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Edited by
Roberto Bergami
Sandra Liliana Pucci
Annamarie Schuller
Dear Readers,

This collection of works represents the contribution made by the authors to the X Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, held in Rome, Italy, on 30 November - 2 December 2011.

All papers submitted for publication were subject to a blind review process, involving at least two referees.

This is a process where there is no disclosure of the identities of the authors and reviewers.

The papers in this publication were subject to editing, but changes were kept to a minimum, to preserve the original message of the authors and also to respect different cultures and writing styles from across the world. In a departure from previous editions, the reference formatting styles were relaxed to allow authors greater freedom and reduce the heavy workload of the editors.

We acknowledge the variety of works and research conducted over time from individuals across all continents of the globe that has resulted in the publications of these proceedings.

We also acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the Editorial Team, in the process of blind reviewing manuscripts submitted for publication.

On behalf of the editorial team we extend our gratitude to Professor Swaffield, the Founder and Director of the Forum, for his continuing support in making this publication possible.

Roberto Bergami  
Sandra Liliana Pucci  
Annamarie Schuller  
December 2011
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Global Citizenship and Human Rights Education

Maria Helena G. Pratas
Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências (ISEC)
Alameda das Linhas de Torres, 179, Lisbon, Portugal
hpratas@isec.universitas.pt

Abstract

This paper describes two experiences of Global Citizenship Education. One of them was a Course, organized by the North-South Centre, about Global Education and Human Rights. Global education is a holistic “education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity, and human rights for all. Global education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimension of Education for Citizenship” (Maastricht Global Education Declaration, 2002). The other experience was developed with Teacher Training students with the purpose to encourage them to reflect on the theoretical bases of building Peace and Human Rights Education and to develop teaching activities and strategies. Human rights education is crucial, in order to respect the rights and freedoms of others and to understand our responsibility for their implementation, enabling pupils to become critical and participating citizens in our global society.

Keywords: Global Citizenship Education; Human Rights Education; Peace Education

The World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE)

On 10 December 2004, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE). The aim was to improve the implementation of human rights education programmes at all levels, and to broaden and deepen human rights learning, according to the principles of universality, indivisibility, interdependency, impartiality, objectivity, non-selectivity, constructive dialogue and cooperation. The World Programme fosters the following human rights education principles (see Plan of Action, par. 8): (a) Promote the interdependence, indivisibility and universality of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development; (b) Foster respect for and appreciation of differences, and opposition to discrimination on the basis of race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, physical or mental condition, and on other bases; (c) Encourage analysis of chronic and emerging human rights problems (including poverty, violent conflicts and discrimination), which would lead to solutions consistent with human rights standards; (d) Empower communities and individuals to identify their human rights needs and to ensure that they are met; (e) Build on the human rights principles embedded within the different cultural contexts and take into account historical and social developments in each country; (f) Foster knowledge of and skills to use local, national, regional and international human rights instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights; (g) Make use of participatory pedagogies that include knowledge, critical analysis and skills for action furthering human rights; (h) Foster teaching and learning environments free from want and fear that encourage participation, enjoyment of human rights and the full development of the human personality; (i) Be relevant to the daily life of the learners, engaging them in a dialogue about ways and means of transforming human rights from the
expression of abstract norms to the reality of their social, economic, cultural and political conditions. This Plan of Action highlights that human rights education in the school system involves not only the integration of human rights in all educational processes and tools (curricula, textbooks, materials, methods and training) but also the practice of human rights within the education system.

The World Programme consists of different phases, of which the first one covered the period of 2005-2009, with a focus on primary and secondary education. The consultation on the focus of the second phase of the WPHRE highlighted the need to focus attention on human rights training for teachers and educators, without which human rights education cannot be effectively integrated into the school system. It was thereby decided that the second phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2010-2014) would focus on human rights education for higher education and on human rights training programmes for teachers and educators. A Plan of Action for the Second Phase of the World Programme (2010-2014) (document A/HRC/15/28) was prepared and adopted by the Human Rights Council by its resolution 15/11 (30 September 2010). This Plan of Action states that Higher Education institutions, through their core functions (research, teaching and service to the community), “not only have the social responsibility to educate ethical citizens committed to the construction of peace, the defense of human rights and the values of democracy, but also to generate global knowledge to meet current human rights challenges, such as eradication of poverty and discrimination, post-conflict rebuilding, sustainable development and multicultural understanding” (par.21).

As education concerns “not only the content of the curriculum but also the educational processes, the pedagogical methods and the environment within which education takes place”, human rights education in higher education should be understood as a process that includes not only the learning of human rights, but also the practice of rights, within the higher education system (par.22). This approach includes action in five areas: (a) Policies and related implementation measures; (b) Teaching and learning processes and tools (c) Research (d) The learning environment (e) Education and professional development of higher education teaching personnel (par.24-33).

**Education for Global Citizenship and Human Rights in Portugal**

The Comprehensive Law on the Education System in Portugal (1986) sets out the right of every Portuguese citizen to education and culture, and the duty to promote democracy in education as the key feature of equality of opportunity. The current regime for the autonomy, administration and management of state pre-school education and basic and secondary schools is fundamentally based on the general principles of democracy and participation. There is a tendency to broaden the space for participation in the running of the school, with respect to the role of students, parents, teachers, and local communities: a series of legislative measures led to a progressive accentuation of the importance of student participation and to overcoming the purely advisory function of families (Figueiredo et al., 2000).

In Portugal, in School Curricula, Education for Global Citizenship is present in an interdisciplinary manner, in all cycles of basic education. After the Curricular Reform (1989) and with the revision and reorganisation of basic education (2001), education for Global Citizenship is considered: a high priority of all educational, training, and cultural policies; an essential and transversal component of formal and non-formal contexts; one of the main pillars of the construction of a school of citizens based on the construction of a new paradigm – life-long learning and education for all (Salema, 2002).

Citizenship education aims at developing education for global citizenship in awakening a civic awareness in pupils as a fundamental element in the process of training responsible
citizens, who will be critical, active and ready to intervene, using an interchange of experiences witnessed by pupils and their individual and collective participation in the life of the class, the school and the community (Gaeri, 2001).

As it also happens in other countries, in Portugal, the study of human rights is not a priority theme in the majority of primary and secondary schools, not even at University. Students should know their rights and responsibilities as an important element of democratic society, but there isn’t an interdisciplinary human rights education programme.

Since its setting up in 1990, the Council of Europe’s North-South Centre, in Lisbon, has been engaged in Global Education, which encompasses the global dimensions of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education as well as global youth work. Global education is a holistic education that opens people’s eyes to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity, and human rights for all. It encompasses development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention and intercultural education, all of which represent the global dimensions of education for democratic citizenship (Sasi, 2009).

The annual Lisbon Forum on Human Rights, held by the North-South Centre since 1994, is a platform for dialogue and for sharing experiences, expertise and good practices between Europe and the other continents. It focuses on human rights, democracy, the rule of law and intercultural dialogue. In 2008, it was devoted to the principle of the universality of human rights and its implementation, in relation with the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The 2009 Lisbon Forum focused on “Creating a culture of human rights through education”.

The North-South Prize ceremony is a most important aspect of the Centre’s role in advancing human rights. The Prize is awarded annually to two persons, one from the North and one from the South, for their outstanding and exceptional merits in the field of human rights in a North-South context. The Prize ceremony takes place in the Portuguese Parliament (Sasi, 2009).

One of the Portuguese priorities has been on intercultural Education, as, in the last decades, there was an increase in the alien population. An important effort has been made against racial discrimination and to combat racism and intolerance, in terms of legislation and specific actions. The mass media are also involved in promoting tolerance, multiculturalism and combating racial discrimination. Inter-ministerial programmes have been set up to promote the values of co-existence and integration and the production of multicultural teaching materials. Seminars and workshops on human rights education and racism have also been conducted. Material for teachers are distributed free of cost to promote these values.

Education for Global Citizenship: the gap between intended and implemented curriculum

A study on education for democratic citizenship in Southern Europe, states that: "The recognition of the importance of EDC within curricula is, by itself, no guarantee of its actual implementation. Indeed, there appears to be a gap between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum that is perhaps greater than the one usually found for other areas of school education" (Losito, 2003: 10). This study found it difficult to establish the relationship between school policies and political ones. As there are no practices of systematic evaluation of education policies, it is difficult to reconstruct the variety of initiatives and projects in Education for Citizenship, because of the autonomy granted to individual schools in curriculum design. Curriculum research has shown that there is often a gap between what curricula formally envisage and the students’ actual opportunities to learn. This gap also concerns Education for Citizenship. The existence of this gap is confirmed by some results of
the second IEA Civic Education Study. The case studies carried out in the first phase of the study stress, in various ways, the gap between intended and implemented curriculum (Losito, 2003).

The Portuguese case study underlines the gap between the aims of the intended curriculum and student awareness in relation to the learning processes actually developed; the students generally did not recognize that they were participating in within-class activities related to citizenship issues, excluding the election of the class delegate. Their awareness of democratic issues seemed to depend on the special characteristic of the teacher or the occurrence of an exceptional event (Menezes et al., 1999).

Actually, teachers are a fundamental aspect for the success of any educational policy and of innovation processes. This also holds for Education for Citizenship. From a perspective that sees Education for Global Citizenship as the result of the educational action of the school as a whole and of the experience of participation that students gain inside their school, the training issue concerns (or should concern) all teachers and not just the ones of a few school subjects that can be considered as being more directly related to global issues. Teacher-training should be carried out on several levels: curricular contents, teaching methodologies, management skills, and - last but not least - relational skills (Losito, 2003).

Most of the degree courses for primary school teacher training and some particular schools for secondary school teacher training include some specific teaching and contents relevant to Education for Citizenship. However, in the field of both initial and in-service teacher training, there seems to be insufficient attention to these issues. The largely decentralised nature of the in-service teacher-training system makes it difficult to draw a sufficiently precise picture of the existing situation of in-service training. There are several in-service training experiences in Education for Global Citizenship. Teachers are asked to teach skills and democratic attitudes, but there is little in the training of these instructors to give them the necessary skills to play their role; and it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing training activities (Losito, 2003).

That is why I felt the need to be present at the annual Lisbon Forum on Human Rights, held by the North-South Centre, and to inscribe at the Global Education on-line training Course.

**An Experience of “Global Education”**

The experience I am going to describe is a training course called *Global Education: The Human Rights Dimension*, offered by the North South Centre and The Network University in 2010, from 15th November to 20th December 2011. The course was targeted at practitioners in the field of education and development, teachers, social and youth workers, as well as policy-makers, civil servants and local and regional authorities. This four-week online learning course involved at least 8 hours of learning per week, including reading course materials, online discussion and participation in interactive exercises. The course included individual assignments, interactive group exercises, a discussion forum, a glossary and a virtual library.

The *Global Education: The Human Rights Dimension* Course consisted of 4 modules: 1. Introduction to Global Education: Human Rights Education Basics; 2. Understanding Human Rights Education in your *glocal* context; 3. Developing strategies for action; 4. Developing Human Rights Education activities. Participants were expected to work on the same module at the same time (collaborative learning).

The online training course included registration, the learning process, tutoring, assignments; reading materials; development of specific discussion topics. The group was divers but well balanced, especially regarding geographical background. Each start of a
module (or week), participants received an email with information on the schedule of that week including activities and proposed assignments. The course developed for a period of around 7 weeks. One additional week of time was allowed to finish the required assignments. After this extra week the final decision on the Certificate award was made. Criteria were that at least 75% of the activities should be completed and there were two activities obligatory (assignments 8 and 9). The successful participants received a package containing a printed and signed certificate; a copy of North South Centre publication ‘Global Education Guidelines’ (available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) and a CD-Rom with the contents of the course.

