive from such a placement (Figure 8).

The data highlights that there are some tensions between the willingness of academics to upskill their knowledge and the ability to do so. Not surprisingly, these issues largely come down to funding problems. Whilst the ideology of plans such as the Malaysian National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010 espouse the desire and willingness to have programs designed to benefit academics, it is known and accepted that funding to implement the spirit of such plans is scarce and it is likely that these programs will not proceed, or if they do, will proceed less vigorously than might have been envisaged. Therefore, government really need to alter their view on education funding and start to view it more as an investment.

In the Malaysian context, education policy makers should consider the introduction of a program such as the Australian "Researchers in Business", to provide professional development opportunities for academics on the one hand, and provide industry with a pool of skilled academics who may assist them in developing innovative processes and practices to enhance organisational competitiveness.

There is scope for further research in this area and more studies are warranted across different countries to more vigorously validate the industry placement model, shown at Figure 3, and discover whether other factors such as benefits, challenges, perceptions of academic and government policies share commonalities.

References

Aminah, A. (1998). *Women in Malaysia, Country Briefing Paper*. Manila, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.

Arnold, P., & Smith, J. D. (2003). Adding connectivity and losing context with ICT: contrasting learning situations from a community of practice perspective. In M. Huysman, E. Wengerand & V. Wulf (Eds.), *Communities and technologies* (pp. 465-484). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Bergami, R., & Schuller A. (2009). Perceptions on Industry Placements: A Scoping Study of Academics in Australia. *The International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Change Management, 9*(9), 61-82.

Brown, S., & Chalmers, V. (1990). Teacher placement in industry: gaining maximum benefits. *SCRE Spotlights*(18), 1-6.

Chappell, C. (2004). *Contemporary vocational learning - changing pedagogy*. Paper presented at the Seventh Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association Conference, Canberra. from
 http://www.avetra.org.au/Conference_Archives/2004/documents/PA013Chappell.pdf.

Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education. (2009). *The Bologna Process 2020 - the European higher education area in the new decade*. Paper presented at the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education. from http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/conference/documents/Leuven_Louvain-la-Neuve_Communiqu%C3%A9_April_2009.pdf.

Enterprise Connect. (2009). Researchers in Business [Electronic Version]. Retrieved 2 June, 2009 from http://www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au/Manufacturing/AssistancetoImplementChange/Pages/ResearchersinBusinessGrant.aspx.

Garland, J. C. (2009). *Saving Alma Mater: a rescue plan for America's public universities*. Chicago, Il, USA: The University of Chicago Press.

Gela, B. (2004). *Deep change: professional development from the inside out*. Lanham, MA, USA: Scarecrow Education.

Goodrich Harwood, G. (2008). Design principles for successful virtual teams. In J. Nemiro, M. Beyerlein, L. Bradley & S. Beyerlein (Eds.), *The handbook of high-performance virtual teams* (pp. 59-83). San Francisco, CA, USA: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Haigh, G. (1997, 28 March). Pearls of wisdom. *Times Educational Supplement,* p. 19.

Ireland, E., Golden, S., & Spielhofer, T. (2002). *Professional development - a review of teachers' placements in business and industry*. Slough: NFER.

Klein, R. (2001, 27 April). Bubbling over. *Times Educational Supplement (Curriculum Specials),* p. 18.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

McGavin, H. (1996, 29 November). Work experience: the headteachers' turn. *Times Educational Supplement,* p. 4.

Meadon, L. (1990). Review of a company's teacher secondment programme. *International Journal of Educational Management, 4*(4), 27-28.

Ministry of Education. (2007). *National higher education action plan 2007-2010: triggering higher education transformation* Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Government of Malaysia.

Roversi-Monaco, F. (1998). Today's universities and the challenges of the future. In R. Pascoe & J. Ronayne (Eds.), *The passeggiata of exile: the Italian story in Australia* (pp. 3-12). Melbourne, Victoria,Australia: Victoria University.

Schuller, A., & Bergami, R. (2008). Expanding the Profession - Industry Placement for Teachers. In Swaffield B. & Guske I. (Eds.), *Education Landscapes in the 21st Century: Cross-cultural Challenges and Multi-disciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 196-205). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Star, C. (2007, 26-29 September). *Whither engagement? Challenges for community engagement within academia.* Paper presented at the 2007 International Women's Conference: Education, Employment and Everything... the Triple Layers of a Woman's Life, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia.

Wo, C. T. (2009, 30 June). Experts to jointly review Malaysia's education system. *The Star*.

Transforming Our World-view into a Universal-view

Bruce C. Swaffield, Professor, School of Communication and the Arts,
Regent University, Virginia, USA
brucswa@regent.edu

Abstract

In contemporary society, the term worldview has come to imply an observation and examination of the world based on an individual system of beliefs, values, knowledge, and experience. The result often is a fixed, static picture of other cultures, peoples, and nations as evaluated – and many times judged – according to personal practices and formulas (Simmons, 2006). Such a method of looking at the world does not allow for any expansion of thoughts or ideas. Initially, worldview meant a broadening of global vision, as defined by the German expression *weltanschauung* (Ashmore, 1966). In order to provide a useful framework for both individual, fixed views of the world and, at the same time, allow broader learning and acceptance to occur (Aerts et al., 1994), we must move toward a more appropriate term, known as a universalview. Replacing worldview with universalview will allow us to enlarge our perspective and outlook as we continue to develop into a global community of all people everywhere.

Introduction

Our perception of the world depends on perspective – how we view situations, events, and even people based on our experiences. These personal observations then come to be more widely known as our worldview. The problem is that worldviews differ and often conflict with one another. They can prevent us from understanding other cultures because we are using an internal value system to observe external conditions.

A perfect example is a student who traveled with me on a study abroad course many years ago. One of the cities we visited was Venice, Italy, and our lodging included meals for all three days. As we all sat down to dinner the first night, this particular student turned to me and asked why the waiters had not brought any butter with the bread.

"We always have bread and butter at supper," the young woman said.

"For the most part," I responded, "Italians don't use butter with bread at dinner. Only in the morning at breakfast."

She shrugged her shoulders and I could tell this explanation was not acceptable.

"I am going to ask for butter," she announced.

Several times, she stopped the waiters and repeated over and over again, "Butter. Butter. Butter." She didn't even know that *burro* was the Italian word for butter.

Each time, the waiters shook their heads and said no.

Undaunted, she persisted until they finally brought her a small plate of butter. For the next two nights, they did the same without being asked.

She got what she wanted, just as if she was back home in the United States.

This incident is a small matter, of course, but it demonstrates what can happen when opposing views collide. She was used to having bread and butter at dinner. It didn't matter if she was in a country where such was not the custom. On a larger scale, diverse views cause disagreements, confrontations, and wars among nations. People willingly fight to defend what they want, or what they understand to be right, without seeing or understanding the other side. What is sorely needed today, rather than a personal worldview, is a universalview of the world. We can still have our personal beliefs and judgments, but we need to get beyond ourselves if we are ever going to experience other cultures and peoples as they actually exist.

Exploring definitions and purpose

In order to understand this term we use – *worldview* – we need to explore its origin and meaning. Most scholars agree that the word is rooted in the German noun *weltanschauung*.

> *Weltanschauung* is a highly elastic term, but it usually denotes a perspective and interpretation of the universe and its events held in a sustained way by an individual or by a group. The perspective functions normatively, and as a point of articulation. It implies cognition and values and may or may not include a supporting theoretical structure. A *Weltanschauung* is something like an involuntary precipitate that has crystallized in the mind of an individual or in the collective outlook of some group, as in the case of Hellenic Greece or medieval Europe. (Ashmore, 1966, p. 115)

Generally translated, *weltanschauung* means world (*welt*) view (*anschauung*). How we employ the word, however, varies depending on our perspective. Freud (1918) pointed out the danger of being too literal in our definition.

> By *Weltanschauung,* then, I mean an intellectual construction which gives a unified solution of all the problems of our existence in virtue of a comprehensive hypothesis, a construction, therefore, in which no question is left open and in which everything in which we are interested finds a place. It is easy to see that the possession of such a *Weltanschauung* is one of the ideal wishes of mankind. When one believes in such a thing, one feels secure in life, one knows what one ought to strive after, and how one ought to organize one's emotions and interests to the best purpose. If that is what is meant by a *Weltanschauung*, then the question is an easy one for psychoanalysis to answer.

More than anything else, Freud explains the dangers of having a strict and precise *weltanschauung*. It is much like the student who wanted butter at dinner. Because this was a practice in her family in the United States, she was adamant that it be observed everywhere and by everyone, no matter the traditions of Italian culture. She was comfortable with this way of doing things; she felt secure, even though she was 5,000 miles away from home, because she was used to bread with butter. Her "emotions" and "interests," at least for the moment, were all tied to her past experiences. These formed her beliefs and views of the world. She could feel at home without actually being at home. In this case, one *weltanschauung* became dominant over the other although they were both equally important. One was not right and the other wrong. Each was proper and correct given the respective culture.

Prior to Freud, however, Hegel and Kierkegaard both wrestled with this notion of *weltanschauung*. "For Hegel, *Weltanschauung* means the world-view of a certain nation, in a certain time: a shared view in which the poet participates. Thus a world-view is a general, shared view which one acquires automatically by participation in the times and society which one forms with one's fellows. . . . World-view, à la Hegel, is the understanding from apprehending the unfolding of Spirit in the exterior world" (McCarthy, 1978, p. 136). Kierkegaard later translated the German word into his own language, making this "world-view" a more active and integral part of one's total thought and being. He used the term "life-view" that involves a vigorous search to know other people and cultures.

> Life-view emphasizes the duty and importance of the individual to understand himself, both his "premises" and his "conclusions," his conditionality and his freedom. Each man must answer for himself about the meaning of life, and thus he cannot take his cue from the spirit of the age which will all too readily answer on his behalf. In addition, life-view, as philosophy of life, challenges established, academic philosophy which proceeds exclusively from thought. The new

philosophy which Kierkegaard suggests by his emphasis on life-view and his definition of it is no longer detached thought but reflection upon the meaning of experience and then its articulation in a coherent view. Life-view is not to be the sole aspect of new philosophizing, but will instead properly take its place at the center of the search for wisdom, which philosophy once claimed to be. (McCarthy, 1978, pp. 136-137)

In other words, a "life-view" is more than just a philosophy of life. It is, for all intents and purposes, a way of life. As such, it permeates everything we think, do or say. But what about how we feel at certain times? Our mind does not always control our inner feelings.

It is easy to examine or define *weltanschauung* and life-view on an objective level, but much more complex when we talk about the personal emotions attached to our perspective of other races and cultures. When I was invited to be a lecturer for a short time in Harbin, China, I welcomed the opportunity. I knew little about the culture, except for the Chinese food I ate occasionally. I looked forward to meeting these people on the other side of the world to understand more about their lives. Within two days of being there, I was ready to come home. I thought I was prepared for my visit, but I felt closed in and claustrophobic, as if I could not go anywhere or do anything without being watched. The university had assigned a young man to assist me and he went with me everywhere. He was there even when I wanted to go back to my hotel room and lie down for a few minutes. Jerry was right there in the room, sitting quietly in a chair by the window, as I tried to rest. Needless to say, I felt so uncomfortable that I actually became anxious.

Looking back on the experience, and with a considerably more objective view, I realize that Jerry and the university were making sure that my every need was handled. The Chinese custom of hospitality was not something I was used to; after all, I am an American and I enjoy my freedom as well as my space. Having someone at my side every minute of the day made me uneasy and uncomfortable. Several times, I tried to get away from Jerry. But nothing worked. I soon realized that I was not about to change what he had been taught about being a good host. I could either accept the differences in cultures, or I could continue to be miserable because these people were not doing the things I wanted or expected. In essence, my worldview was certainly different than Jerry's worldview. This occasion is where a more universalview would have helped both of us.

To be sure, a worldview can be most problematic when two or more individuals or groups hold different opinions. Burney (n.d.) talks about the lenses we use to see the world and its situations, much like wearing glasses allow us to see better.

There is another lens, however, that is even more important. It's our worldview. Each of us has adopted one – whether we realize it or not. Principles and precepts shape the way we view the world around us. Those principles are imprinted upon us through what we have learned, heard and experienced. Once a worldview is established we interpret everything around us dependent on what has shaped on our lenses. Unlike optical lenses, however, our worldview impacts not only what we see but also what we hear and experience. Everything that enters our mind for consideration enters through the lens of our worldview and we will respond accordingly.

Our worldview, then, determines how we look at the world: "we interpret everything around us dependent on what has shaped our lenses. . . and we will respond accordingly." Often, that response is to judge, to evaluate, to decide whether something is right or wrong, good or bad, based on our "adopted" worldview. The "principles and precepts" that "we have learned, heard and experienced" naturally make us want to think one way is superior to the other.

Divergent perspectives

Differences among people occur at all levels, races, cultures and nationalities because of individual perspectives. How well our views are "shaped" and formed determines how well we are able (or willing) to understand foreign viewpoints. I once knew a person who traveled overseas with us. Everywhere we went he kept saying, time and time again, "This isn't the way we do it back home." We all know persons who fit into this category. They are the type that, when asked, will answer that people in England drive on the wrong side of the road. As we know, there is no right or wrong side; there is only right or left. Though others might not agree, I think driving on the left side is much easier than the way we do things in the United States. My view, however, will hardly convince an entire nation that there is a better way to drive.

We have to realize that the present concept and interpretation of the word worldview frequently prompts an either or situation. Simmons (2006) proposes an expansion of the term to make it more inclusive.

> I stated earlier that the danger of the contemporary usage of worldview language is that it forces a dualism that demands a decision of allegiance or exclusion: "You are either with us or against us." Incumbent on my proposal is that the criterion for a useful worldview is that it opens the space in which to eventually contest its usefulness. This is what dualistic thinking shuts off. By framing a world as white/black and good/evil, what can too often get lost is the complexity with which these dualisms interpenetrate and cross-pollinate. (p. 166)

Breaking down each and every difference, by emphasizing what is right or wrong – "white/black" or "good/evil" – causes a worldview to contract rather than expand. As Simmons contends, we must "open the space" between conflicting perspectives so that there is acceptance and understanding. A worldview should not be set in stone and dictate actions or beliefs for the future. Instead, it must be malleable and flexible so it is molded by the present as well as the past. Strictly speaking, we do not "adopt" a certain worldview like going to the store and picking out a product we like or what fits us best. Nor should a worldview be permanently "established," for it needs to be ever-changing, ever-growing and ever-developing. We have to look at the evolution of a worldview as a process, something in progress, rather than an "imprint" that can never be changed once it is fixed in our minds. What we must cultivate is a broader, more comprehensive view of the universe in which we live as opposed to narrowing our beliefs and constructs through a limited worldview.

Had I made up my mind about Rome, Italy, the first time I visited the Eternal City in 1989, I would never have returned. My initial encounter with the city was not pleasant at all. At the time, I thought to myself that I would never come back. I had just arrived on a hot, summer day, taking the train from Florence down to Rome. I had to stand the entire two-plus hours because every car was packed. Making my way from Termini Station to the hotel on foot, about half a mile away, was a nightmare. The traffic circling around Piazza della Repubblica, one of the busiest parts of the city, seemed endless and chaotic. I was almost hit several times as I tried to cross the street. To add to the confusion, a homeless woman was running around, from lane to lane, screaming in a frenzy and kicking her shoes everywhere. After arriving at the hotel, I checked in and immediately went to a café on a nearby corner. I sat down to relax. Without warning, a motorcycle zipped through the tables, almost running over my foot, and disappeared into the main boulevard packed with six lanes of bumper-to-bumper traffic. I would have left at once if I wasn't so hungry. For the rest of my days in Rome, my initial impression colored everything else I did or saw: the city seemed dirty and polluted; the buildings were old; there was too much noise; the people always seemed in a hurry; and dinner was two hours later than I liked.

Through the years, my worldview of Rome has changed into a universalview. I have been back at least two dozen times and the city is one of my favorite places to visit. I no longer even think about what bothered me at first. Instead, I see Rome for what it is, not for what I want it to be or what I thought it was. In addition, I can still love Rome and also love where I live in Virginia Beach, Virginia. One place is not better or worse than the other. I embrace a universalview that each one is merely different, attractive, and pleasing for its own sake.

As human beings and citizens of a global community, we have a responsibility to keep moving, intellectually and ethically, toward understanding other cultures and people. In making a case for "an ethics for peace that cuts across cultures," Cha (2008) explains we must become more aware of "differences and similarities" among nations and individuals.

> We have obligations though, as we never need have if we choose to believe that we are not responsible for decisions we make and the actions we take. Our obligations include examining the nature of societies in terms of their differences and similarities and in terms of how they change upon interaction. Especially, we need to look carefully at our pasts and how they have influenced our present. And as we imagine and undertake changes in the present, we must remember that these actions of the present become the future. (p. 6)

"Our pasts" as well as "changes in the present" should contribute to a universal understanding of one another in the future, regardless of personal beliefs. The present concept and notion of worldview, at least as it is used in the United States, seems to stifle rather than encourage discussion. Let me explain. Teaching at Christian institutions as I have for the past 25 years, I have encountered students who, from time to time, come to college with their worldview already firmly fixed. At 18 or 19 years old, they have already made up their minds about a great many things, especially religion and what they believe (most of which they have heard from their parents). Some of these young women and men are so set in their ways that they refuse to read or discuss certain controversial issues. They know what they believe and they do not want to hear about anything else that might be contrary. Yes, they have a strong religious worldview. But what about trying to get along with those who do not hold the same values or live in the same way? If they take the Great Commission seriously – to go and spread the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ to all people and nations – how will they ever reach those they do not understand or even acknowledge?

My intention is not to criticize religion or those who are deeply devoted to a "Christian worldview." I am merely sharing what I have observed through experience. Sadly, many of these particular students often have forgotten that Jesus proclaimed love (to God and to others) as the greatest commandment. As a side note, I should like to see us abandon all labels that tend to set us apart from one another. I think this might be the effect, perhaps on a subconscious level, when we hear phrases like Christian worldview, Muslim worldview, Jewish worldview, Buddhist worldview and so on. How far should we go to distinguish ourselves from one another when the whole point of a worldview, more aptly called a universalview, should help us see more of the world and not less?

In *A Just Society*, Boylan (2004) begins a dialogue on what needs to happen as we examine our distinct perceptions of the world. What we discover and learn should help us as opposed to hinder us on our journey.

> Our ability to value anything is inextricably tied to our personal worldview. This is because worldview forms the context for all of our normative and factual judgments. It is only by understanding (or acquiring an understanding of) what a worldview is that we can come to know fundamentally what valuation is all about and how it can be used correctly or not. (ix)

We need to know what we mean when we talk about worldview, and whether our worldview allows us to make "normative and factual judgments" without any other considerations beyond our immediate perspective. There are dozens of questions we could pose, but few concrete answers. I recently asked several graduate students at Regent University to define worldview. Their answers are intriguing as much as they are diverse:

Response A: "Beliefs and values that guide your decisions."

Response B: "Worldview is an individual's perception on the world around them based on their own personal experiences and knowledge."

Response C: "A worldview is a basis for the interpretation of basic human standards of conduct and how they came to be."

Response D: "Worldview is the overall interpretation of an individual of the world; it is the way an individual sees the world based on his or her moral position."

Response E: "I would define worldview as the lens through which an individual interprets political or philosophical situations, colored by their past experiences, faith, religious training, education, and socialization by their community and family."

Response F: "A simplistic approach is a metaphorical window through which we look at people, ideas, and choices around us. More complex: A judgment paradigm, based on our values, that we apply to our decisions about our attitudes and actions."

When we begin to define what a worldview is, we run into all kinds of problems. In a sense, we describe one abstract term using several others, such as "moral position," "basic human standards of conduct," "perception," "beliefs," and "values." The dilemma, of course, is trying to reach any sort of consensus on a universal interpretation. Conduct is much different in the United States than in Italy or Saudi Arabia. The perception of the world by someone from Thailand will be quite unlike that of a person from Germany. Beliefs and values will vary widely, too, between persons from China and Brazil. In the end, explaining a particular worldview always breaks down into separate components and perspectives, "the way an individual sees the world," which tend to alienate persons, societies and cultures.

Whatever we do when it comes to explaining what we convey by our worldview, we cannot take it upon ourselves to define the term for someone else. Each individual (and group) is different, with a diverse background, belief system, experience, culture, and perspective. Attempting to construct a worldview for others, let alone ourselves, can be risky business. For example, Muslims might object to this definition of an Islamic worldview written by a Christian author:

> Islam, we've been told, is related to the Arabic word meaning "peace." This is
> correct, except that the word means a particular kind of peace. A better translation
> is "surrender" or "submission." It describes the peace when a vanquished soldier
> lays down his arms in submission. And so the very name, Islam, has militaristic
> connotations, and in this lies the root of radical Islam. That root then grows in the
> soil of the Islamic worldview. (Colson, 2001)

A similar disconnect in tone and position would occur if a Muslim offered a definition of a Christian worldview.

The difficulty in espousing a worldview is that it is not an accurate view of the world at all. It is our unique take – a snapshot – on everything from how we see different religions to how we view foreign customs to how we interpret political systems abroad to how people dress or talk. A case in point is my viewpoint on world history. I have to admit my knowledge in this area is particularly limited. Like most people, I do not know much because I think I am not affected by what happened many years ago and thousands of miles away. I never thought much about China or Taiwan, yet when I was preparing to teach in Harbin,

China, I was instructed over and over again by the sponsoring agency not to talk with anyone about the tensions between these two countries. To me, living in the Midwest, I had no idea that this issue was such a problem. To those living there, disagreements between China and Taiwan ran deep, politically and culturally. Sad to say, I knew nothing about Chiang Kai-shek and Chairman Mao even though I had heard their names many times while growing up. My worldview was altered considerably after being in China. I gained a wider view of the universe, the kind of "world view" that Aerts et al. (1994) presents in *World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration*:

> A world view is a coherent collection of concepts and theorems that must allow us to construct a global image of the world, and in this way to understand as many elements of our experience as possible.
>
> Societies, as well as individuals, have always contemplated deep questions relating to their being and becoming, and to the being and becoming of the world. The configuration of answers to these questions forms their world view. Research on world views, although we are convinced of its practical value and necessity, will always be primarily an expression of a theoretical interest. It reflects the unlimited openness of the human mind to reality as a whole. Even if this research would not appear to be of any immediate value or necessity – quod non – we still should promote and encourage it energetically, because it also expresses the most unselfish striving of humanity "the desire to know," a property of "Homo sapiens sapiens."
>
> Hence, a world view is a system of co-ordinates or a frame of reference in which everything presented to us by our diverse experiences can be placed. It is a symbolic system of representation that allows us to integrate everything we know about the world and ourselves into a global picture, one that illuminates reality as it is presented to us within a certain culture. (pp. 17-18)

It is imperative for us to "construct a global image of the world." We have to realize that a true "world view" is really "a frame of reference" that "allows us to integrate everything we know." And, I would add, what we know at that moment, realizing that we will continue to add more and more to our knowledge and understanding of the world. That is one reason why we need to talk in terms of a universalview. The second reason is because we want our "global picture" to be more universal. Not less so.

Conclusion

The analogy of a house can help us better understand the predicament we face each time we begin to examine the world in all of its complexity (Aerts et al., 1994). We may quickly become lost and confused. What we see is foreign and strange, radically different from what we are used to. We wonder what to think when we lose our frame of reference.

> We can find our way in our own house. We know how many rooms it has, and how they are used. Knowing one's house thoroughly makes one feel "at home." The world around us can be construed as a huge "house" that we share with other humans, as well as with animals and plants. It is in this world that we exist, fulfilling our tasks, enjoying things, developing social relations, creating a family. In short, we live in this world. We thus have a deep human need to know and to trust it, to be emotionally involved in it. Many of us, however, experience an increasing feeling of alienation. Even though, with the expansion of society, virtually the entire surface of the planet has become a part of our house, often we do not feel "at home" in that house. With the rapid and spontaneous changes of the past decades, so many new wings and rooms have been constructed or

rearranged that we have lost familiarity with our house. We often have the impression that what remains of the world is a collection of isolated fragments, without any structure and coherence. Our personal "everyday" world seems unable to harmonise itself with the global world of society, history and cosmos. (p. 11)

Our "house" continues to grow larger each day, primarily because of technology. But that is no reason for us to be uncomfortable. All of the "new wings and rooms" will allow us to see and do more than before. At first, these other parts may seem like "a collection of isolated fragments, without any structure and coherence." We need to remember, however, that they are connected and tied to the old structure that makes us feel "at home."

Our global community, individually and corporately, is expanding rapidly. It is time for us to stop looking at the little pieces of the world that we see every day, and begin to see the entire universe. Taking a true universalview, rather than a worldview, will give us the opportunity to better appreciate and understand our own perspective as well as that of others within an international and inclusive context.

References

Aerts, D., Apostel, L., De Moor, B., Hellemans, S., Maex, E., Van Belle, H., Van Der Veken, J. (1994). *World views: from fragmentation to integration.* Brussels, Belgium: VUB Press.

Ashmore, J. (1966). Three aspects of weltanschauung. *The Sociological Quarterly 7*(2), 215-228.

Bertrand, J. (2007). *(Re)thinking worldview: learning to think, live, and speak in this world.* Wheaton, Illinois, USA: Crossway Books.

Bourne, E. (2008). *Global shift: how a new worldview is transforming humanity.* Oakland, California, USA: New Harbinger Publications.

Boylan, M. (2004). *A just society*. Lanham, Maryland, USA: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.

Buddhism. (2002). *Mahidol University* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.mahidol.ac.th/budsir/buddhism.htm.

Burney, B. (n.d.). "Worldview: which lens are you looking through?" *Crosswalk* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.crosswalk.com/pastors/11595738/.

Cha, I. (2008). Toward a transcultural ethics in a multicultural world. *Diogenes 55*(3), 3-11.

Colson, C. (2001). Understanding Islam's ideology and worldview, Islam series 2. *Breakpoint* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.breakpoint.org/commentaries/3214-understanding-islams-ideology-and-worldview.

Decartes, R. (1641). Meditations on first philosophy. Trans. Laurence J. Lafleur. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall, 1960.

Drury, K. (n.d.). "A Christian worldview?" *DruryWriting* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.drurywriting.com/keith/worldview.Christian.htm.

Ferguson, K. (2008). Meaning and the external world. *Erkenntnis 70*(3), 299-311.

Freud, S. (1918). Civilization & die weltanschauung. *Modern History Sourcebook* online. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1918freud-civwelt.html.

Hahn, L. (2001). *A contextualistic worldview: essays*. Carbondale, Illinois, USA: Southern Illinois University Press.

Khan, A. (2009). Understanding Islam. *Kavkaz-Center News Agency* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2009/02/09/10545.shtml.

Kuyper, A. (1898). Lectures on Calvinism: the stone lectures of 1898. *Kuyper Foundation* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.kuyper.org/main/publish/books_essays/printer_17.shtml.

McCarthy, V. (1978). *The phenomenology of moods in Kierkegaard*. Boston, Massachusetts, USA: Marinus Nijhoff.

Nash, R. (1992). *Worldviews in conflict: choosing Christianity in a world of ideas*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: Zondervan.

Naugle, D. (2002). *Worldview: the history of a concept*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: Eerdmans.

Simmons, J. (2006). Finding uses for used-up words: thinking *weltanschauung* 'after' Heidegger. *Philosophy Today 50*(2), 156-169.

Sire, J. (2004). *Naming the elephant: worldview as a concept*. Downers Grove, Illinois, USA: InterVarsity Press.

Sire, J. (2004). *The universe next door: a basic worldview catalogue*. Downers Grove, Illinois, USA: InterVarsity Press.

Smedley, A. (1999). *Race in North America: origin and evolution of a worldview*. Boulder, Colorado, USA: Westview Press.

Sowell, T. (1995). *Race and culture: a world view*. New York, New York, USA: Basic Books.

Tackett, D. (n.d.). What's a Christian worldview? *Focus on the Family* website. Retrieved 15 November 2009 from: http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview.aspx.

Organizational Intelligence:
Attitudes and Habits of Hispanic Entrepreneurs in the Process of Decision-making and Business Performance

Dr. Angel D. Resto-Gallardo, Walden University, USA
arestogallardo@gmail.com

Abstract

A review of current literature revealed that internal managerial capabilities (i.e., managerial inadequacy, incompetence, inexperience, expectations, control, and financial shortcomings) are the primary factors involved in business failure and approximately 50 percent of all small businesses fail within the first 5 years. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to conduct a full organizational intelligence quotient (OIQ) assessment that correlates business performance to OIQ. In this quantitative study, an OIQ survey was conducted on a convenience sample of 96 Hispanic business owners. Data were analyzed calculating an average OIQ. An OIQ of 100 (at the 50th percentile) with 15 IQ points per standard deviation is insufficient to succeed in a competitive market. The findings demonstrated that Hispanic entrepreneurs have an OIQ of 96 and, therefore, did not exhibit the attitudes and habits of smart organizations; consequently, they are more likely to encounter barriers in their ability to routinely make and formulate quality decisions. This study contributes to social change by identifying the areas of organizational strengths and weakness that helped Hispanic entrepreneurs improved their decision making process, thus strengthening their internal managerial capabilities to better compete and survive in the face of changing circumstances.

Introduction

At 13.5 percent of the total population, Hispanics have become the largest minority group in America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). They own 6.6 percent of businesses and account for 2.48 percent of total receipts, constituting the largest minority business community (SBA, 2007). Although such growth is striking, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration, approximately 50 percent of all small businesses fail within the first 5 years; this failure depends primarily on the owner's foresight and organization.

According to Bates, Jackson, and Johnson (2007), the creation of viable small businesses entails (a) the involvement of skilled and capable entrepreneurs, (b) access to financial capital to invest in their business ventures, and (c) access to markets for the products of their enterprises. These authors argued that the first of these three building blocks—skilled and capable entrepreneurs (i.e., the management team)—is the most important internal resource. However, gaining management skills and capabilities requires opportunities to acquire certain educational and business-related experiences.

Gaskill, Van Auken, and Manning (1993) and Lussier and Pfeifer (2000) agreed that the lack of insight, flexibility, emphasis on technical skills, managerial deficiencies (i.e., lack of management skills and appropriate managerial training), and financial shortcomings (i.e., lack of accounting background, cash analysis, and financial records) are critical internal factors for effective business performance. Meanwhile, Moller and Svahn (2003) and Winter (2003) argue that having a pool of internal resources is essential for a competitive advantage. Therefore, it is imperative for entrepreneurs to manage business dynamic capabilities that involve the business ability to integrate, reconfigure, renew, and transfer resources.

The focus of this study is not to assess the success or failure of small businesses; rather, it focuses on internal business processes, which include the adoption and effective use of best

practices that come from deeply seated organizational attitudes and habits. These are measurable by the organizational intelligence quotient (OIQ). Indeed, in today's business environment, the ability to manage intangible assets has become the center of discussion among scholars.

The current study addressed whether Hispanic entrepreneurs exhibit attitudes and habits of smart organizations and are able to routinely make and formulate quality decisions to effectively and efficiently compete in the market. Hispanic entrepreneurs in the United States have a higher percentage of failure compared to the rest of entrepreneurs nationwide. Exploring the decision-making attitudes and habits of the largest minority group in the United States and considering that this group represents 15 percent of the nation's total population, conveyed a new perception of the internal managerial process embedded in this minority group. This study aims to explore the internal managerial capabilities as well as the fact that the adoption and effective use of best practices come from deeply seated organizational attitudes and habits, which are measurable by the OIQ.

Theoretical Framework

A review of current literature revealed that internal managerial capabilities (i.e. managerial inadequacy, incompetence, inexperience, attitudes, expectations, control and ambition), are the primary factors for business failure (Haswell & Holmes, 1989; Njite, King, Parsa, & Self, 2005) and roughly 50% of small businesses fail within the first five years (SBA, 2007). These managerial capabilities are becoming the center of attention for many scholars on strategic planning. The knowledge-based theory of the firm (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1996; Kogut & Zander, 1992; Nonaka, 1991), considered these managerial capabilities the major determinants of sustainable competitive advantage and superior firm performance. Moreover, because these managerial capabilities are embedded with knowledge, and because knowledge-based resources are usually difficult to imitate and socially complex, make these capabilities the new center of business strategic planning.

There are several models designed to measure knowledge-based resources, define its applicability to their performance and acts as predictors of business future (i.e. failure or success). Most seek to measure organizational intelligence the way IQ models seek to measure human intelligence (Kull, 2000; Matheson & Matheson, 1998; Mendelson & Ziegler, 1999).

Kull (2000) developed a two-factor model where static and dynamic organizational intelligence is evaluated throughout five sub-systems: structural design, cultural identity, stakeholder ecology, intellectual capital, and the interpretative map. These subsystems represent knowledge and provide for an understanding of how it can be modified.

Mendelson & Ziegler (1999) developed the Organizational IQ model. This model measures a company's ability to quickly process information and make effective decisions. It provides strong results that have both economically and statistically significance, providing confidence on the development of the organizational IQ concept.