The overall evaluation of the course was very positive, with a high rating of satisfaction among the participants’ evaluation questionnaires, considering participants’ diverse professional and geographical backgrounds.

Participants comments on lessons learned related to mainly three areas: 1. The challenges of designing and implementing activities in practice and in context; 2. The reflections on the links between Human Rights, globalization and social justice; they mentioned for example the importance of having a “global” picture and also paying attention to rich and diverse local perspectives. 3. Team work and organizational issues: working in diverse teams and with different stakeholders. Most people requested for more time to prepare the assignments, but also for the need of a platform to keep in contact with the fellow participants after the course.

Most participants indicated that they have developed knowledge. They also developed skills in relation to developing a Human Rights Education programme, from general planning skills to implementing an activity step-by-step. Many participants said that they felt more competent in these areas and more aware. A few participants mentioned mapping skills, evaluation skills, and critical thinking skills including how to build an argument from the perspective of different stakeholders. A few participants indicated this course made them feel more competent and confident, yet not enough. For some, this was a first step, for others, it was inspirational and made them realize how much more they need to learn and the support they need from institutions and more experienced Human Rights educators.

As for the methodology and exercises, participants believed that exercises fitted well the course contents and objectives. About half of them believed they needed more time to conclude them. Suggestions for improvement included adding discussion fora for smaller groups and even more interactive exercises. For example, “I think that exercises were well-designed, and they were specific due to the modules contents.” The most challenging exercise was the mapping exercise, followed by the planning assignments, the activity design, the role play and bingo. The most used tools during the course were (several options were possible): the assignments and the discussion forum.

I really think it was very rich, because it gave us a whole approach, with different methods, different documents and many contacts, all over the world, which made this course really global!

**Educating for Human Rights and Peace in Teacher Training**

The experience I am going to describe occurred in a teacher training course, during the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). The participants were 83 students training to become Elementary School teachers at the Department of Education of ISEC, Lisbon, Portugal. The students, aged 20 to 27 years old, were taking a course on Ethics and Education, as part of their senior year of the Initial Teacher Education Program. The purpose of the course was to inform and to stimulate the students to reflect on the theoretical basis of the theme, and on activities and strategies that might be used in the various curricular areas.
The Council of Europe Project 'Education for Democratic Citizenship', as well as a number of published theoretical references, pedagogical materials and identified and published practices, served as a basis for the training. Another approach was the Culture of Peace Programme by UNESCO. Culture of Peace is defined as a set of values and attitudes that reject violence by trying to solve the root causes of problems through dialogue and negotiation. There are four main categories of work in the programme: education for peace, human rights and democracy; the fight against exclusion and poverty; the defence of cultural pluralism and cross-cultural dialogue and finally conflict prevention and the consolidation of peace.

The students reflected on the importance of building peace and educating for peace. Peace is not just a matter of diplomacy or of acquiring social skills and communication. The promotion of peace is essentially a cultural task and its primary context is education. They worked on the theme of peace building and education for peace: they have read documents, discussed various issues and have carried out various activities. These activities were focused on issues such as promoting human rights, the need to live truth, justice, love and freedom as pillars of peace and social order. The students presented works and debated about development and solidarity as keys to peace, openness to reconciliation, dialogue and forgiveness; the importance of respect for the dignity of the person, including minorities, and dialogue between cultures. A source of reflection, in particular, were the messages of the World Day of Peace, which provide a rich and deep analysis of the topic in question, going to the roots of the problems and their solutions. They examined how the peace should be built on these four columns: Truth, Justice, Love and Freedom. They addressed the issue of education for legality, since law favours peace. They studied the United Nations, which has helped to promote respect for human dignity, freedom and development of nations, and they tried to develop an awareness of being a family of nations. The United Nations Charter declares that the recognition of the innate dignity of all members of the human family, as also the equality and inalienability of their rights, is the foundation of liberty, justice and peace in the world. They also reflected about the two broad categories of Human rights: civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights; they are closely connected, being the expression of different dimensions of the human person. The defence of the universality and indivisibility of human rights is essential for the construction of a peaceful society and for the development of individuals, peoples and nations.

To educate on peace and solidarity is not only to describe concepts or communicate values, but to promote thinking and actions that provide experience and help to create habits of solidarity. Thus, students were invited not only to reflect but also to live experiences of peace and solidarity. The proposal has been welcomed: some preferred to pursue a theoretical approach; many others realized volunteer activities in neighbourhoods of the city, in hospitals, or cooperated with associations of social solidarity. They studied various ways to achieve a true peace education, beginning in their classroom and their school and through contact with other schools. The results were quite positive: they became more aware of these problems, more awake to act with greater respect for human rights, which are obligations. They had a clearer awareness of the dignity of all human beings, defeated the inertia to devote time to others, even when they felt they had no time to give. In conclusion, solidarity is learned only when it is lived!

**Conclusion**

Both training modules helped the participants to reflect upon the theoretical bases and to develop teaching activities and strategies that may be used in different curricular areas. It was successful in helping students to develop teamwork skills and the ability to work in...
interdisciplinary contexts, making them more aware of social issues and more involved in school-related civic action and enabling them to become critical and participating citizens in our global society.

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Drama in the Multi-cultural Classroom

Dr. Lorie A. Annarella
Associate Professor
Elementary Teacher Education
Northeastern Illinois University
Chicago IL, USA
L-Annarella@neiu.edu

Abstract
We all have drama in our lives. Drama is part of the human experience of living. As we communicate to each other through speech and through our body movements and senses, we are using drama. Our emotions and feelings are conveyed to others through the dramatic experience of real life drama. Every time we speak to a colleague, demand an explanation, or hug a friend or relative, we are incorporating a little piece of drama that is a part of our daily life.

What is creative media?
Creative drama is using the idea of dramatic play as enrichment for spontaneous, inventive and creative learning. Creative drama is not to be confused with theatre. Theatre is primarily production focused, whereas creative drama focus is on the individual and learning outcomes. Creative drama uses creative activity for self-discovery and learning. Creative drama is essentially part of theatre, but it renders itself free of theatre goals through the empowerment of its participants to express creative thought and action through dramatic activities. Some creative drama activities might include: role play, improvisation, mime, character development and guided imagery and readers and chamber theatre.

The Multicultural Classroom
"Culture encompasses the learned behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideals that are characteristic of a particular society or population" (Ember and Ember 1990, p. 17). There are many cultures which define the United States. Today our classrooms encompass many different cultures and ethnic groups as well. It is important for teachers to remember that the teaching of various cultural and ethnic differences as well as similarities can become the glue that can form student understanding and respect for each other. It is equally important that students be taught that cultural differences exist through ritual, symbol and ideas. When students are taught these differences in various cultures they can better understand what it is to be empathic and understanding to the needs of those who are different from themselves.

Drama in the Multicultural Classroom
By using creative drama in the multicultural classroom, the curriculum can be taught in a student focused manner through experiential hands-on learning. Students from various cultures can learn to use drama as a way of telling and expressing their individual cultural differences. They can share their similarities and differences with the rest of the class. Since drama teaches through the strength of the group, it is basically noncompetitive. Too often in school students become competitive with each other. Drama teaches the importance of the individual but also the importance of the individual functioning within the group dynamic. It is never competitive. In theatre this concept is taught as ensemble. No player stands alone, but is
always an important part of the whole. "Drama...works from the strength of the group. It draws on a common stock of experiences and in turn enriches the minds and feelings of individuals within the group." (O'Neill and Lambert, p. 13, 1990). This is an important aspect in teaching in the multicultural classroom. Each student is encouraged to participate and to share experiences. Students become holistically involved within the drama activity. Thus, they are learning in a supervised but holistically natural way by doing hands-on activity. This encourages students to become involved not only with their own ideas, but with the ideas of their classmates. This sharing of ideas and attitudes can also bring students to an understanding of various cultural norms different from their own. Students can learn various cultural differences and similarities from working with drama. Students can participate in drama activity through movement, improvisation, mime, role play and can learn to discover new things about themselves and others (Cottrell, 1987). Since drama can be an extension of childhood play, it teaches the multicultural student to question, respond, explore and discover. Drama can also encourage students to enhance or develop language skills. Too many times, the multicultural student is left to learn new cultural rules and language on her own. Drama can be an encouraging force to unite the multicultural student to the rest of the class in a fast and nonintrusive way. As drama fosters many desirable cognitive and affective learning outcomes, it can also foster the motivation and understanding of cultural differences. Creative drama can open many avenues of pleasurable learning for students, but the teacher must remember that the aim of creative drama is to build on students' past experiences, giving them a greater knowledge not just of themselves, but of what it is to be human, as well as developing an understanding of the past, present and future of the society in which they live (Heathcote, 1984).

Motivation Through Multicultural Literature and Drama

Multicultural literature is literature about any racial group other than the white Anglo-Saxon majority in the United States (Norton, 1993). Ethnic diversity in the United States is extremely great and stories about various ethnic groups can also contribute to the multicultural classroom. When children are exposed to multicultural and ethnic literature they can begin to formulate a sense of pride for those who are members of the culture being studied in the literature. Pride instills a healthy self-worth in children and an understanding of basic character essentials. When children learn about different cultures and ethnicity, they become accustomed to it and this helps to eliminate fear of something or someone who is different than they are. Reading multicultural and ethnic stories along with using creative drama activity further stimulates students' interest in understanding what it is to be different from who they are. Drama exercises focusing of multicultural literature can motivate the multicultural student to learn to understand that diversity is a good thing and to be different is to be truly unique and wonderful. Drama can teach students to be accepting of each other and of each other’s ideas and cultural differences, since it encourages interpretation of actions and plot as well as understanding and character development. In order to dramatize a player needs to understand the internal feelings of the characters in a literary. In order to accomplish this, the player has to try to formulate an understanding of who the character is and how the character might act in a given situation.

Drama can also provide active learning in a student focused curriculum. When students are actively engaged in learning through thinking, speaking, listening, and moving during focused activity, they become one with their task and become holistically engaged in what they are learning.
Drama Brings Inventiveness, Trust and Creativity to the Classroom

Creative drama can plant the seeds of inventiveness in the multicultural classroom. For example, in task-oriented play, the teacher sets up a drama exercise by asking students to do a particular task (such as becoming the little girl in "Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story" from China (Young, 1989). By becoming this character and taking on the emotions and feelings of the character the student gains additional insight in understanding how others may think as well as developing a personal insight of their own. They learn to be empathic towards characters in stories and to formulate an understanding of how the character might react in a given situation. Hopefully, this empathic understanding can be applied to every-day situations outside of the literature. They also learn that reading is truly an extension of everyday life with its dramatic interpretations and displays of characters and situations involving plot and setting.

Students can be encouraged to trust their fellow students and themselves through creative drama tasks. Students should always be asked to contribute with statements like; what do you think, or show what you would do in that situation? There is never a right or wrong answer when using drama in the classroom. Each answer carries its own merit. Creative drama is nonjudgmental. Because it is nonjudgmental it creates an atmosphere of trust and understanding. Finally, by using the physical aspects of the body combined with oral interpretation, the student can create an environment in which to experiment, create and to act on it.