Matheson and Matheson's (1998) nine-principle model correlates IQ with performance, with smarter organizations significantly getting a high IQ score. These organizations not only perform better but more consistently. Organizations in which the principles are strongly rooted are better able to adopt decision-making best practices and to achieve superior results. The model fits very well with the purpose of this research as it allows the researcher to examine the processes through which Hispanic entrepreneurs make strategic decisions and make them as effective as their operational process.

In order to develop competencies, business owners must adopt cognitive development practices to survive in a dynamic economy. According to (Kull, 2000), organizational

intelligence (OI) represents an intuitive understanding that links knowledge management with performance measurement. He characterized organizational intelligence as an organization's cognitive capacity to leverage knowledge and employ reasoning to meet its perceived challenges. Glynn (1996) distinguished OI as an organizational capability to process, interpret, encode, manipulate and access information in a purposeful, goal-directed manner so it can increase its adaptive potential in the environment in which it operates. Organizational intelligence, then, is the ability to allow organizations to grow, survive, and prosper. This ability requires a proper organizational structuring and functioning, and the management of human resources, technology, knowledge, and organizational learning.

Competitiveness is crucial for a firm's growth, development, and survival. Knowledge creation and knowledge sharing and the nurturing of social networks as a source to innovate are essential ingredients to develop knowledge based resources embedded in strategic practices. The knowledge based theory of the firm allowed for the analysis of these important resources that may lead any business strategy to sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance.

Population

The population selected for this study was Little Village, a neighborhood in the west side of Chicago, Illinois, USA. This neighborhood is home to the largest Mexican American population in the Midwest. According the US Census, Little Village has an estimated population of 91,071 residents (i.e. Hispanic 83%, Asian 13%, Black 12.9%, and White 3.52%).

The population sample was retrieved from the Official City of Chicago, Department of Business Affairs And Licensing website (www.egov.cityofchicago.org). The sample list included business owners who hold a business license in Chicago and operate their businesses within the Little Village area (Ward 22). The population consisted of 900 businesses in this geographic area. Each member of this population was contacted by the researcher to determine if the business owner was Hispanic. This prescreening process assisted the researcher to determine the convenience sample. Only 197 business owners self identified themselves as Hispanics. For the purpose of this study, only those respondents who self identified as Hispanics were chosen for the convenience sample. There were 197 surveys mailed out to the selected sample and 101 of them were returned. The response rate was about 48.73%. Within 101 respondents, five of them returned the survey with notes indicating they chose not to participate. Therefore, 96 responses were valid for analysis.

Methodology

Matheson and Matheson's (1998) nine-principle model correlates organizational IQ with performance, with smarter organizations significantly getting a higher organizational IQ. The nine principles consists of: value creation culture, creating alternatives, continual learning, alignment and empowerment, disciplined decision making, open information flow, outside In strategic perspective, embracing uncertainty and system thinking. All of these principles transform the power of decision making process. It allows making "smart" decisions. Understanding the Organizational IQ, helps entrepreneurs re-think their business strategies to operate efficiently, effectively and consistently to prosper and grow in the knowledge economy.

A self–administered survey designed to measure organizational intelligence quotient (OIQ) was distributed to Hispanic entrepreneurs. The OIQ survey generated two (2) outcomes; the overall OIQ score, and OIQ profile. The OIQ score was used to measure the

organizational IQ and the OIQ profile identified areas of organizational strengths and weaknesses and indicated areas for improvement.
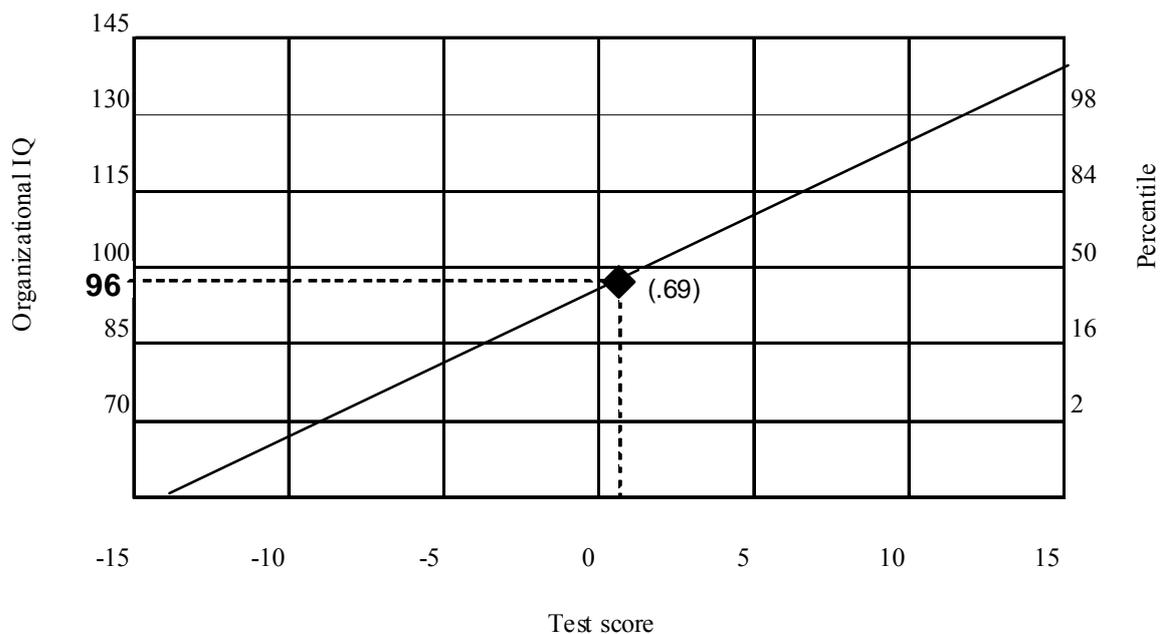
Instrumentation

The survey consisted of 45 questions (five questions on each of nine principles), which were be answered using a scale (from +3 for very smart to –3 for the opposite) to produce an interval data (see Appendix A). A license has been approved by Don Creswell, cofounder of Smart Org Inc. The survey was divided into nine pages, one per practice, with five questions per page (Labeled A through E). Each practice is mentioned on the top of each page. For each item a short text characterized each end of the scale, from +3 for very smart to -3 for the opposite. The respondents scored their business against this scale on how well it fits. If it has both "smart" and "not smart" characteristics, the respondent gave an intermediate score. If the characteristics were roughly balanced or not preset at all, the respondent scored it as 0 (zero).

Results

The survey results revealed that Hispanic entrepreneurs in Little Village (HELV) have an overall OIQ score of 96, which means—according to Matheson and Matheson (1998)—that they are more likely to encounter barriers in their ability to routinely make high-quality decisions (See Figure 1). The OIQ profile consisted of five "smart" principles and four "not committed" principles. The "smart" principles are value creation culture, continual learning, disciplined decision-making, alignment and empowerment, and open information flow. The "not committed" principles are creating alternatives, embracing uncertainty, outside-in strategic perspective, and system thinking (See Figure 2).

Figure 1: Conversion Table for Organizational IQ. By Matheson, D., & Matheson, J. (1998). The Smart Organization: Creating Value Through Strategic R&D. Boston: Harvard Business School Press. (Reprinted with Permission)
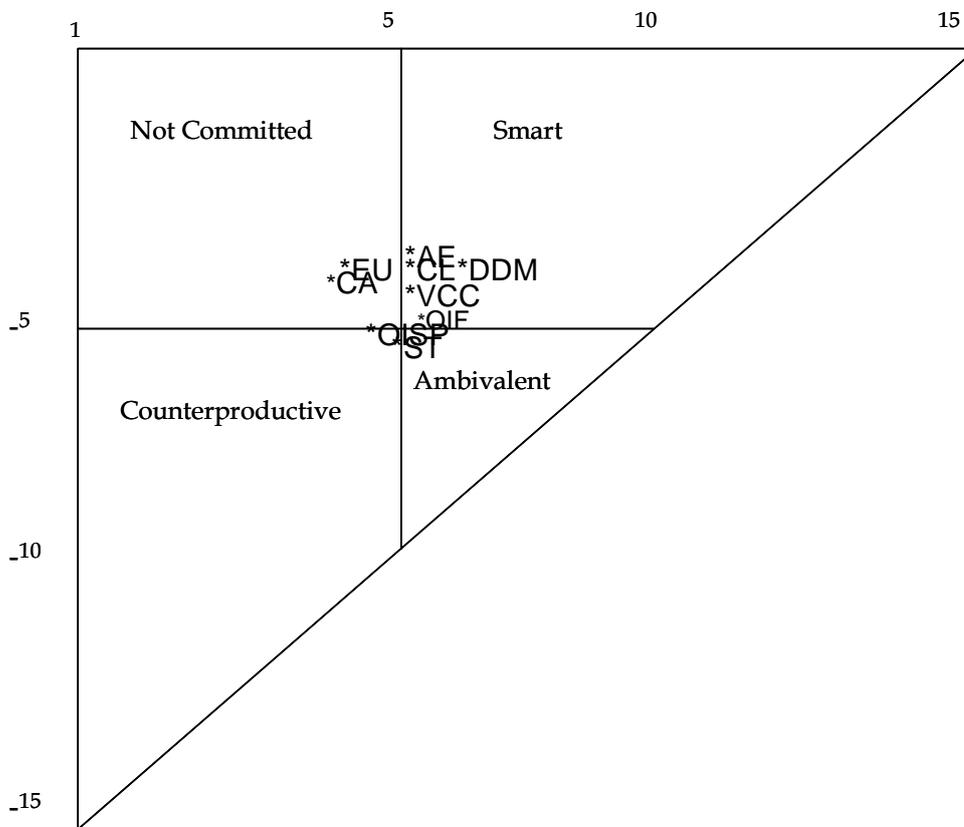
Discussion

The survey revealed five principles that were considered "smart" and four principles that were considered "not committed". Consequently, this sample provided little or no active resistance, and no major barriers to improving this OIQ profile were found. To improve in these areas, entrepreneurs need to provide vision, train employees, learn principles and practices, demonstrate (lead by example), and coach.

The following section presents the organizational intelligence profile exhibited by HELV, describing the areas of organizational strengths and weaknesses as well as areas for improvement (See Table 1)

Table 1: Overall Organizational IQ Indicator Score sheet

Principles	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Value creation Culture	0.30	0.10	0.20	0.40	0.30	1.30	5.60	-4.30
Creating Alternatives	0.20	0.10	-0.40	0.00	0.10	0.00	4.40	-4.40
Continual Learning	0.00	-0.10	0.10	0.40	0.50	0.90	5.20	-4.30
Embracing Uncertainty	-0.10	0.00	0.10	0.40	0.00	0.40	4.70	-4.30
Outside-In Strategic Perspective	0.10	-0.20	0.10	-0.10	0.10	0.00	4.90	-4.90
System Thinking	0.30	0.00	0.10	-0.20	-0.20	0.00	5.00	-5.00
Disciplined Decision Making	0.50	0.40	0.60	0.50	0.20	2.20	6.40	-4.20
Alignment and Empowerment	0.00	0.50	-0.10	0.10	0.50	1.00	5.30	-4.30
Open Information Flow	-0.20	0.40	0.00	-0.10	0.30	0.40	5.20	-4.80
TOTAL						6.20	46.70	-40.50

6.20/9=.69

Organizational Intelligence Profile

Principle 1: Value creation

The goal in the value-creation culture principle is to maximize employees' potential to add value to everything they do on a daily basis. This value is transferred to the customers, who in return will remunerate the business with their support and demand. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +5.60 on positive behaviors and –4.30 on negative behaviors. This score situates the value-creation culture principle in the smart quadrant. Matheson and Matheson (1998) argued that a principle on the smart quadrant is the easiest to improve and/or sustain. Barriers to best practice implantation will not arise as a result of principles because they contain few negative patterns.

Principle 2: Creating alternatives

The goal in this principle is to seek high-value alternatives that are desirable, safe, and rewarding. It also requires a commitment to evaluate alternatives honestly and without prejudice. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +4.40 on positive behaviors and –4.40 on negative behaviors. This score situates the creating alternatives principle in the not committed quadrant. HELV showed weak positive and negative behaviors, indicating that HELV are not paying attention to social interactions with their employees and customers as a strategy to seek alternatives to solve problems.

Principle 3: Continual learning

The goal in this principle is to learn continually what creates value and how to deliver it. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +5.20 on positive behaviors and –4.30 on negative behaviors. This score situates the continual learning principle in the smart quadrant. Although the positive behaviors on this principle surpass the negative ones by 0.90, business owners must keep a focused strategy to maintain the learning flow and adapt their business strategy to any unexpected challenge.

Principle 4: Embracing uncertainty

The goal in this principle is to learn how to deal with unknown and uncertain events. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +4.70 on positive behaviors and –4.30 on negative behaviors. This score situates the embracing uncertainty principle in the not committed quadrant. HELV showed weak positive and negative behaviors that neutralize each other, forcing the organizational absorptive capacity to a halted stage.

Principle 5: Outside-In strategic perspective

The goal in this principle is to see and act on the big picture. From the personnel perspective, employees can distance themselves from their personal circumstances, see the big picture, and appreciate its implication for strategy. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +4.90 on positive behaviors and –4.90 on negative behaviors. This score situates the outside-in strategic perspective principle in the not committed quadrant. In other words, HELV are not taking full advantage of the relevant information available to enhance their current business strategy.

Principle 6: System thinking

The goal in this principle is to expect all individuals within the business to think the full implications of their actions and events. The goal is to recognize that everyone within the organization is interconnected and must act appropriately to avoid negative consequences. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +5.00 on positive behaviors and –5.00 on negative behaviors. This score situates the system thinking principle in the smart quadrant. This means that HELV see their businesses as open systems that have many interconnected elements. By having this mind set, HELV and employees further evaluate their actions as minimizing negative outcomes.

Principle 7: Open information flow

The goal in this principle is to inform and be informed. In other words, information is used to create value. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +6.40 on positive behaviors and –4.20 on negative behaviors, situating the open information flow principle in the smart quadrant. Although HELV showed positive practices within this principle, it was clear during the data collection process that employees were not well-informed about business operations. Moreover, they expressed that the owners shared minimal information with them. Most of the information was hoarded by the owners.

Principle 8: Alignment and empowerment

The goal in this principle is to coordinate all employees effectively to create value. The effective allocation of employees' talent, skills, and knowledge can empower employees to create value through their actions. According to the survey, HELV exhibited +5.30 on positive behaviors and –4.30 on negative behaviors, situating the alignment and empowerment principle in the smart quadrant. Thus, HELV are on the right track to leverage employees' potential. HELV can still push employees to innovate and reconfigure their existing knowledge.

Principle 9: Discipline decision making

The goal in this principle is to orchestrate strategic choices that involve people, processes, and technologies to achieve the highest possible value creation. HELV exhibited +5.20 on positive behaviors and –4.80 on negative behaviors. This score situates the disciplined decision-making principle in the smart quadrant. During the analysis of the previous eight

principles, HELV demonstrated that they do have the foundation for a disciplined decision-making process. This is crucial for performance improvement.

Societal Impact

It is critical for HELV to take a moment to assess and analyze their internal managerial capabilities and how they impact their business operations. This business community needs to take ownership of their actions and seek feasible solutions that begin from within. Taking an introspective approach can provide better insights into how they can perform better and smarter. Blaming others will not solve their problems, but being proactive, sensitive, and adaptable can produce wiser strategies and strengthen their internal managerial capabilities to survive and compete. The findings of this study can serve as a starting point for HELV to begin this internal assessment process to renew or extend present business or generate new ones, fostering and nurturing core competencies' development, innovation, and invention to improve performance.

Conclusion

Overall, Hispanic entrepreneurs in the Little Village neighborhood in Chicago, Illinois, did not exhibit the attitudes and habits of smart organizations and were unable to routinely make quality decisions to effectively and efficiency compete in the market. The following guidelines encompass the strategic areas on which HELV can focus to improve their quality decision-making process, thereby building their core capabilities, processes, and capacities to formulate smart decisions and compete better.

Value creation culture

HELV must search for value-creation practices to achieve a sustainable competitive edge. Recognizing the importance of value creation can enhance operations' excellence and profitable outcomes. Nurturing an organizational culture in which value creation plays an integral role in developing effective strategies must be a priority for HELV. They must encourage creativity and innovation to search for the best practices that maximize value creation.

Creating alternatives

Maintaining open communication channels with employees, staying involved in day-to-day operations, and asking for feedback (from employees and customers) can lead HELV to the possibility of an array of alternatives to make well-informed decisions. The more quality alternatives that are available, the better the chances of choosing and maintaining quality decisions. HELV must include employees in this dynamic process as everyone within the business is responsible for providing valid and value-added alternatives to enhance daily operations. HELV should be the center of this information network to ensure the optimization of the alternative creation process.