A Community of Learners through Ensemble, Spirit and Energy

Just as reading and writing connects students to the outside world, drama connects students with the inside world of feelings, emotions and intuition. Drama gives life to characters as it connects students with the energy of the human spirit through interpretation. Such tasks as mime, guided imagery, and improvisation, help students to learn spontaneity and how to rely on the use of their own creative energies. Drama by its very nature is cooperative, as individual energy combines with group energy, forming a synergy which contributes toward the good of the production. As in cooperative learning groups, it is equally important that each class member be permitted to work with everyone in the class at "lie time or another. As students interfaces with each other, they are learning about each other through drama activity. It is essential then that students be permitted to focus on individual differences and discuss their ideas and notions in the dramatic activities. By doing this, students will understand and come to appreciate individual differences and diversity.

It is important that students learn to understand and to get along with each other in spite of differences. Creative Drama can become a tool in the multicultural classroom in order to do this. It can help to bind people together. Drama by its very nature focuses on ensemble. Rarely does a performer create alone. Each performer depends on others to deliver the best possible performance. In addition, performance requires trust, group participation, and effort. When creative drama is used in the classroom, a community of learners begins to develop through ensemble or group participation. Each participant learns to function individually, yet within the group dynamic. The idea is to perform the drama task through cooperation with others in the group.

Academic Skills

The very act of drama teaches academic skills. Language Arts consists of speaking, listening, reading, and writing--all areas that can be addressed in creative drama. Listening skills are used as the student follows the directions of the creative drama leader or hears the presentation of another student. Students participate in speaking when they present their own
enactments and during the debriefing process, in which they discuss what they have seen performed. (Debriefing is an essential part of every creative drama exercise.)

Drama can also extend to the reading and writing processes. Creative drama can be used as a prewriting activity. For example, in learning to write descriptive paragraphs, the teacher might ask students to focus on an exercise using imaginary objects (balls, fruit, pens) in their hands, which they will throw or pass to each other. After experiencing this act of drama, they can easily describe the process orally, and then do so in writing.

**Creative Play**

The value of creative play is addressed in creative drama. Johan Huizinga (1950) discusses the significance of play in *Homo Ludens*. He says that one can deny nearly all other abstractions-- justice, beauty, truth, goodness, mind, even God-- but one cannot deny the seriousness of play. By acknowledging play, one acknowledges the mind.

When we use creative drama in the classroom, we honor the importance of play. Drama becomes our learning tool, and learning is serious business. Students like participating in creative drama. It enables them to get out of their seats and to move, listen, speak, and discover what it is to be human and how having fun can relate to learning.

**How to Implement Creative Drama in the Multicultural Classroom**

In order to use our creativity and inventiveness, we must free our energy and learn to trust ourselves. Because creative drama is nonjudgmental, it encourages risk-taking. The student must first feel basic trust from the creative drama leader (teacher), who becomes a mentor for the students, guiding them through activities and creating a nonthreatening atmosphere for the class. For this reason, creative drama tasks should not be forced upon the student. If a student refuses an invitation to participate, the teacher must have patience. The student can be drawn into the group by allowing him or her to first observe as the teacher works with the rest of the class. The teacher can then return to the reluctant student, issuing another invitation to join the group.

The creative drama teacher never acknowledges that someone has performed well, but instead focuses on the idea that has been conceived and contributed by the student. Praise should be kept to a minimum. This is important, since at no time is it encouraged that students compete with each other. Drama is to be used as an honest tool for learning. Every student enactment has merit and is discussed as a worthwhile possibility. It is the substance of what is being contributed that is of value, not the manner in which it is being done. Through this process of creative expression, inventive inquiry, and acceptance, students can learn to believe and trust in themselves. Rollo May (1975) discusses creative courage as the discovery of symbols, forms, and patterns on which we can build a new society. The ability to be creative is present within every individual. The use of creative drama helps the student to process that internal ability into an external form, through speech and movement. It allows students to have the courage to create.

The student is asked to participate in the class as a member of a group or ensemble, making the risk of failure low. Students are asked for opinions on the topic being discussed, not for "correct answers." There is no right or wrong answer, thus, again, making creative drama low risk.

The following are two creative drama activities that can be used successfully in the classroom:

**A. Guided Imagery**

This exercise can be done while the students are seated or can also be done with movement. It is recommended when first introducing drama exercises to a class that students be
seated through their first guided imagery exercise.

1. Have students get comfortable in their seats. Breathing exercises can be used to set the tone of a stress free atmosphere.
2. Tell the students that they are to pick a special place where they would like to visit. It can be a place they already been or one where they would like to visit but have never been.
3. Give them several minutes to reflect on that special place.
4. Tell the students that they are going to go to their special place and that they will remember exactly what it looks like when they come back.
5. Begin the trip into their imagination by telling them that they may go to their special place by any form of transportation they choose.
6. Have them travel to their special place by "side coaching" them through suggestions that you the drama teacher present as they are visiting their special place.
7. As the students are traveling in their special place ask the following questions:
   What do you see?
   What do you hear?
   What do you smell?
   You might want to taste something here. What are you tasting, and what does it taste like?
   Touch something. What is it and what does it feel like?
   What do you feel like in your special place?
   These sensory questions are used to help the student focus on the mind activity that is going on in the imagination as the guided imagery is progressing. I often reiterate to students to remember the above outcomes as I am "side coaching" them on a guided imagery trip.
8. You might have the student bring something back with them from their trip. The item can later be discussed in class during the debriefing.
9. Students can then be asked to begin to leave their favorite place, perhaps the same way they decided to come. It is important to "side coach" the students back to the classroom, so the debriefing can begin.

This exercise can have multiple uses as most creative drama exercises do. For example, guided imagery exercises can be used as a pre-reading or writing exercise, or teaching descriptive paragraph writing. It can also teach the important learning skill of focusing. During guided imagery exercises, students practice giving their total attention to the drama leader and focus entirely on the pictures that they have created in their "mind's eye."

**Important Points to Note When Using Guided Imagery**

In guided imagery, the creative drama leader guides or "side coaches" the students into an imaginary trip, allowing the students to visualize in their "mind's eye" as the trip progresses. Wording and instruction are very important when using creative drama. Students are told that they will be going on a trip into the imagination. Students are never told to "pretend" anything when eliciting a response. They are asked "to be" or "to do" something. In other words, students might be told to prepare themselves for a trip, to relax and to listen to the voice of the teacher and as they travel they will be receiving information along the way. To tell students that they are to pretend to go on a trip loses the authenticity of the exercises. I often have students do breathing exercises before we begin a lesson. This helps them to relax, both mentally and physically.

The creative drama teacher forms the framework for the story trip, but the students are asked to supply all of the experiences and details. Guided imagery can provide motivation for a lesson or can be used as a prereading or prewriting assignment and exercise. It can set the mood for a story that the class will read by helping to create empathy for the characters in the
story as the creative drama leader (teacher) leads the students through a guided trip where they must make decisions and become involved in the same situations as the characters in the story. Thus, the student develops background for the story, experiencing a direct link to the story through visualization. This link makes the setting, character, and plot of the story much easier to understand and cultivates empathy for the characters.

Guided imagery lessons can also provide a wonderful way to develop topics for a creative writing lesson. They help students to brainstorm a topic for the writing process. For example, students may be asked to dramatize a "surprising" situation, and then to write about it.

The discussion-- or "debriefing"-- involved in drama also can serve as a stimulus for writing or reading. In one type of debriefing, students enact a scene and then report on it by using the images evoked in their five senses-- how they felt, what they saw, heard, smelled, and tasted. The students' debriefings can form the basis of a reading or writing assignment. In this guided imagery activity, the student listens, focuses, visualizes, discusses (during the debriefing), reads, and writes. It is important that the creative drama leader initiate a debriefing, or discussion session, after every creative drama lesson. This debriefing should tie the creative drama lesson into the larger curriculum of, for example, literacy. Students need to understand that all creative drama lessons have a place and purpose in what they are learning in the larger curriculum.

B. Reader's Theatre and Chamber Theatre

Reader's Theatre and Chamber Theatre are both student-focused activities in which the students use the text as the actual script with group enactment and interpretation as a way to focus on the meaning of the text. Reader's Theatre and Chamber Theatre have some similarities, but there are subtle differences. In Reader's Theatre the story or piece of literature is read from a script or book. In Chamber Theatre, the script is memorized. Students may edit the script in both activities, but the script is usually not as heavily edited in Chamber Theatre. In both mediums there is a narrator. In Reader's Theatre, the narrator does not take an active part in the drama. In fact, the narrator stays away from the immediate playing area, and each member of the cast generally reads a part. In contrast, in Chamber Theatre, the narrator is a more active participant. At times, this narrator will read the piece and the other players will mime a scene; at other times, the narrator will also play a part. While Reader's Theatre uses no costumes, Chamber Theatre often uses them.

In one of my Elementary Language Arts methodology classes a group of students elected to present Shel Silverstein's (1975) poem "The Giving Tree" as a readers' theatre piece. The classroom was set in arena stage fashion. The players chose the center of the playing area. After the reading we had a debriefing. The students discussed how children take their parents for granted. Questions were brought up as to how we can know when we are taking and giving too much. Some students thought that this poem manifested how people can ruin the environment. The comments continued to flow. This was an example of how the student enactment of one poem in readers' theatre can provide an enriching experience and create many subsequent topics for discussion and discovery for classroom learners.

Drama is an integral part of everyone's life, one that can easily be integrated into our curriculum. Through drama, students can use inventiveness and discovery to enhance learning in all areas. What is more humanistic than using drama to involve the whole person and to help people formulate an understanding of their differences and similarities?

References


Mother Tongue and Foreign Language Learning

Assist. Prof. Dr. F. Özlem Saka
Akdeniz University
Antalya, Turkey
ozlemsaka@akdeniz.edu.tr

Abstract
Learning a foreign language involves using the language with all skills. It is clear that people who have improved all the skills in their mother tongue will learn the foreign language better. Students in the English Language Teaching (ELT) Departments are expected to have improved all the language skills in both their native language and the target language. To find out if the students in the freshman class of the ELT department are competent enough in both languages, according to their self-perception, they were given a questionnaire. The questionnaire was also expected to reflect if they were aware of the fact that their habits in improving language skills in the mother tongue affected their foreign language learning. The data were analysed with SPSS and the results were discussed. According to the findings of the study, some suggestions were made to improve foreign language teaching and learning process.

Introduction
As is known everybody learns his/her native language in the environment in which the native language is used to communicate. Children acquire the native languages fluently and efficiently, moreover they acquire them ‘naturally’, without special instruction, although not with significant effort and attention to language (Brown, 2000, 21). It is certain that first language acquisition gives linguists and scientists much information about how a language should be acquired. However, language acquiring is quite different from language learning. When foreign language is considered, language learning takes place instead of language acquisition. Learning is defined as acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience, or, instruction (Brown, 2000, 7) whereas acquisition means the unconscious internalization of knowledge (Bley-Vroman, 1990, 5). Chastain (1988) indicates that children acquire their mother tongue without any instructions, repetitions and corrections and this process reflects the second language procedures. Native speakers know the rules subconsciously, grasp the meanings intuitively, communicate in social settings, use all skills and use the language creatively (Stern, 1991).