Continual learning

Learning must be the driving force leading HELV and employees to a sustainable and adaptable business environment. Innovation and creativity are the center of a learning strategy. Therefore, HELV must nurture an organizational culture that rewards learning, shares valuable information, and promotes group interaction as a means to build and apply knowledge. HELV are the agents responsible for creating the mechanism to absorb information from the environment (external and internal information) as well as disseminate and transform it into knowledge that can be used by employees to better operate the business.

Creating repositories of information that are accessible to all employees and coaching sessions to train them on how to contribute to this information pool can generate an effective cycle of information that benefits the business.

Embracing uncertainty

HELV—as with any other entrepreneurs—are afraid to the unknown. Nevertheless, being proactive seems to effectively reduce anxiety related to uncertain events. HELV must face uncertainty by proactively planning, considering elements of risk and uncertainty in their planning process. Recognizing and calculating the risks inherent in uncertain events—and the probability of occurrence—can help HELV more effectively plan for unexpected situations. Planning for the unexpected helps HELV to act not with fear, but with conscious strategies that can minimize risks and avoid any potential losses.

Outside-In strategic perspective

HELV must broaden their perspective about how the industry trends affect their businesses. HELV must create a mechanism to acquire external market information to prepare and plan strategic decisions that absorb these market changes. Being sensitive to market trends and changes can help HELV delineate effective strategic moves to better compete and survive in this ever-changing economy.

System thinking

HELV must develop a sense of "accountability" among employees. Holding employees accountable for their individual actions can enhance group dynamics within the business and effectively manage the value created through their actions. Encouraging and fostering an organizational culture that values employees' quality contributions and understands the impact of individual actions on business performance build a sense of community within the business, which adds value to the business in the long term.

Open information flow

Although the survey results indicated that hoarding information has not detracted HELV from making good decisions, they expressed that they are constantly bombarded with lots of information, causing stress and panic. Constantly sharing relevant and necessary information and teaching employees how to handle the new information can alleviate the panic and stress suffered by HELV. Decentralizing relevant information and creating the mechanism to deliver it in a secured and appropriate manner can benefit the business. Empowering employees with new skill sets and knowledge is a feasible competitive strategy to effectively compete and manage the constant information flow.

Alignment and empowerment

HELV must build a development plan for employees to assess their skills and knowledge as well as delineate a plan to enhance them according to the business goals or expectations. Matching employees' skills and knowledge with business purposes and vision can help business owners effectively allocate human, technological, and financial assets to maximize value creation. By having a clear understanding of employees' strengths and weaknesses, HELV can formulate better strategic decisions when allocating resources to cope with day-to-day issues. Investing in employees' development, along with technologies, can help HELV delineate efficient processes that encompass quality standards.

Disciplined decision making

Allocating the right people, technologies, and processes must be a priority for HELV. Developing an absorptive capacity to seize and sense all kinds of information and transform it into feasible knowledge to better allocate resources must be an ongoing task for HELV. As previously mentioned, in today's economy, business owners must be prepared for the unexpected; therefore, they need flexible but structured business architecture to survive the ever-changing market. HELV must be adaptable and focused to maintain a balanced mix of resources to deal with the uncertainties of day-to-day operations. Assessing, evaluating, monitoring, and leveraging resources (i.e., human, physical, and financial) should become the norm for HELV. With a balanced mix of people, technologies, and processes, HELV can orchestrate strategies that can sustain quality performance and enhance their competitive edge.

In summary, it is essential for HELV to develop core competencies, create value practices within the business, and maintain a learning architecture and ability to adapt to unexpected events by filtering valuable information and transforming it into usable knowledge to make well-informed decisions. These core competencies have the capacity to assess information, transform it into actionable knowledge, and incorporate it into a business strategy for reacting and adapting to market changes. Being sensitive and reactive to business trends is important for business survival and growth in this volatile economy. For HELV, this is crucial to effectively compete with more powerful businesses that are able to adapt and reconfigure their business strategy to accommodate new emerging trends. This sensing and absorptive capacity has the potential to allocate people, technologies, and processes that are vital for developing a competitive advantage.

References

Allee, V. (2003). *The Future of Knowledge: Increasing Prosperity Through Value Networks*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Amidon, D. M. (2003). *The innovation superhighway: Harnessing intellectual capital for sustainable collaborative advantage*. Boston: Butterworth Heinemann.

Balthazard, P., & Cooke, A. (2004). *Culture and knowledge management success: Assessing the behavior-performance continuum.* Paper presented at the 37th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, Hawaii.

Barney, J. (1986). Organizational Culture: can it be a source of competitive advantage. *Academic of Management Review, 11*, 656-665.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage. *Journal of Management, 17*(1), 99.

Bates, T., Jackson, W. E., III, & Johnson, J. H., Jr. (2007). Advancing Research on Minority Entrepreneurship. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 613*(1), 10-17.

Boynton, A. C. (1993). Achieving Dynamic Stability through Information Technology. *California Management Review, 35*(2), 58.

Brown, J. S., & Duguid, P. (2000). *The Social Life of Information*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Choi, Y. R., & Shepherd, D. (2004). Entrepreneurs' decisions to exploit opportunities. *Journal of Management 30*, 377.

Cohen, W., & Levinthal, D. (1990). Absorptive Capacity: A New Perspective on Learning and Innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 35*, 128-152.

Cohen, W. M., & Levinthal, D. A. (1990). Absorptive Capacity: A New Perspective on Learning and Innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 35*(1), 128-152.

Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. (2003). Business research methods. *The McGraw-Hill/Irwin series operations and decision sciences.* 8th.

Creswell, J. (2002). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd Edition ed.). Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications

Cross, R., & Parker, A. (2004). Charged up: Creating energy in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Excellence, 23*(4), 3-14.

Das, J. P. (2008). Planning and Decision Making: Beware of Emotions and Illusions. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, 17*(1), 1-14.

Davenport, T. H., De Long, D. W., & Beers, M. C. (1998). Successful Knowledge Management Projects. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 39*(2), 43-57.

Dillmann, D. (2000). *Developing a Questionnaire*. London: Continuum Press.

Dosi, G., Faillo, M., & Marengo, L. (2008). Organizational Capabilities, Patterns of Knowledge Accumulation and Governance Structures in Business Firms: An Introduction. *Organization Studies, 29*(8-9), 1165-1185.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Martin, J. A. (2000). Dynamic Capabilities: What Are They? *Strategic Management Journal, 21*, 1105-1121.

Garvin, D. (1993). Building a Learning Organization. *Harvard Business Review, 3*(2), 81-82.

Glynn, M. (1996). Innovative Genius: A Frame for relating Individual and Organizational Intelligences to Innovation. *Academy of Management Review, 21*(4), 21-28.

Grant, R. M. (1996). Prospering in Dynamically-competitive Environments: Organizational Capability as Knowledge Integration. *Organization Science, 7*(4), 375-387.

Haswell, S., & Holmes, S. (1989). Estimating the Small Business Failure Rate: A Reappraisal. *Journal of Small Business Management, 22*(7), 98-74.

Higgins, J. (1994). *Innovate or evaporate: test & improve your organization's IQ*. Miami: The New Management Publishing Company.

Ji Hoon, S., & Chermack, T. J. (2008). A Theoretical Approach to the Organizational Knowledge Formation Process: Integrating the Concepts of Individual Learning and Learning Organization Culture. *Human Resource Development Review, 7*(4), 424-442.

Keats, B. W., & Bracker, J. (1988). Toward a Theory of Small Firm Performance: A Conceptual Model. *American Journal of Small Business, 12*(6), 41-58.

Ketchen, D. J., Jr., Snow, C. C., & Hoover, V. L. (2004). Research on Competitive Dynamics: Recent Accomplishments and Future Challenges. *Journal of Management, 30*(6), 779-804.

Kogut, B., & Zander, U. (1992). Knowledge of the Firm, combinative capabilities, and the replication of technology. *Organization Science, 3*, 383-397.

Kull, D. M. (2000). Organizational Intelligence: Measuring Cognitive Resources to Improve Performance. Retrieved 9/20/2002, from http://www.gwis2.circ.gwu.edu

Liebowitz, J. (2000). *Building Organizational Intelligence: A Knowledge Management Primer*. New York, NY: Cress Press.

Matheson, D., & Matheson, J. (1998). *The Smart Organization: Creating Value Through Strategic R&D*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

McElroy, M. (1999, April). *The Knowledge Life Cycle*. Paper presented at the ICM, Miami, FL.

McElroy, M. (2003). *The New Knowledge Management; Complexity, learning and sustainable innovation*. New York: Knowledge Management Consortium International Press.

Mendelson, & Ziegler, J. (1999). *Survival of the Smartest; Managing Information for rapid Action and World-Class Performance*. New York NY: John Wiley & Sons Press.

Mendelson, H. (2000). Organizational Architecture and Success in the Information Technology Industry. *Management Science, 46*(4), 513.

Moller, K., & Svahn, S. (2003). Managing Strategic Nets: A Capability Perspective. *Marketing Theory, 3*, 209-234.

Njite, D., King, T., Parsa, H. G., & Self, J. (2005). Why Restaurants Fail. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 46*(3), 304-322.

Nonaka, I. (1991). The Knowledge-Creating Company. *Harvard Business Review, 69*(6), 96-104.

Nonaka, I. (1994). A Dynamic Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation. *Science, 5*(1).

Parikh, M. (2001). Knowledge Management Framework for High-tech Research and Development. *Engineering Management Journal, 13*(3), 27-33.

Pina, M. (2007). Entrepreneurship as Decision Making: Rational, Intuitive and Improvisational Approaches. *Journal of Enterprising Culture, 15*(1), 1-20.

Prahalad, C. K., & Hamel, G. (1990). The Core Competence of the Corporation. *Harvard Business Review, 68*(3), 79.

Robertson, M., Swan, J., & Newell, S. (1996). The role of networks in the diffusion of technological innovation. *Journal of Management Studies, 33*(3), 333-359.

SBA. (2007). *Minorities in business: A demographic review of minority business ownership*: SBA Office of Advocacy, Small Business Research Summary.

Schreyogg, G., & Geiger, D. (2007). The Significance of Distinctiveness: A Proposal for Rethinking Organizational Knowledge. *Organization, 14*(1), 77-100.

Soo, C., Devinney, T., Midgley, D., & Deering, A. (2002). Knowledge Management: Philosophy, Processes, and Pitfalls. *California Management Review, 44*(4), 129-150.

Spender, J. C. (2008). Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management: Whence and Whither? *Management Learning, 39*(2), 159-176.

Teece, Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal, 18*(7), 537-533.

Teece, D. J. (1998). Capturing Value from Knowledge Assets: The New Economy, Markets for Know-how, and Intangible Assets. *California Management Review, 40*(3), 55-79.

U.S. Census Bureau, P. D. (2000). Hispanic population in the United States.   Retrieved 8/29/08, 2008

Van den Bosch, F., Volberda, H., & Boer, M. (1999). Coevolution of firm absorptive capacity and knowledge environment: organizational forms and combinative capabilities. *Organization Science, 10*(5), 551-568.

Winter, S. G. (2003). Understanding dynamic capabilities. *Strategic Management Journal, 24*, 991-995.

Wong, W., & Radcliffe, D. (2002). The Tacit Nature of Design Knowledge. *Technology Analysis and Strategic Management Journal, 12*(4), 493-512.

Zahra, S., & George, G. (2002). Absorptive Capacity: A review, reconceptualization, and extension. *Academic of Management Review, 27*(2), 185-203.

The planning process of a first generation Mexicana teacher in a bilingual social studies classroom in the United States

Alberto López-Carrasquillo, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Teacher Education Department, Northeastern Illinois University 5500 N. St. Louis Ave. LWH 4005 Chicago, IL. USA. 60625, a-lopez@neiu.edu

Abstract

This article reports the findings from a single case study with a Latina teacher as she plans for her Latino students in a bilingual social studies classroom in the United States. Findings reveal that three practices enact the implementation of an anti oppressive pedagogy: discussing issues of oppression from the "Others" perspectives, sharing experiences about immigration, and fostering biculturalism among her students.

Introduction

Recent research on standards and educational reform indicate that curricula tend to maintain U.S mainstream visions and discourses (Apple, 2000; Banks, 2001a, 2001b; Gay, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Researchers argue, for example, that the U.S. mainstream curriculum supports the viewpoints of the majority group--which are mostly based on the social, historical, and cultural experiences of Anglos (Delgado-Bernal, 2002). Thus, the design of the U.S. mainstream curriculum tends to reproduce the current dominant discourse within society and supports the status quo.

In this article, I summarize the findings from a case study with a first generation Mexicana Teacher, hereafter called Grisel (López-Carrasquillo, 2006). Utilizing a qualitative inquiry approach, and by paralleling and extending Milner's (2003) case study with an African American teacher, the aim of this case study was to understand the experiences of this Latina teacher as she plans for and reflects on her practices with Latino third-grade children in a Midwestern elementary public school.

Theoretical Framework

This case study was aligned within the anti-oppressive education (Kumashiro, 2000, 2001) and Latino Critical Theory (Delgado-Bernal, 2002). Both theoretical frameworks attempted to explain the experiences of first- generation Mexican teacher as she planned for and reflected on her practices with Mexican third-graders.

Latin Critical Theory (LatCrit) extends the work of critical race theory movement, born out of critical legal studies, by including the issues of Latino communities in the United States. Howard, (2003) notes that the movement of critical race legal studies seeks to address issues of racial inequality and the often overlooked the role race and racism and institutionalized white supremacy play in U.S society. With this framing, critical race theory within education seeks to give much-needed attention to the role that race plays in education research, scholarship and practice (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Hence, Howard (2003) argues that the inclusion of a critical race framework is needed in education when one considers the perennial underachievement records of African American, Latino/Latina, Native American and Asian American students in U.S. schools. Although both examine various forms of oppression (Sleeter & McLaren, 1995), the direct emphasis on race and identities of LatCrit and critical race theory is one of the differences with multiculturalism and cultural relevant pedagogy. In this sense, Lopez (2001) points out that "scholars who write within this framework aim to analyze the pervasiveness of race/racism in the larger social order while simultaneously demystifying the ostensive neutrality of various social discourses. In this

regard, CRT abandons the neutral concept of "a color blind society" in favor of a critical perspective that recognizes the normality --and thus invisibility-- of racism in our daily lives."(p. 30)

Latin critical theory (LatCrit) has emerged as one of the well-developed system of knowledge or epistemology that exists in contrast to the dominant Euro-American epistemology (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Developed as an extension of the work of the Critical Race Theory, this theory studies issues related to the specific experiences of the Latino communities in the United States such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, multidimensional identities, phenotype, intersectionality of racism, sexuality, sexism, classism and other forms of oppression (Delgado-Bernal, 2002). Solórzano and Bernal (2001) point out that LatCrit theory is conceived as an antisubordination and antiessentialist project that attempts to link theory with practice scholarship with teaching, and the academy with the community. In sum, scholars who promote the LatCrit have established a framework which contrasts with the Euro-American viewpoints, or what Halcón (2001) calls "mainstream ideology" by challenging the mainstream ideology, which promotes the Americanization of immigrants by imposing hegemonic practices such as English only instruction and seeing the language and culture of Latinos as "a problem to be solved". In this sense, LatCrit uncovers the relationship of power and the system of structures that have an effect on the schooling experiences of the Latino/a students.

Along with this critical framework, Kumashiro (2000, 2002) argues for an anti-oppressive education that includes an *education for Other* as one of the components. A The aim of this component is to assist and improve the experiences of students who are *Othered* or oppressed by mainstream society. In developing *an education for Other,* Kumashiro (2000, 2001) notes how schools are spaces where the Other is treated in marginalized ways; hence the importance of developing this component of an anti oppressive education. Kumashiro (2000) and other scholars (Apple, 2000; Banks, 2001a; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1998), use the term "*Other*" to refer to those groups that are traditionally marginalized in society (i.e. that are *other* than the norm).

In particular, when implementing an anti oppressive education, Kumashiro (2002, p. 33) emphasizes that "*education for the Other*" should look at the internal ways of thinking that justify the harmful treatment of those considered Other in society. For Kumashiro this is problematic due to the fact that all individuals have multiple identities, thus multiple experiences with oppression. This is why, he recommends that in *education for Other* students should work with oppression in two ways: 1) providing helpful spaces for all students, especially for those students targeted by the different forms of oppression; and 2 educators need to acknowledge the diversity of their students by embracing these differences and treating their students as races, gendered, sexual and classed individual. In this sense, using anti-oppressive education provides an appropriate theoretical lens to understand the experiences of Grisel as she plans a social studies curriculum for her Latino students.

Methodology and data analysis

The case of a Latina teacher and Latino/a students following an U.S. mainstream-based curriculum (e.g. social studies) was identified as a case that presented unique characteristics when one compares it to a more "typical" U.S. social studies classroom. Hence, I used a single-case study (Yin, 2003) design since the ways a first-generation Mexicana teacher planned and taught the social studies curriculum for her Latino/a students was a unique case that has received limited research attention.

In order to identify potential participants, I developed three criteria: 1) The participant should identify himself or herself as a first generation Latino/a teacher; 2) he or she should be teaching a social studies teacher in an elementary school; and 3) he or she should be

compromised with teaching for diverse students, especially Latino students. These criteria ensured that the sample will be rich in information and accord with the purpose of the study.

Through my knowledge of the Latino/a teaching community in the Chicago area, I was introduced to teachers. From my informal conversations with many teachers they had shared their concerns about the status of the education system. These informal conversations helped me gain access to potential participants for my study. For instance, I had information conversations with five Puerto Rican teachers and three Mexican Teachers. From these conversations, the participant in the study had more experience teaching in Mexico as well as in the bilingual program in the United States, and she uses social studies as the core of the curriculum.

The primary subject of the study, hereafter called Grisel (self-selected pseudonym), is a first-generation Mexicana living in the Midwest of United States. Grisel was very enthusiastic and always willing to talk about her experiences as a teacher. She was commonly identified by her colleagues as very highly committed to teaching her diverse students, mainly Latinos/a students. I employed unstructured interviews (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Merriam, 1998) to analyze and transcribe following the strategies proposed by Crichton & Childs (2005), and document analysis (Hodder, 1998; Merriam, 1998). For data collection, I used journal writing (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998); field observations (Angronsino & Mays de Pérez, 2000; Creswell, 1998, 2003; Merriam, 1998); field notes (Angronsino & Mays de Pérez, 2000; Creswell, 1998; Glesne, 1999) and member check (Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998). In addition, a triangulation of data was implemented to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Finally, I included the Spanish version and English translation to preserve the authenticity and richness in the data.

Grisel's identities: She is "Others", too

In the case of Grisel, she is part of at least two other groups framed as minorities as a Latina and woman. What is more, she uses these identities as a part of her self-reflective planning in order to improve the experiences of students who are "*Othered*" or oppressed by mainstream society; what Kumashiro (2001) calls "*education for other*."

Oppression is one of the experiences that influence a majority of Grisel's thinking and self-reflective planning. In other words, many of the experiences that have the most influence on her self-thinking that is transferred into her planning decision are associated with experiences of oppression.

> -Grisel: Porque precisamente yo he pasado por el mismo proceso en que estos niños han pasado y que sus padres han pasado me permite el ver o el llevarlos. O sea a mi me pasó esto, a ellos también les ha pasado esto.
>
> (Because I have been through the same process, they have had. In addition, it allows me to guide them through. In other words, for example, this experience happened to me and they have experienced something similar.) (Grisel, Interview, March 10, 2006)

In Spanish "going through" is an expression of empathy with a situation. From a LatCrit standpoint, Grisel refers to that pan ethnic experiences that all Latinos in the United States share such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001)In many cases, and especially on first generation immigrants, part of this pan ethnic experience is learning a new language. In fact, Grisel uses her experiences learning English as second language when deciding what materials to choose for her bilingual social studies classroom. For example, she discussed a story about a Japanese girl who came to the

United States without knowing English. Through this story, Grisel discussed with her students how she adapted to the new country, and how her classmates accepted this girl.

> -Grisel: Este material es el mejor para dar un arco iris de situaciones para ver cómo debemos de solucionar ciertas situaciones o para ver cómo debemos de tomar ciertas cosas. También el diferenciar que hay personas que son más abiertas en ideas que otras. Hay otros que son más temerosos y hay otros que no. (This is the best material that allows for a rainbow of situations to find out how we can solve some situations. In addition, there are people who have more openminded than others. There some people who are more afraid than others are.) (Grisel, Interview, April 28, 2006)

In these two excerpts, Grisel used her culture and experiences to affect the planning process and her decision-making. Most relevant Grisel's unique epistemeological position allow her to share the Mexican culture in terms of traditions, values, the language students speak at home, and a shared history as a community of immigrants living in the United States. These are the realities that make Grisel part of a group that is considered *Other* in the U.S. mainstreamed discourse. This pan ethnic reality allows her to make curricular modification such as these two shown in the excerpts above and in others discussed later.

Planning a Social Studies Curriculum for Others

Grisel uses several strategies in order to accommodate the social studies curriculum; specifically during the pre-active phase (Jackson, 1968) of planning. Milner (2003) found, that experiences related to culture have an important role during this process. He refers to these influences as *cultural comprehensive knowledge* (an accumulation of the multiple experiences that shaped how this teacher understood the world).The use this knowledge was evident in this case. Three strategies to plan a social studies curriculum for Others were identified in the data: a) openly discussed issues of oppression from the Others' perspective, b) sharing experiences about immigration, and c) fostering biculturalism among her students.

Discussing Issues of Oppression: the Others' perspective

In the light of her own experiences with oppression, Grisel chooses topics and materials that openly discuss oppressive relations within society, such as racism. For example, one of Grisel's goals in a lesson about the Apartheid in South Africa was for students to understand how racism is bad for society. She asserts: "…me gusta [la lección sobre el Apartheid] porque están tomando conciencia de que no importa el color de la piel; o sea eso es lo de menos lo que importa es la persona" (I like it [the lesson about Apartheid] because they are becoming conscious that the color of skin is not important, thus the person is what really matter). She believes her students need to know that they might face racism outside the classroom. . What is more, she knows that, for them, talking about racism is not talking about something that happens to someone else; they have already experienced racism as close as in the schoolyard.

> -Grisel: … yo no trato de taparles el sol con un dedo. Ellos tienen que saber que hay cosas que todavía existen. (…I do not try to "cover the sun with one finger." They have to know that there are other things that still exist).
> -Researcher: ¿Cómo el racismo? (Like racism)?
> Grisel: Aja, el racismo. Y lo van a encontrar. Y es una de las cosas que yo no le puedo decir que no existe, porque sí existe. Más sublime, pero sigue existiendo. (Yep, racism. And they will find it. And it is one of the things that I cannot say that it does not exist, because it does exist. More sublime, but [it] still [exists]).

-Researcher: ¿Tú crees que ellos lo saben ya de que existe? ¿Lo han vivido? (Do you think that they know it since it exists? Have they lived it)?

-Grisel: Sí, saben, lo han vivido. (Yes, they know, they have lived it).

-Grisel: Sí, de hecho estaban jugando, fue en el parque y le [unos estudiantes blancos a unos mexicanos] dijo que ellos no querían jugar porque los mexicanos siempre comían frijoles y que siempre eran morenos y que apestaban feo... (Yes, in fact, they were playing; it was at the schoolyard and they said [some White students to the Mexican students] that they did not want to play because Mexicans always eat beans and that they were "brown skinned" so they stink…(Grisel, Interview, March 17, 2006)

In addition, Grisel has reflected about gender oppression within society. As a Mexican woman, she knows firsthand the oppressive relations concerning gender inequities in society, especially in the Latino culture. Based on her self-thinking she plans to include themes that promote gender equity.

-Grisel: Yo trato de darles ejemplos tanto de hombre ilustres como de mujeres ilustres porque muchos de mis niños y por nuestras características culturales, tú sabes, que tendemos a emular el género masculino. Y también a ponerlo en un nivel más arriba que la mujer. Ellos tienen que darse cuenta que así cómo hubo hombre ilustres también hubo mujeres ilustres. O sea trato de balancear para que no haya ese estereotipo de que siendo hombre eres mucho mejor.

(I try to give them examples of illustrious men and women [e.g. Cesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt] because many of my children—and due to our cultural characteristics, you know—we tend to emulate the masculine gender. And also put it at a higher level than the woman. They have to realize that the same way there were illustrious men, there were women as well. In other words, I try to balance it in order to avoid the stereotype that being a man is much better.) (Grisel, Interview, April 24, 2006)

In balancing the social studies curriculum in terms of gender representation, Grisel is fostering a critical view of the social studies curriculum and the traditional gender roles in society. Designing a social studies curriculum from a critical perspective in which oppressive relations in society are studied and challenged has the potential to open a secure space for sharing and learning from each other experiences.

Sharing immigration experiences

Although many of Grisel's students were born in the United States, immigration is a common theme between the teachers and the families of students at her school. These kids listen to their families talking about immigration issues, and immigration issues affect their lives in an enormous way; for example, students often hear of cases in the community about government deportations and how families are separated. For this reason, immigration is a topic that Grisel uses as a source in her pedagogical work in the social studies bilingual classroom. She considers social studies curriculum to be a vital part in her planning because it serves to construct that common place where discussions about social pluralism are studied:

-Grisel: Por medio de las ciencias sociales el que ellos entiendan que las comunidades integradas por las diferentes culturas son las mejores. Porque traen riqueza cultural de ideas. Y que no es malo el ser diferente.

(Throughout the social studies, the students understand that communities that are culturally diverse are better suited, because they bring a cultural wealth of ideas…and it is not a bad thing to be different.) (Grisel, Interview, March 10, 2006).

Social studies curriculum includes themes regarding the study of communities. Grisel takes advantage of these themes to include a LatCrit perspective when discussing the issue of immigration. By using her cultural comprehensive knowledge, Grisel changes the hegemonic mainstream discourse of "Us (i.e. U.S. citizens) vs. them (i.e. the illegal aliens)" when presenting this topic. She points out:

-Grisel: Estábamos hablando de inmigración, de los tipos de inmigración o por las razones por los que la gente inmigra, pues los papas hicieron junto con los niños un tipo de ensayo en donde decían las razones por las que habían venido. La mayoría de ellos vinieron por cuestiones de trabajo o para una mejor educación. Porque en México aunque se supone que la educación es gratuita según el artículo tercero de la constitución, no es totalmente gratuita. Tienen que pagar también por la inscripción de los niños, tienen que pagar un gasto de la sociedad de padres, tienen que pagar por útiles escolares específicos. Pues eso de que la educación es gratuita y obligatoria en México pues en realidad no es. Pues para personas con pocos recursos económicos, como es la mayoría de padres de familia que tenemos, que tienen 3 o 4 niños que mantener pues a la verdad no pueden darle su educación, ni siquiera darles la inscripción que se supone no es obligatoria. Así que esa es una de las razones por las que esas familias inmigran también. (We were speaking of immigration, of the types of immigration or the reasons for which people immigrate, then the parents along with the children made a type of essay in where they gave the reasons for which they came to the US. Most of them came to get better jobs or for a better education. Because in Mexico although one assumes that the education is free according to the third article of the constitution, it is not totally free. They must also pay for the inscription [i.e. this is a type of tuition that parent must pay at the beginning of the year] of the children, they must pay for the society of parents, and they must pay for specific scholastic equipment. As a matter of fact, in reality the education in Mexico is not free and obligatory. Then for people with few economic resources, as most of family parents we have, they have three or four children to rise, then in reality they cannot provide school for them, or even give them inscription that is supposed to be not obligatory. So that is one of the reasons for which those families also immigrate.) (Grisel, Interview, April 28, 2006)

Fostering biculturalism

Grisel understands that her students are bicultural; therefore, it is vital for them to know about both countries. During her planning process, she includes both cultural backgrounds into the curriculum official knowledge (Apple, 1999) by broadening the scope of the curriculum in the areas she feels the curriculum is weaker in the knowledge she thinks her Latino students must know. In the following example, she opened the scope of the curriculum by extending it to include the national symbols of Mexico, El Salvador, and Chile.

-Grisel: …este es un cambio en el currículo que tengo que hacer, el comparar los símbolos patrios de su país. De hecho, pertenecen a dos países y la mayoría de los estudiantes cuando estuvimos viendo sobre su identidad, sobre la cultura, a qué cultura pertenecían, porque me hablaron de su cultura, fue por medio de los trabajos en conjunto con sus papas, me di cuenta de la identidad cultural que tienen o se inclinan más a ese tipo de identidad cultural. Entonces, para mi sería un desastre y un error el dejar de ver la otra cultura. Hay algunos que se identifican con las dos culturas, hay unos que se identifican como americanos, es por eso que necesito, por esos muchos o esos pocos que se identifican con ambas culturas porque si su nacionalidad es ambas, necesitan su país México, su país Chile, bueno el de Chile se

identifica como americano, pero por ejemplo El Salvador, la de El Salvador, ella se identifica como salvadoreña y como americana.

(…this is a change in curriculum that I must make, comparing the national symbols of their country. In fact, [students] belong to two countries and most of the students when we see their identity, about the culture, to what culture they belong, because they spoke to me of their culture, through the project they did together with their parents, I realized what cultural identity they have or their inclination to which cultural identity. Then, it would be a disaster and an error for me to not see the other culture. There are some that identified themselves with the two cultures; there are some that identified themselves as Americans. It is why I need, for those many or those few that are identified with both cultures, because if their nationality is both, they need to know about Mexico, or Chile—well the one from Chile identified himself as American—but for example, El Salvador, the one from El Salvador, she identifies herself as Salvadoran and American). (Grisel, Interview, March 10, 2006)

This type of curricular change practiced by Grisel because she knows the political, economical, and social realities of the Latino community. In light of her understanding of the Latino community, she has what Bartolomé and Barderrama (2001) call teacher ideological clarity and what Calderhead (1996) notes in term of how the planning process occurs within a practical and ideological context. This means that her cultural comprehensive knowledge is affecting understanding of the Latino community and consequently shaping her ideological clarity. In other words, for Grisel, her job is not "mainstreamed" the Latino students into the "dominant culture"; on the contrary, her job is to teach them the "mainstream culture" as well as to teach them their native culture. In sum, she sees herself as an agent to foster biculturalism.

Conclusions and Implications

Grisel used several strategies in order to accommodate the social studies curriculum to her bilingual classroom. Armed with her cultural comprehensive knowledge, she uses her ideological clarity during the planning process to make curricular changes. The results from this case study have several implications for teachers: a) teachers need to be conscious about her ideological clarity during planning; b) planning is not neutral, c) and during planning teachers epistemologically defines themselves and their students.

In most of the literature about planning and teacher's thinking, there is a tendency to describe the planning process in some mechanistic fashion. Milner (2003) concepts of culturally comprehensive planning added a new component to this process. For Milner the broad cultural experiences that teachers bring to the classroom are an integral part of their decisions. Hence, teacher's epistemology influences how they teach. In this sense, planning is not a neutral act because teachers' cultural comprehensive and self-reflecting practices are active elements during the decision making process. In this case, Grisel plans a social studies curriculum taking into consideration her identity as Latina to move her Latino students at the center of the curriculum. In sum, she included their social circumstances, communities, cultural experiences; bicultural identity, language needs; and epistemological stance to make instructional decisions in the bilingual social studies classroom.

References

Angronsino, M. V., & Mays de Pérez, K. A. (2000). Rethinking observation: from method to context. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Vol. 2nd, pp. 673-702). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Apple, M. W. (1999). What counts as legitimate knowledge? The social production and use of reviews. *Review of Educational Research, 69*(04), 343-346.

Apple, M. W. (2000). *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age* (2 ed.). New York, NY.: Routledge.

Banks, J. A. (2001a). Multicultural education: historical development, dimensions, and practice. In J. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (pp. 3-24). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banks, J. A. (2001b). Multicultural education: its effects on students racial and gender role attitudes. In J. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (pp. 617-627). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bartolomé, L. I., & Barderrama, M. V. (2001). The need for educators with political and ideological clarity. In M. d. l. L. Reyes & J. J. Halcón (Eds.), *The best for our children: critical perspectives on literacy for Latino children* (pp. 48-64). New York: Teachers College Press.

Calderhead, J. (1996). Teacher: Beliefs and Knowledge. In D. C. Berliner & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of Education Psychology* (pp. 709-725). New York: Macmillan Library Reference USA.

Clandinin, J. D., & Connelly, M. F. (1998). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, California, USA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Crichton, S., & Childs, E. (2005). Clipping and coding audio files: a research method to enable participant voice. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 4*(3), 2-9.

Delgado-Bernal, D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: recognizing students of colors as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(1), 105-126.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting & Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 1-34). Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE Publications.

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (1998). Interviewing: the art of science. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting & Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 47-78). Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE Publications.

Gay, G. (2001). Curriculum theory and multicultural education. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee-Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (pp. 25-43). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction* (Vol. 2). New York, NY: Longman.

Hodder, I. (1998). The interpretation of document and material culture. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting & Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 110-129). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Howard, T. (2003). The dis(g)race of the social studies. In G. Ladson-Billings (Ed.), *Critical Race Theory Perspectives on the Social Studies: The Profession, Policies, and Curriculum* (pp. 27-43). Greenwich, Connecticut: IAP Information Age Publishing.