Despite the similarities between the acquisition of the first language and foreign language, they have differences as well. Second language learners are different from children learning a first language since there is already one language present in their minds (Cook, 1996, 7). It is inevitable that learners will be affected by their native language. With the help of his native language system, the learner will expect that the foreign language will have syntax, semantics, a lexicon which recognizes ‘parts of speech’, morphology which provides systematic ways of modifying the shapes of words, phonology which provides a finite set of phonemes, and syllables, feet, phonological phrases, etc (Bley-Vroman, 1990, 15). The language learner will use whatever previous experience he/she has had with the language to facilitate the foreign language learning process (Brown, 2000, 95). For that reason, all the learning related to the native language is of great importance. Lado (cited in Brown, 2000, 209) compares native and foreign languages and states that those elements that are similar to the learner’s native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will
be difficult. Stern (1991, 341) states that “The native speaker’s ‘competence’ or ‘proficiency’ or ‘knowledge of the language’ is a necessary point of reference for the second language proficiency concept used in language teaching”.

The learner has already succeeded learning his/ her native language and he/ she has developed some strategies in his/ her native language. Fried (cited in Bley- Vroman, 1990, 24) claims that the difficulty of learning a foreign languages comes from the special ‘set’ created by the first language habits. Palmer (cited in Stern, 1991, 329) accepts language learning as a habit forming and presupposes that proficiency in the use of a language can get as a result of formed habits. When language learner has to construct a grammar of a second language, they cannot tackle the problem in the same way they have in the native language. The needs of the first language learner and those of the foreign language learner are very different because they are already have a mental representation of language with the parameters set to the values of their native language (Milchell & Myles, 1998, 44). The reflection of their native language habits can be seen easily in the foreign language learning. Like the positive transfer of the items in the native language, negative transfer is also possible. For example, if a person has not developed strategies in the language skills in his/ her native language, to manage to do it in a foreign language is almost impossible.

Learning a foreign language includes teaching using all main skills in a foreign language. Tomlinson (1998, 4) thinks that language learning is a conscious process which includes all kinds of experience, memories and knowledge of the language learners. A good language learner is expected to express himself orally and written in the foreign language and to comprehend what is said in a real environment or in a written material. McKay and Tom (1999) claim that language learners increase their learning when they feel they are the part of language learning. They can express their feeling by writing and speaking. In Turkey, English is generally taught as the foreign language. Although students are supported to gain and develop all the skills in English, the result does not live up to expected standards. They are taught grammar and vocabulary, however, they do not use them accurately in most cases. It is the same even with EFL students. Although they try hard to improve their skills in English, some of them still have problems. At this point it is necessary to think about the level of language skills in their native language. If a person has developed language skills in his/ her native language, he/ she will try to do it in the same way in the target language as well. The awareness of his own native language provides the learner with care for the target language. The reason for the difficulties in improving language skills in the target language can be their incompetence in their native language. Therefore, in this study, students were asked what their perceptions and ideas were related to the skills and language components gained in their native language and the target language. To determine if they are competent enough in both languages, their answers were compared in terms of improving language skills and components in both languages.

1. Problem

Do ELT students pay attention to language skills and language components in both their native language and the target language?

1.1. Research Questions

To find an answer for the question in the problems, the answers for the questions below are tried to be answered:

1. What are the ratios of the students who pay attention to using the native and foreign languages accurately?
2. What are the ratios of the students who pay attention to the grammar rules in the native and foreign languages?
3. What are the ratios of the students who know a lot of vocabulary in the native and foreign languages?
4. What are the ratios of the students who pay attention to the grammar rules while writing in the native and foreign languages?
5. What are the ratios of the students who pay attention to punctuation while writing in the native and foreign languages?
6. What are the ratios of the students who read a lot in the native and foreign languages?
7. What is ratio of students who believe good knowledge in the field of the native language is the basis for foreign language learning?

2. Method

This is a descriptive study based on the ideas of the freshman students in ELT department of Akdeniz University. The research group is composed of 108 freshman students of the ELT department, who were still studying to improve the main skills, grammar and vocabulary in English when they were given the questionnaire. The group is composed of 41 male and 67 female students.

Table 1: The ratio of the students participating in the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1. Limitations

1. It is limited to 108 freshman students in ELT department at Akdeniz University in the 2010-2011 academic year.
2. It is limited to their perceptions about themselves. They were not given them tests that showed their levels in the skills in both languages.

3. Findings and Discussion

When the students are asked if they pay attention to using the native language and the foreign language accurately, they answer the question in the following:

Table 2: The ratio of the students who pay attention to using the languages accurately

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the table that when the native language is considered, only 77.8% of the students say they pay attention to using it accurately. On the other hand, 97.2% of the students, which is a great ratio, believe that they should pay attention to using the language accurately. This means that they do not make mistakes while using English.
When they are asked if they know the grammar of the both languages well, they answer as in the following:

**Table 3: The ratio of the students who know the grammar of both languages well**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is quite interesting that only half of the group agree that they should know the grammar of the native language well, whereas 80.6% of the group believe that knowing the grammar of the target language well is important.

Their ideas related to knowing a lot of vocabulary in both languages are shown in Table 4 as in the following:

**Table 4: The ratio of the students who know a lot of vocabulary in both languages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result is quite surprising. Three thirds of the group believe that they should know a lot of vocabulary, while only 36.1% of them say that they know a lot of vocabulary in the native language. This shows that they pay more attention to learning new words in the foreign language.

When the students are asked if they pay attention to grammar while writing in the native and foreign languages, they answer as in the following table:

**Table 5: The ratio of the students who pay attention to grammar while writing in both languages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While three thirds of the students say that they are careful about the grammar rules while writing in the native language, almost all of them agree that they should put attention to grammar while writing in the foreign language. As these students are the teacher candidates they know the place of grammar in writing in the foreign language, but some of them still seem to ignore its place in the native language.

These students are asked if they pay attention to punctuation while writing in both languages, they answer this question as in the following:
Table 6: The ratio of the students who pay attention to punctuation while writing in both languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ratio of the students who believe punctuation is very important while writing in both languages is quite high. 63.9% of the group say that they are careful about the punctuation while writing in the native language. The ratio of the students who believe they should pay attention to punctuation while writing in the foreign language is higher than those in the native language with the ratio of 85.2%.

When the students ask if they read a lot in both languages, they answer the question as in the table below:

Table 7: The ratio of the students who reads a lot in both languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When reading is taken into account, it is seen that the ratio of the group who partly agree the idea has the highest rate with 61.1% for the native language and 50.0% for the foreign language. In this category, the rate of the students who read a lot in the native language is higher than that of the foreign language. However, the ratio of the students who say they read a lot in the native language is 24.1% and in the foreign language it is 41.7%. Although the ratio for the foreign language is less than the half, it is again higher than that of the other.

When the students are checked if they believe that good knowledge in the native language is the basis for higher foreign language levels, their answers are found as follows:

Table 8: The ratio of the students who believe good knowledge in the native language is the basis for higher foreign language levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Partly Agree</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language is the basis for foreign language.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that most of the students believe that good knowledge in the native language is the basis for higher foreign language levels with the ratio of 88.9%.

**Conclusion and Suggestions**

The result of the questionnaire is quite interesting. It is clear that students believe that they should develop skills in the foreign language as they are all the students of English language teaching department. They read in English, they study English grammar, they try to write grammatically correct sentences, paragraphs, texts and they pay attention to punctuation
in English. They are aware of their responsibility for using the foreign language better. They will be teachers of English when they graduate from the university, therefore, it is necessary for them first to develop all language skills to be competent language users and later to teach the language correctly to their students. They try hard in the freshman class at university in their courses based on different skills. They also study grammar and vocabulary as the important part of the curriculum at university. On the other hand, their ideas related to the native language in terms of language skills and components are not the same according to the results of the questionnaire. They do not pay much attention to developing the language skills and components in their native language. They believe that is the language they have already acquired as the mother tongue and they do not need to improve it. Whereas they mostly agree the idea that good knowledge in the native language is the basis for good knowledge in the foreign language. The reason why they cannot improve the language skills and components to highest levels can be their insufficiency in their native language. It is certain that they communicate using their native language. However, they do not read a lot in Turkish. They do not care for their grammar mistakes while writing Turkish. They do not know the grammar rules of as much as they know English grammar. They do not pay attention to punctuation while writing in Turkish and the like. Literature related to this field shows that native language habits affect foreign language learning. The more you know the native language, the better you learn the foreign language. That’s why learning the native language is of great importance while learning a foreign language.

Some suggestions can be made to change this situation as in the following:
1. The effect of the native language should be taken into account while teaching a foreign language.
2. Students should be aware of the fact that their native language habits affect their foreign language learning.
3. Students should be supported to improve the language skills and language components not only in the foreign language but also in the native language.
4. The syllabuses of native language and foreign language courses should be reorganised in a way that supports one another.
5. Further quantitative researches should be done on the same topic containing language level tests to be applied in both languages related to language skills and language components to compare their levels.

References
The Power of Online Social Networks
For Management of Natural Disaster Crises
In Developing Countries: A Case Study of Thailand in 2010

Neunghathai Khopolklang, Associate Professor of Communication,
Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand,
neunghat@sut.ac.th

Roongkan Musakophas, Suranaree University of Technology,
Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand
roongkan@gmail.com

Weerapong Polnigongit, Associate Professor of Communication,
Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand,
weerap@sut.ac.th

Abstract
This study is based on the concept of using online social networks in managing natural disasters. It was designed to study a procedure to formulate online social networks and help flood victims in Thailand in 2010. It was found that online social networks were organized to support the government sector when that sector could not help victims. The online social networks in each sector exchanges information in order to reduce repetition of help, and help victims effectively. The result of this study can be an important lesson in managing types of disasters through online social networks in developing countries, which often face slow response times by departments in the public sector.

Keywords: Power, online social networks, management, natural disaster crises, developing countries, Thailand

Introduction
At this moment, the use of the Internet and people’s networks in social movements are gradually increasing due to the potential of the Internet for connecting people (Hara and Shachaf, 2008, p.53). The internet, is like the traditional way the mass media works, presenting news and information to people at the same time. However, the internet has some communication features different from mass media in the past. It has the ability to interact with people, so that a receiver can respond to a sender directly and immediately, and also exchange information directly with other receivers in the network (Paul, 2001, p.740).

When the technology has developed to the stage of web 2.0, the social movements of a people’s network is more obvious, due to the fact that people can take part by creating content on a website more than in the past when people only took part by reading. All internet users can now present ideas and create contents on the internet. The role of the internet user has thus been changed from being a receiver only to being both a receiver and a sender. Originally, websites only sent information, so that people could only read. Thus it was classed as web 1.0 (Cheepachornlok, 26 March 2008). There are now various ways of using the internet in stage of web 2.0, for example search engines like Google, online encyclopedias like Wikipedia, online picture sharing sites like Flickr, online video sharing like YouTube, social network websites like Facebook and Twitter, and blogs (Huang et al., 2010, p.2).

As mentioned about web 2.0, where each user can quickly and easily communicate to others, the various types of online social activities for the citizen sector have arisen apart from daily communication for entertainment or knowledge, such as the Facebook network.
blogs, and bulletin boards. Nowadays, everywhere around the world internet potentiality has been growing, especially communication through online social networks such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. These are used by social activists, playing an important role in, for example, the global warming crisis. Thus, the involvement of the citizen sector in natural disasters is helping related departments to process and manage information, connecting public and citizen sector with departments that can use information via the mentioned tools. (Lips and Gong, www, 2011)

Examples of the use of online social networks to manage natural disasters around the world, the use of bulletin boards for sending messages and online video clips of damaged areas by flood at Grand Forks, North Dakota (Paul, 2001, p.743), the use of a bulletin board to report the situation of Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan, along with Twitter to report damage and the residents’ need for help near damaged areas by the typhoon (Huang et al., 2010, p.2), and access to information about earthquake situations reported via Facebook and Twitter to make crisis maps on websites for volunteer relief workers in Chile and Haiti (Lips and Gong, www, 2011).