Jackson, P. W. (1968). *Life in Classrooms*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2000). Toward a theory of anti-oppressive education. *Review of Educational Research, 70*(1), 25-53.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2001). "Posts" perspectives on Anti-oppressive education in Social Studies, English, Mathematics and Science classrooms. *Educational Researcher, 30*(3), 3-12.

Kumashiro, K. K. (2002). *Troubling Education: Queer Activism and Antioppresive Pedagogy*. New York, NY.: Routledge Falmer.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The DreamKeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. San Francisco, California, USA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Who will survive America? pedagogy as cultural preservation. In D. Carlson & M. W. Apple (Eds.), *Power/ Knowledge /Pedagogy: The Meaning of Democratic Education in Unsettling times* (pp. 289-304). Boulder, Colo: Westview Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Racialized discourses and ethnic epistemologies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research (second Edition)* (pp. 255-278). Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications, Inc.

López-Carrasquillo, A. (2006). *A case study of a first-generation Mexican teacher's culturally comprehensive knowledge and self-reflective planning for Latino/a-Mexian elementary students in a U.S. Midewstern school.* Doctor of Philosophy Doctoral The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

Lopez, G. R. (2001). Review: Re-Visiting White Racism in Educational Research: Critical Race Theory and the Problem of Method. *Educational Researcher, 30*(1), 29-35.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education.* San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass.

Milner, H. R. (2003). A case study of an African American English teachers' cultural comprehensive knowledge and self-reflective planning. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 18*(2), 175-196.

Sleeter, C. E., & McLaren, P. L. (1995). *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Difference* Albany: State University of New York Press

Solorzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining Transformational Resistance Through a Critical Race and Latcrit Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context. *Urban Education, 36*(3), 308-342. doi: 10.1177/0042085901363002

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3 ed. Vol. 05). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Predictors of Test Anxiety in Polish Adolescents

Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel, Dept. of English, Opole University, Poland
epiech@uni.opole.pl

Abstract:

The focus of this paper is on identifying predictors of test anxiety in Polish adolescents learning English as a foreign language in lower secondary and secondary grammar school. The results of the study reveal that among the strongest predictors of test anxiety there are other anxiety types (social and stress), as well as final grades, and self-assessment of the listening skill, which is viewed as crucial in effective language processing.

Introduction

With the increasing level of testing it seems vital to thoroughly investigate responses to assessment procedures, because students mostly complain about testing when discussing their greatest school threats (de Anda et al., 2000). A commonly observed reaction is usually associated with feelings of apprehension and tension in relation to an evaluative situation – test anxiety. The phenomenon is usually perceived as consisting of two components: *worry* and *emotionality* (Lee, 1999; McDonald, 2001). *Worry* indicates the cognitive concern about test-taking and performance, such as negative expectations, self-evaluation, and preoccupation with performance and potential consequences. It is present before the test and during the whole testing procedure. Students who are highly anxious tend to pay continuous attention to cues that are irrelevant to the test (Lee, 1999). *Emotionality*, on the other hand, refers to perceived physiological reactions like autonomic arousal (elevated heart rate or sweating) and somatic reactions to testing situations such as nervousness, discomfort, tension, feeling sick, and shaking (Hong, 1998). Consequently, for the purpose of the present paper test anxiety is understood as "worry of suffering a reduction in one's self-image and self-efficacy, particularly its reflection in the eyes of significant others, concurrently with obstruction of cognitive processes and outstanding physical and mental discomfort" (Friedman & Bendas-Jacob, 1997: 1044).

As far as the relationship between test anxiety and performance is concerned, it has generally been argued that it has a detrimental effect on performance (McDonald, 2001). It is also speculated that it has a tendency to increase slightly with age (Hembree, 1988; Ollendick et al., 1989; Zohar, 1998; Lee, 1999), alongside a growing amount of testing. The gender of the student is also related to test anxiety, as girls report higher anxiety levels (Payne et al., 1983; Everson et al., 1991). Another factor that has been studied in relation to test anxiety is socio-economic status, which correlates negatively with the phenomenon in question (Hodge et al., 1997). It is also worth mentioning that there is a significant positive correlation between the test anxiety level and adolescents' perception of daily critical events, i.e., their stress level, (Gazella et al., 1998) and their social anxiety (Sarason et al., 1986).

The main purpose of this paper is to find empirical evidence for the above claims by means of reliable instruments in the context of the English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) classroom in the Polish educational context. As levels of test anxiety are correlated with performance, it is argued that the students' level of test anxiety is related with their level of self-assessment of their foreign language skills. Though some researchers claim that receptive skills are assessed more accurately than productive ones (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985), with a tendency for receptive skills to be rated higher than productive ones (Low, 1982), the accuracy of these estimates is generally described as very good or at least good (Oskarsson, 1980). Apart from that, it is also expected that as levels of test anxiety are strongly related to

performance, self-assessment of FL skills and final grades may be a strong predictor of test anxiety levels, also in the context of the FL classroom. Hence, the main hypothesis proposed for the purpose of this study is the following: *Students who obtain lower grades in English report a higher level of test anxiety.*

Method

The research design was differential, as it attempted to measure the strength of a relationship between the variables on the basis of a questionnaire applied in intact groups in order to predict future relationships. The comparisons detected focused on differences between lower secondary and secondary grammar school students. The research was also correlative, as it explored relationships between variables in the whole sample.

Subjects

The subjects of the study were 326 *gymnasium* ("junior high school") and secondary school students (N=326) from Opole, Strzelce Opolskie, Czechowice-Dziedzice, Jelenia Góra, Zgorzelec, and Gliwice (all in south-western Poland). There were 162 boys and 164 girls; 163 secondary grammar school and 163 lower secondary school students. They all attended the third grade at their schools, with the regular amount of English classes (three hours a week).

Materials

The basic instrument used in the study was a questionnaire. Its first part explored demographic factors such as age, gender, place of residence, and socio-economic status. The second part focused on the participants' attitude to English as a school subject and language, and final grades in English (from 1 – *very poor* to 6 – *excellent*). These were the grades they received in English the year before and the semester before, together with the prospective grade they expected to receive at the end of the school year. The participants also reflected on their self-assessment of the four skills (speaking, listening writing, and reading). They were rated on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 – *very poor* to 6 – *excellent*.

The questionnaire also included three self-report scales measuring the students' levels of test anxiety, critical events and social anxiety. Scale One, the FRIEDBEN Test Anxiety scale (Friedman & Bendas-Jacob, 1997), was composed of three parts: Social Derogation consisting of eight items whose main purpose was to measure the fear level of degradation of one's self-image. There was also the Cognitive Obstruction part, consisting of nine items measuring the level of hindrance in cognitive performance and tenseness, with six items denoting the level of physical and emotional arousal. The students were requested to rate each statement on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*). The range of the scale was 23 – 115 points.

Scale Two was a scale indicating the social anxiety level. It explored the participants' anxiety about their colleagues (5 items), school (5) and parents (5). The scale was adapted from La Greca and Stone (1993) and Ollendick (1983). Here the students reported their opinions on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*not true)* to 4 (*true*). The range of the scale was 15 – 60 points.

Scale Three measured the participants' level of stressful events. It focused on the students' experience in relation to family events like divorce, death, and their social lives (accidents, change of school or assault). Their answers ranged from 1 (*no*) to 2 (*yes*). The scale consisted of 14 items adapted from the 72-item scale by Compas et al. (1987). The range of the scale was 14 – 28 points.

Procedure

The study took place in the last week of April, 2002. In each school, the students were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The time slotted for the activity was 15 to 20 minutes. The participants were asked to give sincere answers without taking time to think. Each part of the questionnaire was preceded by a short statement introducing a new set of items in an unobtrusive manner.

The independent variable, grades, is operationally defined as questionnaire items on two levels: the students' intuitive assessment of their abilities in relation to the four skills (internal/subjective assessment) and their final-semester and school-year grades (external/objective assessment). The dependent variable is the global test anxiety level. The control variables were: age, gender, place of residence, students' attitude to English as a language and a school subject, and their socio-economic status, followed by the measurement of stress (perception of critical daily events) and social anxiety levels.

Results

The results obtained from the questionnaire items comprising demographic factors showed that the participants' age ranged from 15 to 19, with the mean equalling 16.7. There was an even distribution of gender with the mean of 1.5, where 49,69% were boys and 50.31% were girls. As far as place of residence is concerned, a majority of students (60.62%) lived in towns, while the rest (26.69% and 15.59% respectively) in small cities and in the country. 50.31% of them were secondary school students and the rest were lower secondary students. As far as their socio-economical status (SES) was concerned, 0.61% reported it to be very low; 7.05% to be low; 70.55% (230 students) claimed it to be average, while 18.40% described it as relatively high and 3.37% (11 participants) as very high.

As regards the school situation, 44.48% students disliked the subject of English at their schools, while the rest (55.52%) approved of it. A slightly different distribution of opinions was collected in reference to the students' attitudes to the English language because as many as 80.37% (262 participants) liked it and only 19.63% did not. The participants were also asked to give the grade they received in English the year before and the semester before together with the prospective grade they expected to receive at the end of this school year. The means were, respectively, 3.94; 3.78 and 3.95. They were also requested to self-assess their abilities in relation to the four skills: speaking, writing, listening and reading, which were: 3.85; 3.82, 3.70 and 4.27. The mean of all the skills was 15.64.

The results of the measurements of the test anxiety scale showed that the mean for the whole sample was 50.87. As far as the students' gender and the test anxiety level was concerned, the results were the following: 47.28 for boys and 54.41 for girls. The next scale measured the participants' social anxiety level, and the mean was 31.69. The third scale aimed at investigating the participants' level of critical events, resulting in a mean of 15.59. The summary of the descriptive statistics analyses can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (N=326)

Variable	Mean	SD
Age	16.68	.96
Gender[1]	1.50	.50
Place of residence[2]	2.48	.71
SES[3]	3.17	.62
Language[4]	1.80	.40
Subject[4]	1.55	.50
School[5]	1.50	.50
Grades	3.88	3.00
Self-assessment	3.91	3.70
Social Anxiety	31.69	8.00
Stressful events	15.59	1.74
Test Anxiety	50.86	14.92

[1] 1 - boys, 2 - girls; [2] 1 - country, 2 - small city, 3 - town; [3] 1 - very low, 2 - low, 3 - medium, 4 - high, 5 - very high; [4] 1 - dislike English, 2 - like English; [5] 1 - secondary school, 2 - gymnasium;

In the next step the student t-test was performed in order to investigate group comparisons in reference to the selected variables: the aggregated grades value, self-assessment of the four skills, test anxiety, social anxiety, and the level of stressful events. Its results revealed that all the variables investigated show significant group differences, while the level of test anxiety remains the same, independent of the school type.

Table 2: Group comparisons in secondary grammar (N=163) and lower secondary school students (N=163)

Variable	t	p
Test anxiety	1.04	.30
Grades	-5.35	.00
Self-assessment	-2.31	.02
Social Anxiety	-4.01	.00
Stressful events	2.11	.03

The basic procedure allowing for the interpretation of the results obtained in the present study was multiple regression; namely, the hierarchical approach to multiple regression, where predictor variables were introduced in blocks. The indicator of significance of variables inserted in this manner was the range of the explained variance R^2, as well as the value and significance of the BETA weights. Consequently, in the first step the items chosen for predicting the level of test anxiety were: age, gender, place of residence, and school type. It can be seen that only gender was a significant predictor, with girls being significantly more anxious than boys (BETA=.23; p=.00). Other variables could not be regarded as predictors of test anxiety as none of them displayed significant relationships with the dependent variable. The whole block of variables, i.e., mainly gender, was responsible for 7% of the variance in the test anxiety results.

The second step allowed for introducing a set of new predictors: the students' opinion about English as a language and as a subject. The results showed that students who disliked the English language displayed higher levels of test anxiety (BETA= -.15; p=.01). The students' attitude to English as a school subject did not appear to be a statistically significant

predictor of test anxiety (BETA = -.10; p = .08). The two variables explained almost 5% of variance, independent of the variables from the first block.

In Step Three there was an attempt to relate the test anxiety levels to the participants' socio-economic status, which in view of the research quoted in the introductory part of the present paper should have been regarded as a powerful predictor of test anxiety. Nevertheless, the hierarchical regression results did not display any significant relationships (BETA = -.05; p = .39).

Step Four consisted in introducing two more predictors into the model: the participants' social anxiety and stress levels. In both cases the relationships were very strong (BETA=.57; p = .00 and .13; p=.00). The results showed that test-anxious students displayed high levels of social anxiety and stress, when viewed independently from one another. They were responsible for 29% variance of the dependent variable.

In the last step the participants' final grades and self-assessment of their abilities concerning the four skills were taken into consideration. Their results explained 9% of the test anxiety variance. Of these calculations, only final school grades and intuitive self-assessment of the listening skill could be treated as predictors of the level of test anxiety, with the BETA weights -.27; p = .00 and -.16; p = .02 respectively. The summary of multiple regression results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Hierarchical regression predictors of the test anxiety level in *gymnasium* (junior high school) and secondary school students (N = 326)

Variable	R-square change	BETA	p
1 Step[1]:			
age		.14	.22
gender		.23	.00
place of residence		-.08	.17
school type		.07	.51
2 Step:			
language	.05	-.15	.01
subject		-.10	.08
3 Step:			
SES	.00	-.05	.39
4 Step:			
social anxiety	.29	.54	.00
critical events		.13	.00
5 Step:			
final grades	.09	-.27	.00
speaking		.10	.19
listening		-.16	.03
reading		-.03	.62
writing		-.03	.55

[1] R-square=.07

Discussion

The basic aim of the present study was to corroborate the hypothesis, according to which students that obtain lower grades in English display a higher level of test anxiety in the foreign language classroom. The results of the research undoubtedly prove the hypothesis in

relation to external assessment, i.e., final school grades. In the case of students' self-assessment, the most reliable predictor of the test anxiety level is their view of the listening skill. In the context of the learning process, the skill seems crucial during the instruction phase when effective processing of information should take place. Even a small deficit in the skill when instruction is being carried out in the foreign language might lead to perceiving the classroom environment as unfamiliar and thus hostile. The classroom becomes a place where the student is unable to do well at the performance (output) stage because of their inability to understand what is being explained (Tobias, 1980). Consequently, it appears that obstruction of cognitive processes and outstanding physical and mental discomfort caused by not understanding the foreign language and instructions are at the heart of test anxiety. It follows that FL performance is strongly obstructed by processing problems, which in effect leads to higher test anxiety levels.

The relationship of test anxiety and gender is well documented and the findings of the present research confirm the statement that girls are more test-anxious than boys. Nevertheless, the claim that age is related to test anxiety is not supported by the research findings, although the age span represented in the research is relatively substantial judging from the point of view of developmental stages (15-19). It may seem then that the amount of testing remains at the same level in the case of both younger and older students. Even the students' growing mastery of the foreign language does not seem to vitally influence their test anxiety magnitude, which means that their test management skills or familiarity with the FL learning situation do not lessen the burdens of the FL acquisition process. Moreover, the place of residence cannot be considered a predictor of test anxiety because inhabitants of towns and villages are comparatively anxious. This fact confirms the significant role of extreme FL demands, which lead to many negative emotions, from "defensive reactions, which include the passive (falling asleep, daydreaming, sluggishness – familiar in classrooms) as well as the aggressive" (Hansen, 1999, p. 214).

The research also sheds more light on the relationship between test anxiety in the foreign language lesson and students' opinion of the language itself. In Poland English is very popular and it is the foreign language most frequently studied. The research results show that both students who dislike the language and those who dislike this subject at school are test-anxious. This observation may again corroborate the negative effects of testing.

The research results do not confirm the claim that high levels of test anxiety are related to low socio-economic status. It might be speculated, though, that the participants were unable to assess their status accurately or they concealed true answers in order to avoid lowering self-perception (Shavit et al., 1980).

The scales on stress (level of critical events) and social anxiety gave the expected results, showing high positive correlations with the global test anxiety levels. They corroborate the findings of other research quoted in the introductory part of this paper, according to which test-anxious students are also socially anxious and stress-prone in relation to critical daily events. It has to be stressed that these variables explain a large part of test anxiety variance, which assigns these anxiety types a crucial role. The finding does not seem surprising, because various forms of anxiety are of similar nature and are characterised by the same experience (Morris, Davis & Hutchings, 1981), meaning that strong positive correlation among various anxiety types may be expected.

The final set of predictors introduced into the hierarchical multiple regression model showed that both external assessment (final-semester and school-year grades) and internal or self-assessment were reliable predictors of test anxiety, given their strong negative correlations with the phenomenon in question. They also show a strong correlation between each other ($r = .68$; $p = .00$). In view of varying research results on the accuracy of self-assessment in FL abilities (Delgado et al., 1999), it may be speculated that students are aware

of their own abilities and their self-assessment mirrors their English teachers' grades. The crucial component of self-assessment seems to be the students' grading of their listening skill, which seems to be the key to knowing the foreign language.

In view of the above results it is possible to create a model of test anxiety predictors, presented in Fig. 1 below, with the most influential predictors investigated in the present research. First it is vital to point out that the factors exhibited on the upper right-hand side of the model are largely beyond the control of the teacher. Nevertheless, students' attitude to English as a school subject, although unquestionably connected with their attitude to the language, also depends on the teacher, who is responsible for the formation of attitudes of his/her students (Wright, 1999). The next factor in the model is external assessment, i.e., the teacher's judgement of the students' language abilities, which is totally dependent on the teacher. These two items, i.e., school grades and attitude, are strongly related (Marsh & Yeung, 1998). This relationship means that it is the teacher and their testing procedures that largely contribute to the prevalence of test anxiety. The last item in the model is the listening skill. The reason it could be the key to predicting test anxiety in the FL classroom may be that the skill in indispensable for cognitive coping with the subject matter. Moreover, it may be argued that the skill is underrepresented in comparison to other skills when practised *per se*. The basic technique for developing the listening skill applied at school is working with the tape, while the real life recipient of the exchange is missing, together with the realistic clues present in everyday life situations.

Figure 1: Predictors of test anxiety
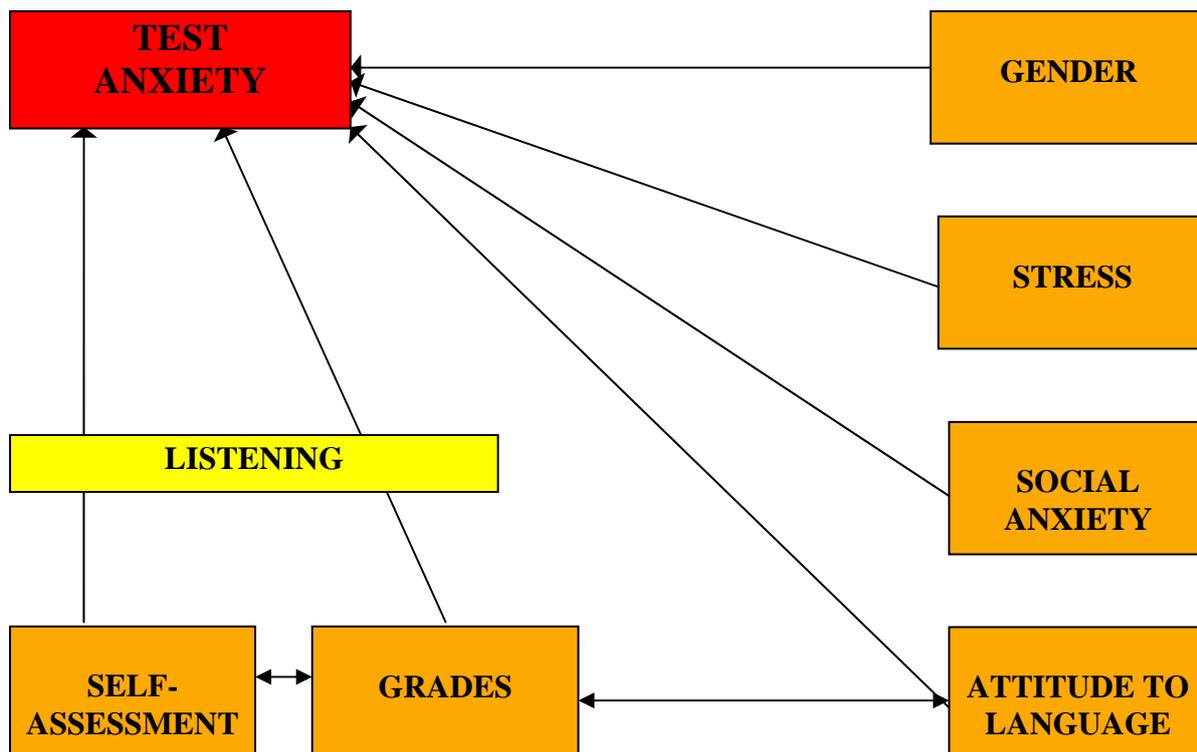
Conclusion

Test anxiety is often found to be a major educational problem (Hong, 1998). It is therefore imperative to combat its effects, as it cannot be expected that testing be totally eliminated from the school life. It should be stated that there are many different ways of

defeating test anxiety, such as developing test-taking skills (Syncamore & Corey, 1990) or study skills programmes (Beidel, Turner & Taylor-Ferreira, 1999), together with systematic desensitisation (Crouse, Deffenbacher & Frost, 1985) or guided imagery (Sapp, 1994). Other test anxiety management programs include multi-component treatment with systematic desensitisation, relaxation training and cognitive-behavioural interventions (Kennedy & Doepke, 1999), reciprocal peer tutoring (Griffin & Griffin, 1999), hypnotherapy (Brown et al., 1996), neurolinguistic programming (Stanton, 1992), eye movement desensitisation, and reprocessing (Bauman & Melnyk, 1994). Nevertheless, it seems obvious one should start treating test anxiety where it begins – in the classroom – by forming positive attitudes towards the foreign language, intensifying listening practice in real life contexts, grading students fairly but indulgently when necessary and, most of all, by taking advantage of the learners' knowledge of their native language whenever cognitive obstructions might occur.

References

Bauman, W. & Melnyk, W. T. (1994). A controlled comparison of eye movement and finger tapping in the treatment of test anxiety. *The Journal of Behaviour Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry, 25*(1), 29-33.

Beidel, D. C., Turner, S. M. & Taylor-Ferreira J. C. (1999). Teaching study skills and test-taking strategies to elementary school children. *Behavior Modification, 23*(4), 630-647.

Brown, G. W., Summers, D., Coffman, B., Riddell, R. & Poulsen B. (1996). The use of hypnotherapy with school-age children: Five case studies. *Psychotherapy in Private Practice, 15*(3), 53-65.

Compas, B. E., Davies, G. E., Forsythe, C. J. & Wagner, B. M. (1987). Assessment of major and daily stressful events during adolescence: The adolescent perceived events scale. *The Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 55*(4), 534-541.

Crouse, R. H., Deffenbacher, J. L. & Frost, G. A. (1985). Desensitization for students with different sources and experiences of test anxiety. *The Journal of College Student Development, 26*(4), 315-318.

De Anda, D., Baroni, S., Boskin, L., Buchwald, L., Morgan, J., Ow, J., Gold, J. S. & Weiss, R. (2000). Stress, stressors and coping among high school strudents. *Children and Youth Services Review, 22* (6), 441-463.

Delgado, P., Guerrero, G., Goggin, J. P. & Ellis, B. B. (1999). Self-assessment of linguistic skills by bilingual Hispanics. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioural Sciences, 21*(1), 31-47.

Everson, H. T. & Millsap, R. E. (1991). Isolating gender differences in test anxiety: A confirmatory factor analysis of test anxiety. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 51*(1), 243-252.

Friedman, I. A. & Bendas-Jacob, O. (1997). Measuring perceived test anxiety in adolescents: A self-report scale. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 57*(6) 1035-1047.

Gazella, B. M., Masten, W. G. & Stacks, J. (1998). Students' stress and their learning strategies, test anxiety, and attributions. *Test College Student Journal, 32*(3), 416-422.

Griffin, M. M. & Griffin, B. W. (1998). An investigation of the effects of reciprocal peer tutoring on achievement, self-efficacy and test anxiety. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 23*(3), 298-311.

Hansen, G. H. (1999). Learning by heart: A Lozanov perspective. In: J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 211 - 25). Cambridge: CUP.

Hembree, R. (1988). Correlates, causes, effects and treatment of test anxiety. *Review of Educational Research, 58*(1), 47-77.

Hodge, G. M., McCormick, J. & Elliott, R. (1997). Examination-induced distress in a public examination at the completion of secondary schooling. *The British Journal of Educational Psychology, 67*(2), 185-197.

Hong, E. (1998). Differential stability of individual differences in state and trait test anxiety. *Learning and Individual Differences, 10*(1), 51-70.

La Greca, A. M. & Stone, W. L. (1993). Social anxiety scale for children - revised: Factor structure and concurrent validity. *The Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 22*(1), 17-27.

Lee, J. H. (1999). Test anxiety and working memory. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 67*(2), 218-241.

LeBlanc, R. & Painchaud, G. (1985). Self-assessment as a second language placement instrument. *TESOL Quarterly 19*(4), 673-87.

Low, G. D. (1982). The direct testing of academic writing in a second language. *System 10*(3), 247-57.

Marsh, H. & Yeung, A. S. (1998). Longitudinal structural equation models of academic self-concept and achievement: Gender differences in the development of math and English constructs. *The American Educational Research Journal, 35*(4), 705-735.

McDonald, A. (2001). The prevalence and effects of test anxiety in school children. *Educational Psychology, 21*(1), 89-102.

Morris, L. W., Davis, MA. & Hutchings, C. H. (1981). Cognitive and emotional components of anxiety: Literature review and a revised worry-emotionality scale. *The Journal of Educational Psychology, 73*(4) 541-556.

Ollendick, T. H. (1983). Reliability and validity of revised fear-survey schedule for children (FSSC-R). *Behavior Research Therapy, 21*(6), 685-692.

Ollendick, T. H., King, N. J. & Frary, R. B. (1989). Fears in children and adolescents: Reliability and generalizability across gender, age and nationality. *Behavior Research and Therapy, 27*(1), 19-26.

Oskarsson, M. (1980). *Approaches to self-assessment in foreign language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Payne, B. D., Smith, J. E. & Payne, D. A. (1983). Sex and ethnic differences in relationships of test anxiety to performance in science examinations by fourth and eighth grade students: Implications for valid interpretations of achievement test scores. *Educational and Psychological Measurements, 43*(1), 267-270.

Sapp, M. (1994). The effects of guided imagery on reducing the worry and emotionality components of test anxiety.*The Journal of Mental Imagery, 18*(3-4), 165-172.

Sarason, I. G. & Sarason, B. R. (1986). Anxiety and interfering thoughts: Their effect on social interaction. In: W. H. Jones et al. (Eds.), *Shyness: Perspectives on Research and Treatment* (pp. 253-264). New York: Plenum.

Shavit, H. & Shouval, R. (1980). Self-esteem and cognitive consistency effects on self-other evaluation. *The Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 16*(4), 322-351.

Syncamore, J. E. & Corey, A. L. (1999). Reducing test anxiety. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 24*(3), 231-234.

Tobias, S. (1980). Anxiety and instruction. In: G. Sarason (Ed.), *Test Anxiety: Theory, Research and Applications* (pp. 283-310). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Wright, M. (1999). Influences on learner attitudes towards foreign language and culture. *Educational Research, 41*(2), 197-211.

Zohar, D. (1998). An additive model of test anxiety role of exam-specific expectations. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 90*(2), 330-340.

Globalization, the English Language, and International Universities:
The Case of Japan

Al Lehner, Akita International University, Akita, Japan
lehner@aiu.ac.jp

Abstract

The forces of globalization continue to effect major evolutions in economic and political spheres, bringing about a significant impact on the local level. At the same time, globalization has been provided a linguistic medium through the English language to realize its goals, ironically thereby providing a conduit for the continuing spread of English around the world. As English spreads, the number of locales in which English is used for professional reasons also increases, for example, in newly developing international universities located in non-English-speaking countries. The paper examines the pragmatic relationship of globalization, the English language, and international universities, in particular, in Japan.

Introduction

Globalization continues to alter the ways in which people across the world relate to one another within various spheres and levels of interaction. From commercial networking to political partnering, there is a growing awareness that traditional circles of identity and well-being, as well as the customary boundaries that have preserved them, are reemerging in ways heretofore unpredicted. Such reemergence, or realigning, is hardly simple, straightforward, or problem-free (Harrison, 1981/1994; Huntington, 1998; Coleman, 2006). In particular, the globalization phenomenon has had a growing impact that is both promising and problematic in the area of language use and policy (Fishman, 2000; Nettle and Romaine, 2000; Crystal, 2003). In that globalization is "the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations" (Rothenberg, 2003, p. 2), inevitably issues of language and culture appear paramount. As pointed out by Guillén (2001, p. 236), globalization is "an ideology with multiple meanings and lineages." It is the ideological nexus of *globalization* and *language* that provides a fulcrum for the English language itself to become globalized and both to enter and shape the discursive interaction. Perhaps this is no more evident than in so-called "international" universities that are beginning to surface across the globe.

The extent to which globalization continues to break out in varied ways and in diverse places, and that education (especially higher education) influences the process in significant measure, makes it sensible to look at how globalization affects university education, especially when and where English becomes the medium of instruction in environments where it is not the local language. As Guillén (2001) explains, globalization is not monolithic, but there are various convergences that occur—across political, commercial, and social boundaries. I would argue that Brutt-Griffler (2002) is correct when she posits that such an interconnectedness promotes a dependence on the English language as a "world" language that no longer spreads through migration, but by a daily use to communicate and interact among people of all walks of life regardless of traditional boundaries, a position also held by Pennycook (1994) and McKay (2002). This growing global use of English in the world—largely for daily purposes—defies oversimplification, as it "exhibits complexities that have yet to be brought under a unifying theoretical perspective" (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, p. 108).

Whether globalization is a constructive or destructive force in the world has been, and continues to be, discussed elsewhere. However, accepting it as a *given* force in the world, I want to look at one of its major consequences, i.e., the spread of English in the world (especially western English[2]), and how such an expansion has begun to make itself evident in (and through) certain universities across the world which educate students in numerous academic disciplines—completely in English. Rather than to ask yet again the proverbial question, How did this happen?, it is more informative to look at what gets taught in such an institution, who gets taught, and what results have been shown.

Globalization and English: The Development of a World Language?

Generally, globalization draws attention to political and economic issues (e.g., Breidbach, 2003; Friedman, 2005, 2007; Russell, 2005). However, in recent years scholars have turned their focus to education and the impact of globalization on schools across the world. In this regard, attention has been given, specifically, to issues of culture, identity, and language (e.g., Kubota and Lin, 2009). This has occurred in response to the ways in which globalization affects how language is used (Coleman, 2006)—in particular, the English language (McKay, 2002; Pennycook, 1994). The various effects of the relationship between globalization and English are so strongly felt that, among not a few people, it is commonly regarded that the confluence of globalization and the English language is integral to national development (Russell, 2005). Yet some would ask: "Why does one need to adopt someone else's language/identity in order to achieve '*development*'" (Imam, 2005, p. 471)? Just so, as Breidbach (2003) points out, language education policies reach beyond the ivy walls of the academy simply due to their political weight within society. As a result, a nexus of economics, politics, and English language continues to push outward in ever-expanding circles of dominating influence (Canagarajah, 1999; Honna, 2008; Kachru, 1992; Nettle and Romaine, 2002; Phillipson, 1992) and is often uncritically regarded as "natural, neutral and beneficial" (McKay, 2002; Pennycook, 1994). In the field of education, the pervasiveness of such influence has been seen as well within academic practices and curricula (Altbach, 1989).

Today, there are various names given to this phenomenon of English in the world: *world English* (Kachru, 1992), English as an *international language*, or *EIL* (McKay, 2002; Pennycook, 1994; Smith, 1976) English as a *global language* (Crystal, 1997/2003), English as a *lingua franca*, or *ELF* (Prodromou, 2008), and English as a *world language* (Brutt-Griffler, 2002)—to draw a attention to the most prominent. The distinctions are often minimal, however, in that what is common to these descriptors, as described by Smith (1976; cited in McKay, 2002, p. 12), is the fact that, in ever rapidly increasing degrees, the English language is used "both in a global sense for international communication between countries and in a local sense as a language of wider communication within multilingual societies." Within this paper I will use the expression *world language* to refer to English in the contexts I present, in concurrence with Brutt-Griffler (in McKay, 2002, pp. 12-13) who describes a world language as:

- a product of a world econocultural system which develops: a world market and business community, as well as a global scientific, cultural, and intellectual life;
- not confined to a socioeconomic elite (as a *lingua franca*); it is learned by various levels in society; and,
- spreads not by migration, but by individuals who acquire the language (see above).

---

[2] I make a distinction here between the vast and growing numbers of world Englishes (Kachru, 1992) and the English of the West, particularly the U.S., UK, and Canada.