Thailand is a country which faced a huge flood disaster due to the influence of inter-tropical convergence zone and the south-western monsoon from October 10 to December 5, 2010. The damaged areas covered about 39 provinces of Thailand (Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, www, 2010). 8,970,653 people were severely affected with damage to the economy estimated at 332,000,000 US$ (EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, www, 2011). It caused a huge disruption to many areas, which has never occurred before, especially in the north-eastern part of Thailand.

This disaster occurred quickly, lasted a long time, and covered many areas. It was not possible for the public sector to thoroughly take care of victims, and the main media, i.e., all TV channels in Thailand, could not report difficulties everywhere. Thus, the citizen sector started to help victims via online social networks. Each network was linked to cooperate with each other and reduce repetition of help. This process of the citizen sector could support the public sector working in any areas where public officials could not thoroughly attend to the victims.

Although the online social networks, local to Thailand, are small organizational units without many tools, personnel or money power as compared to the public sector, citizen sector networks could quickly help victims, and make the public sector review and improve ways to face disasters in the future. The process of citizen sector networks should thus be studied for how to establish the network to cooperate to help flood victims. This is a new lesson that people in developing countries can learn from natural disasters, and provides a model for using online social networks to manage disasters effectively.

**Method**

As this study investigated the actions of the citizen sector through online social networks, and also studied the situation after flood disasters, the data was collected on the internet by choosing information from websites focusing on disasters and the process of providing help by two types of citizen sector networks which have different working methods and are well-known online media. The online social networks used were:

1. online social networks in the form of organizations
   1.1 1500 miles Foundation or www.1500 miles.org
   1.2 www.thaiflood.com
2. online social networks for the general public
   2.1 www.pantip.com
   2.2 ASA Ban Mor Group, Saraburi
   2.3 Thailand Group becomes livelier and better
In addition, the researcher also analyzed interview scripts from TV about the process of online social networks in order to know working procedures, problems, and ways to solve problems in cooperation with online social networks.

Results of Study

The surveyed online social networks used to manage natural disasters could be classified as follows:

1. **Online social networks in the form of organizations**

1.1 **1500 Miles Foundation or www.1500 miles.org**

1.1.1 **Form**

1500 Miles Foundation or www.1500miles.org was established due to the tsunami disaster in Thailand in 2003, which was the largest natural disaster Thailand has experienced. 1500 Miles Foundation is led by Mr. Rathaphum Yuprom, a man who rowed around Thailand about 1500 miles, in order to commemorate the 3rd anniversary of his mother’s death. He aimed to be a center for helping victims in any area that the public sector or other departments could not get to. The Foundation focused on helping victims survive, and then expanded to help victims from all types of natural disasters around Thailand.

This Foundation continued to process news and information on disasters around the world after finishing the help for victims of the 2003 tsunami because the study of how volunteers cope with each type of disaster is important for adaptation to unexpected disasters in Thailand in the future. Learning consists of keeping up with news and information (e.g., Nargis, Myanmar) and of learning ways of surveying damaged areas in order to understand information on the ground directly (such as the earthquake in Haiti).

1.1.2 **How to help flood victims**

To help victims, the 1500 miles foundation itself was called “Frontline” because the team first surveyed flooded areas, then conveyed information to other related departments. Frontline Group was thus a very important team in a disaster situation because if a team works quickly, it can effectively solve problems and mitigate any damage. Frontline Group members were volunteers, who had been trained. Some members applied to be Frontline Group volunteers through the Frontline Group’s Twitter account under the name of @1500 miles.

The foundation received some information about damaged areas from people through Twitter. To survey damaged areas, the Frontline Group started with surveying the landscape by paraplane by looking for electricity poles because electricity poles are an indication that there is a village. A village which was remote would be firstly surveyed. With the paraplane’s ability to fly at low altitude, the Frontline Group could take photos and videos and send the videos back to the office through Youtube in order to evaluate living conditions. The next stage is to return the analyzed data to the Frontline Group to analyze damage in order to determine ways to survey on land, including primary evaluations of needs before making a paper report to cooperate with the public sector.

For surveying damaged areas on land, the Frontline Group gained access by 4-wheel vehicle containing jet skis, kayaks, and disaster relief packages. 4-wheel vehicle went as far into the damaged areas as it could. Then the jet skis were used to continue surveying target areas. Information was relayed from the jet skis about approach, turning left or right due to
flood, cut roads, and where roads could not be seen, or just tree tops. After that the Frontline Group would kayak to survey damaged areas.

When they arrived at a target area, the Frontline Group found key men or volunteers in the area, and systematically shared jobs with each other in order to offer primary care to injured people prior to getting help from other departments. The Frontline Group quickly surveyed other damaged areas that could not get any help, so that they could send information to www.Thaiflood.com in order to inform them of what kind of help was needed. Thaiflood.com then coordinated with public departments and other officials.

1.2 www.thaiflood.com

1.2.1 Form

www.thaiflood.com is a website developed for helping these particular victims. Mr. Parames Minsiri, founder of Portal Web, kapok.com which is one of the most popular websites in Thailand, and a Twitter user, under @whale, evaluated the flood situation in Nakorn Ratchasima when it reached a critical level. He posted a message on twitter to inform members to report the flood situation with the tag, # thaiflood, in order to collect flood information systematically. After tweeting the messages for 1 day, www.thaiflood.com was set.

Before this huge flood, he had learnt how to manage disaster relief from citizen sector groups in other countries. He also had experience from the tsunami disaster on using websites and TV to help victims, learning that after the tsunami, TV was not of use in helping victims. The website was thus used to help victims by cooperating in conveying information. He used information from overseas and found that, in Pakistan, there was a software system for managing disaster only. This software can be used around the world. He then studied from this software producer as well as with a crisis camp group in Washington DC, which was formed to connect information on a website to help earthquake victims in Haiti.

1.2.2 How to help flood victims

www.thaiflood.com was organized after the flood disaster. Its process was firstly to manage the information about the flood. Due to good planning and the posting of the flood information through tag, #thaiflood, working on flood data collection was systematic. Although this disaster has passed, these messages could be useful for managing other disasters which will occur in the future.

Apart from the data collection of flood situations from general public, and organizations of different help in each area, thaiflood.com also made a crisis map in order to show how severe the flooding in each area was. The crisis mapping could help any organizations or people who wanted to donate things to victims, to know where the nearest donation point was. In addition, for linking to the Department of Highways in case that a road was cut, the website showed details as a map, including levels of help needed by marking pegs on the map. It could be easily understood and processed quickly.

From the starting point, when the volunteer network only used Twitter, to the point where there was more information and the flood situation was more extensive, the working of thaiflood.com also expanded. Thus, thaiflood.com employed a group of disabled people to take care of collecting relief information that was shown on the homepage of their website, to be responsible as a call center for getting flood information. The cooperation was widely expanded and this is subsequently supported by Google Thailand on crisis response, so that Google used it for disaster response efforts in other countries. When the office of the Prime Minister set the website of pmflood.go.th/flood, Google asked for their cooperation in sharing the work with thaiflood.com, so that the website of the office of the Prime Minister would be
a center of information from public sector, and thaiflood.com was a center of information from the citizen sector. Both websites collected information and sent to each other for the purpose of helping in damaged areas later. Even though thaiflood.com came from the citizen sector, networks of information for victim relief need to cooperate with the public sector.

2. Online social networks for the general public

2.1 www.pantip.com

2.1.1 Form

www.pantip.com is the website of a social network serviced on web board (bulletin board), which is famous and popular, and also influences its users in terms of thinking, vision and behavior. There are conversation rooms covering all matters: computers, technology, electronics, science, politics, knowledge, sports, entertainment, etc. www.pantip.com was established by Mr. Wanchat Padungrat. It is designed as an online magazine. This name was taken from a shopping plaza, which is the center of the most computer commerce in Thailand, and registered as a juristic person in 2003. www.pantip.com has played an important role in checking stories from general public about both personal and performance events, and in cooperating to help society when disasters occur by setting up a blog, posting pictures, and reporting situations through blogs. The mass media in Thailand, both TV and newspapers, used to take information from blogs posted on pantip.com for broadcast, but the website started to focus more on a social agenda many years ago.

2.1.2 How to help flood victims

As a social network website, www.pantip.com used its web board capabilities for conversation on blogs to report both pictures and content on local situations from victims and volunteers, asking for help to get to victims, and exchanging information from around damaged areas. This channel was able to present pictures and information of victims. The help was expanded to collect volunteers to help victims directly. However, www.pantip.com did not have a leader to process the help given to victims by volunteers, nor was there an obvious role for anyone to organize duties in a group. There will be new blogs for every situation, so that activity depends on where the users who set up the blog are.

2.2 ASA Ban Mor Group, Saraburi

2.2.1 Form

ASA Ban Mor Group, Saraburi consists of 5-6 private individuals who often use Twitter to exchange information about general matters. When there was a flood, the group posted messages to identify procedures that were very slow. Ultimately, the group sent messages via Twitter about how the group could help flood victims at the moment.

2.2.2 How to help flood victims

ASA Ban Mor Group, Saraburi is a group controlling areas in only Ban Mor, Saraburi where there was a flood. ASA Ban Mor Group was a leader in information search by cooperating in a way that TV could not, because Ban Mor district has a population of about 8,000 persons, in 3,000 homes. In Ban Mor district, there were flooded and non-flooded areas, including both high and low levels of water. TV could not be accessed in every area. Thus, the report did not cover every area. ASA Ban Mor Group surveyed the areas that were not covered, and then conveyed information through Twitter. But the help did not match the victims’ needs. Some areas did not want medicines, but medicines were sent. Some areas did
not need rice, but rice was delivered. ASA Ban Mor Group thus conveyed information to find appropriate donations through Twitter, and to get things by themselves, so that there were volunteers from Twitter to help them. For each incidence of help, they had boats, soldiers, volunteers, and Twitter account holder to send useful information and pictures through twitter of thaiflood.com with the tag, #thaiflood.

2.3 Thailand Group becomes livelier and better

2.3.1 Form

“Thailand Group becomes livelier and better” or “ASA Dusit Thailand becomes livelier and better” started from grouping 5 persons on Facebook under the name of “Thailand Group becomes livelier and better”. This group aimed to contribute refreshing towels and water to soldiers who were securing the expressways during the political turmoil in 2010. Then the name was changed to “ASA Dusit Thailand becomes more lively and better” in order to relate with a name used to find help for flood victims using Twitter via tag #ArsaDusit. After that, this group created a website in order to collect pictures about the help for flood victims and this is now a channel used to help society in the future through www.arsadusit.com.

2.3.2 How to help flood victims

“Thailand Group becomes livelier and better” started to help victims by announcing on its Facebook page a request for contributions of money and things at tents at the Dusit Thani Hotel. Then they started to ask for donations via Twitter by inserting tag #ArsaDusit, so that it could help the efforts of thaiflood.com in giving information for cooperating with contributors.