Historically, it was considered evident that the English language existed in three definitive linguistic environments in the world, described as "circles" by Kachru (1986): (a) *inner circle* countries, where English is the primary language used (e.g., the U.S., the UK); (b) *outer circle* countries, where English is used as a prominent second language in multilingual societies (e.g., India, the Philippines); and, (c) *expanding circle* countries, where English (especially that of inner circle countries) is studied as a foreign language (e.g., Japan, Korea). Now, however, English is no longer solely associated with the cultures of inner circle countries (McKay, 2002; Smith, 1976) and is used as a language of "wider communication" between people within and between outer circle and expanding circle countries (Ibid.). In point of fact, referring to Europe, according to Modiano (2009, p. 59):

> …learners are no longer learning English because it is used primarily to communicate with native speakers, but are acquiring English because it will be required of them in a wide range of work related, educational and social activities, many of which will not include native speakers.

Importantly, as Graddol (1999) explains, in the not too distant future the number of people who speak English as an additional language (beyond their first language) will surpass the number of people who speak English as their first language. McKay (2002) makes clear how this factor will significantly impact various aspects of English as a result—native-/non-native speaker issues and language use standards, to name just two. Yet, presumably, the forces of globalization will continue to expand and, along with them, the use of the English language in the world will continue to spread. Given such a reality, how should nations respond?

Case in Point: Japan

Increasingly, traditional outer circle and expanding circle nations are promoting English education with greater and greater determination (Honna, 2008). One country where this is most apparent is Japan. In 2002, the Ministry of Education, **Culture**, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2002) issued an action paper intended as a set of formal guidelines for English education across the country, from junior high school to senior high school to university. The report was called, "Cultivating Japanese with English Abilities," and its primary emphasis was on the need for all Japanese students to learn how to communicate in English. By proclamation, the paper called for a positive response among Japanese people to the internationalization and globalization forces taking hold in the world. Concurrently, it called for the revision of traditional pedagogical approaches within English classrooms and for a much more solid English language proficiency among its teachers.

Seeming to understand full well the need (expressed above) for Japanese people to interact with speakers of various languages around the world *in English,* MEXT attempted to redraw the traditional lines of examination-preparation English classes. The ministry's focus was on the development of an internationalized, or globalized, Japan. Several years later, Honna (2008, p. 6) explained:

> …from a Japanese point of view, English is not the language for us to use only with Americans, the British, or any other native speakers. Rather, English is the language for us to use with Chinese, Koreans, Bruneians, Thais, Malaysians, Singaporeans, and other Asians. That English has become an international language means that it has become a language for multinational communication. With the increasing number of learners, English is playing this role more widely in area and domain than any other languages.

Just prior to these recent occurrences, yet continuing in the meantime, there was and continues to be a tendency on the part of some within Japan to see school reform as almost a response to a self-perceived deficit that was ailing the country. For instance, the Ministry of Education University Council (1998; cited in Doyon, 2001, p. 447), an advisory panel to the national government, stated: "Japanese universities must elevate the level of education and research and develop side by side with highly ranked universities of the world in the 21st century."

This sort of deficit thinking has continued to hold sway among certain sectors of the national government and academia. In 2007, the Prime Minister's Education Rebuilding Council (ERC), another advisory panel of distinguished professionals, issued its first report (of an eventual four) in which it stated: "Japan must become an appealing and strong country to win the respect and the trust of the international community….We must build a world-class education system" (Education 2007, p. 8). By the end of 2007, the ERC had issued its final report and, in each of the reports, emphasis was given to the importance of English within an overall plan for deep-seated educational curriculum reform in Japan.

Yet three years prior to the declarations of the ERC, in 2004, a brand new university had been established by the local prefectural government in northern Japan's Tohoku region, in the small city of Akita on the Japan Sea. That university was meant to incorporate the thinking of organizations like MEXT with regard to English language education and also to think ahead to the future recommendations of the ERC. It is perhaps in the context of such a unique university that the nexus of globalization and the spread of English can be most easily seen and understood.

Akita International University

In April 2004, the government of Akita Prefecture in northern Japan established Akita International University (AIU), a four-year institution offering two undergraduate degree programs: Global Studies and Global Business. Several features of this new university made it unique in Japan because of its self-described "innovative" and "international" features:

- All courses (4 years) are taught in English (except for Japanese language classes).
- All full-time matriculated students whose first language is not English must complete at least one semester in intensive English-for-academic-purposes classes, based upon initial assessment determined by the TOEFL-ITP test. (Some may spend two or three semesters in different levels of study.)
- All students are required to study abroad for one year.
- All first-year students must live on campus.
- AIU has rolling admissions, something unheard of in Japan.

In particular, the mission of AIU included the declaration, "to contribute to the local and international society by developing students with practical abilities, including excellence in English and other foreign languages, along with a strong knowledge of global issues and a rich liberal arts education" (AIU, p. 2). Specifically focused on advanced English proficiency as well as the concomitant emphasis on globalization (see earlier), AIU "offers opportunities for students to strengthen their ability to communicate in foreign languages, especially English, and the university fosters the ethical standards, academic knowledge and intellectual expression necessary to contribute to the knowledge-based global society in the 21st Century" (Ibid.).

As evident in its very name in Japanese, *kokusai kyoyou daigaku* (国際教養大学, or International Liberal Arts University), AIU has firmly established its liberal arts curriculum

on what I have elsewhere referred to as its "6 Pillars."[3] All taught in English, these "6 Pillars" consist of:

- English Language Foundations
- Social Sciences
- Arts and Humanities
- Math and Natural Sciences
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- World Languages and Linguistics

Because AIU requires all of its local students (i.e., students from Japan) to study abroad for one year, it has had to establish a broad network of partner universities across the world, universities in which it is possible for AIU students to continue their coursework in English. To date, it has more than 100 partner schools in North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. As a result, each year approximately 120-150 international students study abroad at AIU through partner agreements established by AIU and their home universities. (At the same time, approximately 120-150 AIU Japanese students study abroad.) These now-ordinary practices at AIU clearly give emphasis to the MEXT dual call for an increase in the number of international students studying in Japan and an improved proficiency in English language ability among Japanese students (Doyon, 2001). Moreover, the confluence of globalization and the English language within an institution of higher learning in a non-English-speaking society could not be more manifest.

The evolution of this university has not been accidental; nor has the dual focus on globalization and the English language receded. It should be pointed out that the key person behind, and the founding President of, this university, Dr. Mineo Nakajima, was himself a member of the ERC as well as a member of the MEXT Central Council for Education. According to Nakajima (2009, p. 1):

> We produce future leaders who will effectively conduct business and lead international organizations of the 21st century. In achieving this goal, we reform Japanese higher education and create a university that can compete and communicate with prestigious counterparts around the world.

Consequences

It seems that Akita International University, in a variety of ways and on different levels, demonstrates how far and widespread globalization has become. At once, it underscores the recognition of the "power" of a practical economics (Russell, 2005) and contributes to the ever-spreading social impact of the English language around the world (McKay, 2002), especially within an expanding circle nation.

To date, this newly formed "international" university has seen swift, robust signs of success and acceptance within Japanese society. In a country where national rankings mean everything—and failure to achieve a respectable rank means almost immediate failure—AIU has achieved remarkable results in just five years since its foundation. These include:

- Yoyogi Seminar data for 2009 admissions[4]

---

[3] See Lehner, 2008. Building on the early characterization by Aristotle and Plato of "9 pillars," which was reformulated as "7 pillars" in the Middle Ages (for descriptions of each, see Wagner, 1983), I have described the AIU liberal arts curriculum as consisting of "6 Pillars."

[4] For those unfamiliar with the stringent, ubiquitous ranking organizations in Japan, suffice it to say that groups like the Yoyogi Seminar (operated by one of the largest "cram" schools in Japan) hold huge sway with parents, teachers, and students. These ranking organizations are lucrative, well-respected agencies that shape the futures of thousands of students in Japan who seek to advance their educational and career opportunities. Here, I include data from the National Center Exam (required for all high school seniors wanting to go to college) for students who opted for the exam sections in economics, business, and management. The predominant university entrance exams (there are several exams students can elect to take) are referred to here, for AIU purposes, as: Type 'A', Type 'B', and Type 'C'. What distinguishes these three exams are their

National Center Exam: economics / business / management: 93%-ile (Type 'C'); 87%-ile (Type 'A'); 81%-ile (Type 'B')

- "Quality of Education" (voted by university presidents)
  7th (of 754) (reported by *Asahi Shimbum* newspaper)
  "National University ranking for AY 2010"
- Job Placement of Graduates
  99.1% (reported in *AERA, Asahi Shimbum Weekly*, 2009.09.21)
- Job Placement of Graduates
  1st in nation (reported by *Sunday Mainichi* newspaper, 2009.09.06)

The competitiveness of its entrance examination has given AIU some of the very best qualified high school graduates—both academically and linguistically—from across Japan. Since the university has a student population goal of approximately 1,000, the number of available seats each year, vis-à-vis the number of test-takers, is proportionately small. As a result, the university has found itself in a very brief period of time being able to select promising students who appear, in every way, to be capable and self-motivated.

Conclusion

Clearly, the forces of globalization may be felt in every part of the world. In addition, the presence of the English language has both propelled globalization forward (Pennycook, 1994) and brought about the establishment of completely English-medium international universities in countries where English is either an additional language or simply a non-entity (AIU, 2009). One such case is Akita International University in Japan in which international liberal arts provides the foundation for advanced studies in global business and global studies - taught completely in English. Given its publicly recognized success rate, AIU stands as a possible sign of things to come in the world, presuming the continuance of globalization efforts (Friedman, 2007) and the complex spread of the English language (Brutt-Griffler, 2002).

If such is the case, particular questions arise:

- What happens to the first language(s) of students who complete advanced university studies in a foreign language? Do these languages develop as well?
- To what extent must "western" studies follow the English language across the world?
- Do all countries and their systems of higher education have equitable opportunities to achieve similar successes?

Regarding the first question, Tsui and Tollefson (2007, p. 1) suggest that globalization poses a "dire" challenge to people in countries where English is not the local language "because one of the most important meditational tools [technology being the other] is not their native tongue." They advocate an approach which advances both multicultural and multilingual practices—and further promote language policies to ensure and protect such practices—so that students do not interrupt or abandon greater proficiency in their first languages nor neglect the maturity of their identities as shaped by their home cultures. A major thrust of the university in question in this text, i.e., AIU, has sought to provide such safeguards from its inception. Yet will this necessarily be the case in all other instances?

---

formats and the number of subject tests students choose. In Type 'A', students take 3 subject tests; in Type 'B', 5 subject tests; and in Type 'C', students who did not pass either 'A' or 'B'—or both—can take a written essay exam. (For comments on how the employability of graduates plays a significant role in the similar ranking of European universities, see Coleman, 2006.)

As to whether or not "western" studies must go hand-in-hand with the introduction of the English language in all "international" universities across the world remains to be seen. As Kubota and Lin (2009, p. 14) point out, it is important to recognize the "legacies of colonialism and imperialism which privilege white European knowledge and epistemologies." They call for a critical analysis of both epistemologies and pedagogies to determine the underlying values and positions which drive and advance these forces so that language is not presented and thought of as an objective, valueless reality, or that English, in particular, not be viewed as free itself of the history of colonialism or the surge of free trade and market-driven systems. It is important, therefore, to examine and question all epistemologies, whether they are "western" or something quite different.

Finally, it may be true that all nations in the world do not have sufficient means to establish international universities, nor perhaps the self-expressed necessity to do so. Consequently, it will be instructive to observe how the forces of globalization are realized in locales where English may not come to dominate, or within societies that do not establish universities which promote the mastery of English as well as the study of other cultures through mechanisms such as the study abroad mandate evidenced in the university discussed in this paper. How such countries respond to what Brutt-Griffler (2002, p. 110) calls the "world econocultural system," which is largely carried forward by English, also remains to be seen. Could it be, however, that a continuing stream of universities across the globe will initiate international programs or establish international campuses, similar to the university described above, to adjust to the economic and linguistic forces now seen having global reach? If so, how dominant will "western" studies become in these programs and institutions?

The university briefly described in this paper seems to be doing many of the "right" things. The "internationalization" of its student body—whether exported or imported—would seem to many to bode well for a globalized world that requires positive interaction among peoples to ensure its own destiny. Does this mean that a school like AIU is a microcosm of what may be possible in ever-increasing measures, globally? Will graduates of such schools be better prepared for international careers (Coleman, 2006)? Is globalization, in fact, only possible through English?

The discussion on these matters will be ongoing for some time, I believe.

References

AIU. (2009). *Student handbook 2009-2010.* Akita International University. Akita, JP.

Altbach, P.G. (1989). Twisted roots: The Western impact on Asian higher education. *Higher Education 18,* 9-29.

Breidbach, S. (2003). Plurilingualism, democratic citizenship in Europe and the role of English. Paper commissioned for the Conference on Languages, Diversity, Citizenship: Policies for Plurilingualism in Europe, November 13-15, 2002. Council of Europe, Strasbourg. Language Policy Division.

Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). *World English: A study of its development.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Canagarajah, A.S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching.* UK: Oxford University Press.

Coleman, J.A. (2006). English-medium teaching in European higher education. *Language Teaching 39,* 1-14.

Crystal, D. (1997/2003). *English as a global language, second edition.* UK: Cambridge University Press.

Doyon, P. (2001). A review of higher education reform in modern Japan. *Higher Education 41,* 443-470.

Education Rebuilding Council. (2007, January 24). Education rebuilding by society as a whole: First step toward rebuilding the public education system, first report. Tokyo.

Fishman, J.A. (Ed.). (2000). *Can threatened languages be saved?* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Friedman, T.L. (2005, September 5). Globalization: The challenge to America. *New York Times Upfront 138, 1,* 12-15.

Friedman, T.L. (2007). *The world is flat 3.0: A brief history of the twenty-first century.* USA: Picador.

Guillén, M.E. (2001). Is globalization civilizing, destructive or feeble? A critique of five key debates in the social science literature. *Annual Reviews of Sociology, 27,* 235-260.

Harrison, P. (1981/1994). The westernization of the world. In C. Verberg, A. Adams, and D. Londow (Eds.), *Ourselves among others,* 66-72. NY: Saint Martin's Press.

Honna, N. (2008). English as a multicultural language in Asian contexts: Issues and ideas. Tokyo: Kurosio Publishers.

Huntington, S.P. (1998). *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the world order.* NY: Simon & Schuster.

Imam, S.R. (2005). English as a global language and the question of nation-building education in Bangladesh. *Comparative Education 41*(4), 471-486.

Kachru, B. (1986). *The alchemy of English.* UK: Pergamon Press.

Kachru, B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures, second edition.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Kubota, R. & Lin, A. (eds.). (2009). *Race, culture, and identities in second language education: Exploring critically engaged practice.* New York: Routledge.

Lehner, A. (2008, February 27). Internationalization of University Education: AIU's Educational System & Student Services「AIUにおける大学教育の国際化 – 教育システムと学生サービス – 」. Presentation at Tottori University. Tottori: JP.

McKay, S.L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language.* UK: Oxford University Press.

MEXT. (2002). Developing a strategic plan to "Cultivate Japanese with English abilities." Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Tokyo, Japan. Retrieved February 15, 2010: http://www.mext.go.jp/english/news/2002/07/020901.htm.

Ministry of Education. (1998). A vision for universities in the 21st century and reform measures to be distinctive universities in a competitive environment (University Council Report). Retrieved February 15, 2010: http://www.mext.go.jp/english/news/ 1998 /10/981010.htm/.

Modiano, M. (2009). EIL, Native-speakerism and the failure of European ELT. In, F. Sharifian (Ed.), *English as an international language: Perspectives and pedagogical issues, 58-77.* UK: Multilingual Matters.

Nakajima. M. (2009). Message from the President. In, Experience Japan. Akita International University, 2009-2010. Akita, JP.

Nettle, D. and Romaine, S. (2000). *Vanishing voices: The extinction of the world's languages.* UK: Oxford University Press.

Pennycook, A. (1994). *The cultural politics of English as an international language.* London: Longman.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism.* UK: Oxford University Press.

Prodromou, L. (2008). *English as a lingua franca: A corpus-based analysis.* London: Continuum.

Rothenberg, L.E. (2003). Globalization 101: The three tensions of globalization. *Occasional Papers from the American Forum for Global Education,* 176, 1-4. NY: The American Forum for Global Education.

Russell, G.F., Jr. (2005). The power of globalization. *NBR Analysis 16*(2), 7-19. The National Bureau of Asian Research.

Smith, L. (1976). English as an international auxiliary language. *RELC Journal 7/2:* 38-43.

Tsui, A.B.M. & Tollefson, J.W. (eds.).   (2007). *Language policy, culture, and identity in Asian contexts.* New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wagner, D.L. (1983). *The seven liberal arts in the Middle Ages*. IN: Indiana University Press.