In the tents for donations, some members of the group would take things and money from contribution to pack disaster relief packages. The main reason that this group acted by themselves separately from the media was that there were areas, not broadcasted on TV, that were damaged, where victims were waiting for help, so that they could not wait for only main media. Group members thus initiated this activity, and contributed to victims directly in order to give necessary things to victims immediately. For the contribution of disaster relief packages, the group announced on Twitter the number of items needed and distributed each day, who had a car, who would go to the damaged area, so that the group could go to every province which had damage and needed help from departments.

Conclusion

In the past, the community sector in Thailand helped victims by contributions of money or things only. For this disaster, the citizen sector helped victims in a different role by grouping as networks to clearly distribute tasks. Although citizen sector networks which helped flood victims came from different origins and different types of helping activities, all networks came to support the public sector, which cannot thoroughly help victims. Each network cooperated with each other in order to ensure that this help was received by victims, who indeed need this help.

This disaster reflected that the public sector alone cannot help victims successfully, but has to integrate with other sectors, particularly the citizen sector that has close contact with victims, understands their needs, and clearly recognizes the situation. The link between public and citizen sectors is thus important and should be the way to cooperate systematically in order to deal with any other disaster which will occur in the future.
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Integrated Learning for an Integrated World: Facing the Challenges of Language Education

Serafina Filice,
Research Associate of English, Università della Calabria, Italy
sara.filice@unical.it

Abstract
A rise in mobility, the globalization phenomenon, the ICT revolution, and the move towards internationalization of education have had a definite impact on education in general and, on language teaching, in particular. The fact that today’s societies are becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent has influenced educational curricula at all levels of instruction. Furthermore, the fact that more attention is being paid to global concerns, such as pollution, nuclear proliferation, world health, conservation of resources and species, global cooperation in peace keeping, international communications networks (cfr. Rivers, 1993: 155) places greater demands on the language classroom. Consequently, how can language teachers connect language teaching to the real competitive world our future graduates will have to face? “An efficient and practical way for language learners to interconnect with global needs is to interconnect to other fields of study. This has led language teaching practitioners to inevitably incorporate content into language teaching practice allowing for interdisciplinary pedagogies to flourish” (Filice, in “Activating CBI within ESP University Contexts”, forthcoming). The purpose of this essay is to understand the current landscape within which language education is taking place and, more importantly, within these global changes the need for teachers to reflect on new orientations that will “better equip the learner with knowledge and skills suitable for the global age” (Mehisto et al, 2008: 11).

Keywords: globalization, connectivity, integration, interdisciplinary pedagogy, CLIL (Content and language integrated learning).

Introduction
Significant changes have occurred over the past decade in socio-economic and educational contexts worldwide. Factors such as a rise in mobility, technological advances, the globalization phenomenon, and the move towards internationalization of education have had a definite impact on education in general and, on language teaching, in particular.

The current globalized and multilingual world environment requires that university graduates be communicatively competent in a foreign language in order to succeed in their professional field (cfr. Atamanova and Bogomaz 2011: 102). If globalization is intended as “the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations” (Rothenberg, 2003: 2), then it is inevitable that issues of language and culture become of paramount importance especially in the field of education. Furthermore, such intensified interaction and integration implies that in order for individuals to relate to one another, they must be knowledgeable individuals, in other words, they should be able to communicate content in the language of the other within diversified contexts. The objective is to create informed citizens able to discuss, “debate, legislate and appropriate intelligently” (Stavrianeas & Stewart, 2010: 35) with regard to subject specific matters such as global warming, Internet economy, or stem cell research.

According to experts, the globalization phenomenon has had a growing impact that is equally promising and problematic in the area of language use and policy (Fishman 2000, Nettle and Romaine 2000, Crystal 2003, as reported in Lehner, 2011: 80). The forces of
globalization continue to influence evolutions in the economic and political spheres leading to an impact at the local level (cfr Lehner, 2011: 80). This alters ways in which people all over the globe relate to one another within various circles and levels of interaction (cfr Lehner, 2011: 80), consequently affecting the economy at the highest levels as well as people's everyday lives.

The fact that today’s societies are becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent has influenced educational curricula at all levels of instruction. Furthermore, the fact that more attention is being paid to global concerns, such as pollution, nuclear proliferation, world health, conservation of resources and species, global cooperation in peace keeping, international communications networks (cfr. Rivers, 1993: 155), places greater demands on the language classroom.

**Global changes bring about glocal challenges**

Information technologies have transformed our lives in every field thereby facilitating exchange of information and knowledge. This, in turn, inevitably drives the integration of world economies which engenders an increase in mobility, both physical and virtual, as well as an expected move towards internationalization of education worldwide. Such a scenario is no longer monolithic in nature but it gives rise to plurilingual and pluricultural communities—again physically and virtually. With intensified globalization, multinational work environments and increasingly diverse and multicultural university environments there will be further opportunities for contact between people from many cultures and professional backgrounds. Will our graduates be ready to face this new world landscape?

Communications and information access is accelerating and multiplying at an astonishing rate through interactive technology. Virtual reality permits our students to enjoy vicarious experiences of other languages and cultures such as we have never known in the past. They have instant access to data and information that once took weeks to discover. As teachers therefore we cannot operate as if the world of our students was not changing.

Our focus of attention is rapidly expanding and equally contracting. At a macro level we are wrapped up in global problems and international negotiations which require a wide knowledge of other fields like geography, history, economics and, of course, languages in which we can communicate. Simultaneously, we are caught up in relationships and interactions with micro units within our school and community, whose many members may not feel at home with our language and culture. In both situations there is a need to be able to communicate, negotiate, and mediate in languages other than our own. This calls upon language teachers to go over and beyond language teaching per se and, in many cases, experiment with language across the curriculum programs.

As we have said, these global changes have posed challenges for educators in general and especially for language teachers, whose major aim is to “better equip students with knowledge and skills suitable for the global age” (Mehisto et al. 2008: 10). How can we meet these challenges within the reality of a mixed global village? Given the changing international landscape this means questioning what to teach and how to teach it. Do students see a real purpose in learning a language? How can we make language learning more meaningful? How can language teachers connect language teaching to the real competitive world our future graduates will have to face?

**Buzz word: Connectivity**

At this point, we need to realize that global changes are characterized by various forms of integration all of which have a common denominator which is conveyed by a key word:
connectivity. Mehisto et al. (2008) delineate the following three forms of connections that teachers need to maintain in order to meet global challenges:

- **a) Connect learning to learners’ lives:** by exploring the student’s knowledge and experience base and interests, and by building the capacity for self-analysis;
- **b) Connect classrooms to the local community:** by experiencing the power of working with others and by exploring the students’ own impact on the community and the community’s impact on them;
- **c) Connect classrooms to the world:** by developing an understanding of how acting locally is linked to global processes and how global processes are linked to the local community and by experiencing the benefits of international perspectives.

The classroom is a microcosm of the community we live in, thus language teachers should create an enriching learning environment that generates a sense of relevance for the learner. When learners realize that what they learn can be applied to their personal lives, to the community they live in and to the real world, they will be more interested and more motivated. In other words, if a powerful synergy develops between learning and their personal lives, their community and the world at large, learning becomes more meaningful.

As has been pointed out, with the new technology mindset, students operate on Internet time, they spent their lives in a real-time global media space (eg. Facebook, Youtube, etc.), that is, they are driven by the *here and now*, and can easily connect with oneself, the past and the future. Knowledge of global issues is important to every citizen because, as Herman Melville asserts, “Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads”. Therefore, we need to connect language studies to as many of these threads as possible.

An efficient and practical way for language learners to interconnect with global needs is to interconnect to other fields of study. This has led language teaching practitioners to inevitably incorporate content into language teaching practice allowing for interdisciplinary pedagogies to flourish (Filice, in “Activating CBI within ESP University Contexts”, forthcoming).

Linking language to other fields of study allows students to interconnect to world issues and to global needs. Seeing as major global issues are all interconnected, there is no reason why they should not be studied that way (see Appendix A and B)! Optimistically speaking, an interconnected world offers endless opportunities for facilitating learning.

However, to become a connected learner, we have to make changes in methodology. Can language teachers afford to confine their concerns to the teaching of grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills, thus concentrating solely on improving students’ language proficiency? Language lessons organized around structures or functions may not be enough. Teaching languages is no longer a linear process, in other words it is not traditionally oriented. Languages cannot be taught using teacher-centered approaches but rather the aim is to shift the focus on the learner, who becomes an active participant in the lesson. Nor can languages be confined to classroom walls or taught in isolation as separate entities away from other disciplines. Upon reflection, in the real world even the four language skills are not used in isolation but always in an integrated mode. We need to emphasize integration. The purpose of language education has thus changed. We are not teaching language for language’s sake but meaningful, relevant learning has to occur because the mindset of the Cyber Generation is focused on immediacy, i.e. *learn as you use and use as you learn*, and no longer centered on a *learn now, use later* mentality.
CLIL: A European response for language education

Over the past decades, the field of language teaching has witnessed a proliferation of various models for the integration of content and language at all levels of education (see for example, CBI, immersion programs, language across the curriculum, etc.).

As a response to these challenges, Europe promotes the use of an approach that connects language and content, known as CLIL. In fact, according to Marsh, integrating language with non-language content “has emerged as a pragmatic solution to a European need” (2003). Integrating language to content links students and learning to the new world configuration. In response to the rapidly changing scenario, CLIL, an interdisciplinary form of pedagogy, seems to be an effective response to a global integrated world.

CLIL, an umbrella term that covers many educational approaches (eg. bilingual education, multilingual education, etc.), is flexible and multifaceted in nature. The essence of CLIL is integration which is dual-focused in nature: a) language learning is included in content classes and b) content from subjects is used in language-learning classes. According to Mehisto et al.,

CLIL supports the holistic development of learners. Its ultimate goal is to guide students towards becoming capable and motivated, bilingual or multilingual independent learners who:
- gain needed content and language knowledge and skills;
- actively seek and successfully make use of opportunities for communication with other speakers of the CLIL language (2008: 30).

To acquire new information it needs to be connected to existing knowledge. They further underline that in CLIL, the “primary focus is on substance (content) as opposed to form” and that

as meaning-making is both a personal and a social process (community), new knowledge and skills develop through personal as well as co-operative reflection/analysis (cognition) and through a communicative process (communication) (2008: 30).

Second language education is conceived as cross-curricular encompassing all areas of study. Language learning can be linked to any subject topic in the curriculum—science, history, geography, mathematics, even music and art can help bridge the gap between EFL and other disciplines. In this way, students are engaged in gaining academic knowledge and develop skills that can enhance achievement in all areas of the curriculum. Interestingly, along these lines, Wilga Rivers (1976: 96), has written, "As language teachers we are the most fortunate of teachers—all subjects are ours. Whatever [the students] want to communicate about, whatever they want to read about, is our subject matter".

Integrated learning requires students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world tasks, events, learning opportunities, or contexts, leading to a specific purpose, product, or outcome. The subject content draws links between aspects of students’ lives and their learning. Integrated learning facilitates collaboration and teamwork which also helps build student/teacher and student/student relationships. Students are more likely to take charge of their own learning if they are involved in the teaching/learning process through decision-making activities. Students work towards developing the capability for communication, for citizenship, for personal development, for work, and for learning. As a result, we educate students in a holistic way by helping them become better citizens at the same time that they become more proficient in a new language. Even the communicative approach emphasizes that languages are best learned by using them to communicate meaning, rather than by focusing on explicit learning of grammar and vocabulary. CLIL is one way of achieving a focus on meaning. Along these lines, Lake says that (1994: 6), “learning is believed to occur
faster and more thoroughly when it is presented in meaningful contexts, with an experiential component” and this includes interdisciplinary studies because when students see connections we can build a more coherent curriculum. “Interdisciplinary teaching helps learners to apply, integrate and transfer knowledge, and fosters critical thinking” (Darn: 2006). Learning is more effective when students use language skills to explore, write and speak about what they are learning.

In this vein, Crandall & Kaufman state that

Successful integration of language and content will raise students’ awareness of both the language as an object of study and its role as a vehicle in the acquisition of disciplinary concepts and text comprehension within the disciplines” (2002: 5).

According to Coyle, in order for a CLIL lesson to be successful it has to combine elements of the following four principles:

a) content (a progression in knowledge, skills and understanding related to specific elements of a defined curriculum),
b) communication (using language to learn while learning to use language),
c) cognition (developing thinking skills which link concept formation both abstract and concrete, understanding and language) and
d) culture (exposure to alternative perspectives and shared understandings, which deepen awareness of otherness and self).

Coyle’s 4Cs teaching framework entails a re-conceptualisation of language moving from language learning per se towards an integrated model which actively involves the learner in using and developing language of learning, for learning and through learning. Using a foreign language to acquire subject content not only improves the communicative abilities [what Cummins (1981) has termed BICS - Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills] but also favours academic abilities [what Cummins (1981) has called CALP - Cognitive Academic Learning Proficiency]. In fact, learners acquire the capacity to learn through a second language and they simultaneously strengthen the cognitive abilities implicit in communicative codes of the mother tongue and the vehicular language.

A note on the Italian CLIL scenario: open issues

Although CLIL is proliferating all over Europe, the Italian scenario presents a situation that is full of loopholes. Despite the fact that the Ministry has foreseen the teaching of one subject in a second language in the last year of high-school, there are several thought-provoking issues still open for reflection that await solutions, such as the following:

• The CLIL impact requires schools to rethink pedagogy—no longer traditionally oriented teacher-centered pedagogies.
• Educational changes also imply changes in classroom dynamics.
• Teachers involved need to be familiar with modern organizational models of methodology (e.g. cooperative learning, project work, TBL).
• Pragmatic organizational problems like timetabling need to be resolved.
• Who teaches what? Who teaches the content? Who teaches the language?
• What competence level in the target language should the teacher(s) involved have acquired?
• Likewise, what language competence should the learners involved have?
• Teacher training courses in CLIL methodologies and target language are indispensable.
• Which content subject(s) will be involved? How does one choose? Why geography and not math? Why biology and not history?
• There is a lack of appropriate CLIL materials/resources for each level.
• A touchy issue is evaluation…does one assess content or language or both?
• Will it be a joint assessment...do both (language and content) teachers evaluate the student together or separately?
• How? Using what criteria? What types of tests...written, oral?
• What role does target language error-correction play?
• Is code-switching an acceptable feature?
• Is student support available? Learning another subject in a foreign language can be psychologically overwhelming for some students.

As we can see, a considerable number of organisational problems remain: the education of language teachers should be more intensified, the development of CLIL curricula needs to be set up and more research is needed regarding the influence of environmental factors. These and other issues need to be carefully resolved if CLIL pedagogies are to be implemented with successful results at every level of education within the Italian context. However, it is hoped that more CLIL experiences will offer greater insights in language learning by means of subject matter. Despite the above considerations and on-going discussions on various matters regarding the CLIL paradigm, the teaching of languages by means of teaching subject matter seems to be the only way forward for language learning as well as the answer to the demand for a new multilingual European citizen.

**Conclusion**

Language learning is a lifelong process and CLIL equips students not for exams, but for life. In other words, instead of fictional content, often an integral part of foreign language teaching programs, real content from the subject class is used, i.e. contents relating to the real world. This encourages learners genuinely to deal with the subject matter cognitively, consciously and emotionally.

By introducing curricular topics, which are a rich source of content, into the EFL class we can transcend the often narrow limits of language teaching and more effectively link language activities to “real life.” As Cazden (1977:42) reminds us, “We must always remember that language is learned, not because we want to talk or read or write about language, but because we want to talk and read and write about the world.” For example, environmental science issues such as deforestation and endangered animals are not only real, but they are of considerable interest and relevance to students and an excellent means of linking the classroom to the world.

Perhaps the greatest advantage derived from a CLIL approach is the aspect of multi-perspectivity. Studying content through different perspectives by diversifying methods and classroom tasks can have beneficial results because students look at content from a different and broader perspective when taught in a second or third language (cfr. Wolff, 2003). Besides, the ability to see connections between fields, ideas and concepts is in itself a core skill.

Furthermore, the integration of language and content throughout language levels has the potential to address the challenge of gaps within basic language study and advanced content studies. An approach that combines language and content “adds depth and breadth to the language curriculum in the [Science] disciplines” (Filice, 2009: 200) and from a wider perspective it can be a “holistic approach to foreign language education” (Stryker and Leaver, 1997: 3). Both language and content can be harmoniously integrated for the benefit of the students' linguistic and content enrichment. Additionally, this methodological framework meets the academic, cognitive and even personal interests and demands of both teachers and learners alike.

CLIL, being transversal in nature, involves all discipline areas leading to a reflection also on languages technically defined as sectorial. Languages are not only something to learn but
with which to learn, thus creating interlinguistic and interdisciplinary paths that have common objectives, contents and methodologies (cfr. Dodman 2004 in Curci: 2008). As language educators today we have a responsibility to contribute to our students’ awareness of interdisciplinary issues and to foster students’ ability to make independent, responsible, and informed choices so they can function successfully in an integrated world. In addition, CLIL may be considered a form of educational delivery designed to increase European cohesion and competitiveness.

In conclusion, the future potential of CLIL is to ‘connect’ and be ‘connected’; in so doing, we provide an added value, i.e. learners develop language skills while becoming more knowledgeable citizens of the world. We look forward to responsible global citizens and life-long learners who connect learning with life experiences to make informed choices and embrace the lifelong journey of interacting socially, politically and economically in efforts to meet local and global challenges. The CLIL approach, if carefully structured, can be a genuine stimulating challenge in an ever-increasingly global reality of integrated knowledge.

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Appendix A: sample of interconnected global issues
(online source: wrsc.org)
Appendix B: sample of interdisciplinary curriculum
(source: Mehisto et al. p119)
The Role of Social Media in Developing Technical Writing

Irina Orlova,
Lecturer, Language Department,
Latvia University of Agriculture, Jelgava, Latvia,
irolva@inbox.lv

Abstract

Rapid development of Information and communication technologies (ICT) introduced new dimensions into language teaching by making materials selection faster and easier, the range of materials immensely varied, and the content information more global. This helps learners expand their language awareness and develop essential skills practically any time and place, as the technology-based activities make them constantly exposed to the global knowledge. Going beyond classroom-only approach to language teaching and learning develops students’ critical thinking skill and stimulates self-reflexivity.

Present study seeks to analyse the role of using social media in teaching technical writing to students of engineering sciences. To do so, the author gives an overview of social media resources and their application in ESP classroom, the impact of the web-based activities on the students’ motivation, field-specific vocabulary acquisition and technical writing skills development, as well as more interdisciplinary approach to foreign language acquisition.

Keywords: ESP (English for Specific Purposes); technical writing; technical communication; critical thinking; self-reflexive learning; writing skills development.

Introduction

The role and functions of ICT (information and communication technology) in application to foreign language learning has been discussed for a few decades now. ICT is a continuously developing field and the intensity of this process calls for regular update and reconsideration of the use of technology in a language classroom. Since a few decades ago, foreign language teachers exploited audiovisual resources – audiotapes and VHS, later CD and DVD - to enhance the language acquisition by exposing learners to what is nowadays called ‘global knowledge’. Recent developments made multimedia resources far more diverse and easier available and gave birth to a group of web-based resources known as social media.

Technical writing and knowledge construction

The focus of the present study is the application of social media as one of the tools offered by ICT in the process of teaching and learning Technical writing. It would be reasonable to begin with defining the notion of ‘technical writing’ as a part of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) university course. The course suggests the learners to acquire the skill of ‘technical communication’ (Schneider, 2005; Miller, 1979) which is use of social, professional and technical contexts to communicate their own knowledge and practices.

Knowledge is not found ready-made in nature. Instead, knowledge is constructed in the interplay between nature and the symbol systems we use to structure and interpret it” (Winsor, 1990, p.58).

At this point, technical writing involves the aspect of ‘construction’, which is processing and analysis of the information and facts available to produce a message. To do so, the learners need to develop such competences as critical thinking and self-reflexivity. The former would enable them to select and analyse the relevance of information while producing their communicative ‘initiative’, the latter – reflect upon the process and the result, i.e. the
message efficiency. Below, there is a list of key elements of technical communication the learners should consider when creating a written message (Miller, 1979. Sun, 2006).

- Formats and mechanics
- Clarity and brevity
- Precision in the use of field-specific terminology
- Technical-technological culture awareness
- Interaction between the contexts: technical, social, cognitive, etc.

Awareness of these ‘milestones’ of written technical communication brings to the foreground the issue of critical thinking and self-reflexivity, as at this point the acquisition of technical writing skills becomes especially subjective: user-oriented as well as target situation-centred. In simple terms, it is the situation when the textbook-based knowledge gives way to individual approach to writing rooted in ‘real-life’ settings. Luckily, there is social media that provides abundant information on field-specific issues and an enormous variety of settings, choice of approach and immediate feedback (from other users).

**Social media in ESP classroom**

It is time now to define the term ‘social media’ in the context of this research. Thus, the author’s perception of the term is as follows:

A form of electronic communication that integrates technology, social interaction, construction and of personal knowledge and practices (cumulative definition by the author).

The key features that social media offers as a tool for language acquisition allow to develop not only the learners’ linguistic and cognitive skills discussed above, but increase motivation, enhance independent learning and time-management, and expose them to an interdisciplinary perception of language acquisition (global knowledge). Thus, the features include (Mayfield, 2008):

- Participation – suggests the user’s activity: contribution and prospective feedback;
- Openness – social media normally provides free user access;
- Conversation – ‘real-life’ multidirectional information exchange;
- Community – the learners are bound by common interests which is motivating;
- Connectedness – the web provides an unlimited access to related links.

To resume the section, below there is an illustration of how the social media resources can be exploited in a language classroom as well as learning out-of-class. Depending on the type of media, different skills and sub-skills are being trained.

From the table, one can see that the writing activities provided by the social media resources vary greatly in terms of background language knowledge requirements and the skills involved. Among the bonuses the use of social media brings is that the activities are reality-based, interactive (instant feedback), can be practiced any time out of classroom, they are not level-bound (i.e. the learners can adjust their knowledge to each communicative situation), reflect the learners’ individual interests, are semi-formal by nature and serve as an additional tool for formal in-class language learning.
Figure 1. Social Media resources and their provided activities (source: author)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Activities provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social networking</td>
<td>- Facebook</td>
<td>Commenting; discussions (including interest groups – Facebook places); chat; news feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Linkedin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- MySpace</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Quepasa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration building</td>
<td>- Wikispaces</td>
<td>Information exchange; discussion; commenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Academia.edu</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Content sharing</td>
<td>- Youtube</td>
<td>Commenting; voting; discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Flickr; Picasa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- scribd</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- SlideShare</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Micro)blogging</td>
<td>- Twitter</td>
<td>Blogging or microblogging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- LiveJournal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- MyBlogSpot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookmarking/tagging</td>
<td>- Google Reader</td>
<td>Information search; tagging; commenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and opinions</td>
<td>- Wiki</td>
<td>Commenting; voting; information upload</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Digg; Mixx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk and discussion</td>
<td>- Skype;</td>
<td>Chat; instant messaging; voice chat; content sharing</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- ICQ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Yahoo Messenger;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Hotmail Msng</td>
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</table>

**Conclusion**

Technical writing in ESP classroom settings is different from that in reality-based ones, where the former takes rather the form of technical communication, which has a primary goal of conveying the author-constructed knowledge or practice. In order to acquire technical writing skills, the learners have to be aware of the major technical writing rules and mechanisms, as well as be exposed to ‘real-life’ global knowledge to enable them construct their own. One of the most recent, varied and easy-to-use tools is the social media. The use of social media in developing technical writing skills would allow more interdisciplinary and learner-centred approach to the development of written communication skills, as well as enhance the learners’ critical thinking and self-reflexivity.

**References**


Abstract
This paper considers the issue of health care as a practice taken into great consideration in European world. As, in the past, it has been promoted in by Andalusian Caliph himself, now it has been implemented by European Union as an educational practice for integration of muslim people. A research conducted by the Department of Public Medicine of the University of Studies of Bari “Aldo Moro” shows it very well.

Keywords: health care, health promotion, Islamic people, care needs, European Union.

Introduction
Medical knowledge, in its triple dimension of research, teaching and clinical practice, has always been taken into great consideration in Islamic world. In this sense, it was greatly promoted by the Umayyad Caliph of Córdoba, during the golden age of the Caliphate of al-Andalus (X century).

The strategic ability of the Caliph, in fact, was able to mediate the religious needs of Islamic culture with the need to implement the sciences in order to promote the acceptance of leadership of its domination in the Islamic world at the time. His choice to encourage a medical school within his court, that was able to collect the best of Islamic and Jewish thought of all times, meets this criterion need.

In this way, the western edge of Europe, represented by the Iberian peninsula became an outstanding forge of the fruitful exchange between the Islamic and Jewish culture, thanks to the contribution of which scientific and medical knowledge knew a moment of extraordinary glory.

This paper shows some of the cultural and scientific implications of such a political choice of the Andalusian caliphate.

Muslim-Jewish culture of the caliphate of al-Andalus
Philosophical and scientific culture in al-Andalus is based on the immense work of translation of Greek knowledge dating back two centuries before in the 'Abbasid Caliphate. Indeed, there was little of a philosophical work in Spain before the X century, owing to the fact that in the Iberian peninsula the Maliki Islamic law school, one of four legal rites of Sunni Islam, which was originated in Medina and imported in the late VIII century by the disciples of Malik ibn Anas Andalusian (d. 795). They imposed orthodoxy and collected many textbooks used in school and hostile not only to any rational interpretation, but also to all types of <<speculation (nazar)>> (D'Ancona, 2005, pp. 672-677).

The first mention to secular sciences occurs through a learned judge who was native of Almeria: the Qadi Sa'id (d. 1070). He carried out his office in Toledo and wrote a bio-bibliographical work called Categories of Nations (Tabaqat al-umam).

After the Umayyad power was settled in Andalusia, the Country knew the rising of a number of scholars who cultivated philosophy with devotion and
distinguished themselves in several branches of this science. Before then, this ancient country did not know anything about science and its inhabitants did not know anyone who had become famous for his love for knowledge [...] Thus Andalusia remained unfamiliar to science until it was conquered by the Muslims during the month of Ramadan 92 H. But even after that date, the Country remained indifferent to all sciences except those of Arabic Language and Law, until the day when the Umayyad took power definitely, after a long period of disorder. Then the highest minds began to study hard and turned their attention to the quest for truth [...]. At the end of the first half of the fourth century, the caliph al-Hakam al-Mustansir bi-llah ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir li-Din Allah began to cultivate sciences and to take learned men under his patronage. He brought the capital works on the most important and rare antique and modern science from Baghdad, Egypt and other lands of the East. At the end of the Reign of his father and later during his Reign he collected a number of books almost equal to that collected by the princes' Abbasids in a much longer period [...]. Then everyone devoted themselves to reading books and studying the doctrines of the Ancients (al-Andalusi, 1935, pp. 120-125).

The emergence of secular sciences would not have been possible without the establishment of the Caliphate at the time of 'Abd al Rahman III and his son al-Hakam (929 - 1031), who considered himself as a great scholar. The Caliphs pursued a cultural policy due to their political ambition to compete with the 'Abbasid Caliphate, and they obtained books in large quantities from the East in order to build a library in Cordova. According to some historians, under the reign of al-Hakam it contained four hundred thousand volumes. Because of the purges ordered by religious reactions, such as under the reign of <<prime minister>> al-Mansur ibn Abi 'Amir (after 981 A.D.), the spread of many works of the immense library of the Caliph through copying and dispersal, will make available a collection of texts comparable to that of the Eastern 'Abbasid Caliphate.

Often knowledge is transmitted even through subsidiaries whose point of origin is a trip to the East. Thus Ibn al-Kattan (d. 1029 A. D.), who taught philosophical sciences to Ibn Hazm, was a scholar of Ibn 'Abdun and 'Umar ibn Yunus al-Harran. They had been students, respectively, of Abu Sulayman al-Sigistani and Tabit ibn Sinan, the grandson of Tabit ibn Qurra (Dunlop, 1955, pp. 100-111).

The establishment of secular sciences was not new without dialectical moments with the religious authorities: Abd al-Rahman III found had to mitigate the severity of the doctors in order to create a favorable climate for his studies: the first philosophers of al-Andalus rose thanks to this policy. People Sa'id refers to in his work were mathematics, astronomers and logicians. Among them physicians were noteworthy, because they practiced an art, both academic and practical, which was held in great regard.

The personal physician of the caliph, for example, was a great scholar who could cultivate his passion for science owing to the fact that the medicine, along with other philosophical and scientific disciplines, such as metaphysics, were unlikely to be blamed for a <<heresy>> by the religious authorities.

**Medical knowledge in Medieval Islam: From Koran to Avicenna**

Among the various forms of knowledge promoted by the Caliphate of al-Andalus there was medicine, held in high esteem by Islamic religious tradition since its implementation is recommended by the most ancient sources of Islamic Law.

The traditional medical science of the Medieval Arab world was based on the successful combination of Koranic dictates and Galenic writings. The Koran, an earthly copy of the
heavenly law, given to Prophet Muhammad by Allah through the Archangel Gabriel, teaches the doctor all the rules of hygiene and dietary inspired by supreme need of ritual purification: bathing, washing, fasting and the prohibition of wine and pork. In addition, the Koran contains the golden rule of moderation and temperance, the medical theory and practice is based on.  

"What is medicine? Essentially, temperance, because greed is the cause of many evils>>, "Do not bath when the stomach is full; do not have relations with your wife if you are drunk; do not sleep naked in the night; do not go to the table when you are angry>>, "Blessed God did not give the man a disease without cure and at the same time without the remedy: so treat yourselves>> (Sterpellone, el-Sheikh, 1955, pp. 15-18).

That kind of medicine was mainly practiced in rural communities, while in Baghdad and in other major urban centers it came in touch with the medicine of the Greeks systematized by Galen and sent to the Arab World in a first time by the translations of Byzantine and Syrian doctors, and finally by linguists and grammarians, such as Yuhanna ibn Masawayk (777-857), known as the Damascus doctor Mesue the Elder or John Damascene, and Hunain ibn Ishaq (808-873), known as the "translator" (al-turguman).

On the contrary, in many city hospitals risen everywhere (in Baghdad alone there were about sixty in 1160 A.D.), a particular kind doctor who was far from illiterate; very learned indeed, grew in importance. That kind of doctor identified himself in medical textbooks he read or wrote. "I am this book and through this book you can get your aim [healing], so there's no need for me," wrote the Emir of al-Mansur Buhara the medical director of Baghdad hospital Rhazes (864-925 A. D.), considered the medieval doctor, "together with Avicenna, the most influential in both East and West" (Hossein Nasr 1977: 161).

Avicenna (Ibn Sina) was born in 980 and died in 1037, was the Islamic scholar who recapitulated the Hippocratic-Galenic medicine, by enriching it of substantial personal contributions and by making it the "official medicine at the service both of educational institutions (universities) and of treatment institutions (hospitals)” (Sanagustin, 1994, pp. 399).

His fee, consisting of over a million words, had been printed in more than a hundred editions, and for centuries it was the medical text for excellence. The brief compendium of medical knowledge he created for the students, the Poem of Medicine, was learned and memorized by the students of all the medical schools in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Beyond its scientific merits, Avicenna was the scholar who promoted the so-called 'Eastern humanism' in which the anthropology of medicine, which was based on the global man as center of care.

The medicine as practiced by Avicenna was both a psychological art and a somatological one, which gave great emphasis on the protection of physical and mental health, since health was seen by the doctor as a continuous process of self-education, having the purpose of obtaining a good life (Sterpellone, Salem el-Sheikh, 1995, p. 100).

This idea was very well expressed by Avicenna as a teacher, who discouraged his students from the obstinacy in therapy; on the contrary, he suggested doctors should focus on reducing the discomfort of patients, in the case in which medical remedies prove ineffective. Pointing to the sick, the greatest islamic physician said: “Does not scare them, gentlemen. Often we can not save them, sometimes our care kills them. At least we try not to starve them” (Cosmacini, 2005, pp. 152-153).

**Physicians Sephardic translators, teachers and scholars at the intersection of Jewish and Arab culture.**

The Court of the Umayyad Caliph of Cordoba hosted the wise men among whom the
Jewish distinguished themselves.
At the court of Cordoba [...] they reached the highest offices of state, favored by their language skills and their ability of doctors (Roth, 1980, pp. 853-854).

The training of Jews doctors nourished by Torah. That's why medicine, like Arabs believed, focused both on ritual purity, which was able to preserve the health of body and soul, and on knowledge of Avicenna, whose thought was mainly contained in the Canon of Medicine and the Poem of Medicine.

Jewish medicine had, therefore, very strong cultural affinities with the Islamic one. Its sources were not only the Sacred Text, but even the knowledge of Greek physicians, Hippocrates and Galen, who offered Islamic medicine the foundations of knowledge of the body.

Furthermore, like the Islamic medicine, the Jewish one had a strong component of wisdom, whereby the patient was not seen as a "carrier of disease" to be healed, but a human being whose personal story both in the relationship with the environment, both in relation to the Transcendent, had a decisive impact on his wellbeing.

The dimension of wisdom in Jewish medicine made the doctor an important collaborator of the divine preservation of creation.

Owing to this reason, the doctor was an expert whose task was loyal application of the Torah with regard to the code of purity of Israel, for which the body should be preserved from all leprosy (zara'at) and the soul from every sin (Cosmacini, 2000, pp. 58-59). The opposite of pure was "filthy" or dirty, and such a contrast was very much present in the popular mind, as regards hygiene and moral. Be "unclean" did not necessarily mean being unhealthy or leprosy: indeed even those who rode camels, ate pork, did not observe the prescribed days of fasting, were considered “unclean” as well as a man and a woman after intercourse, or a woman after childbirth.

Similarly, sources of impurity were considered eating not bled meat, contact with the woman after menstruation, contact with dead bodies and faeces. The similarities with the Islamic rules of hygiene are clear. Just the similarities between the Islamic and Jewish medical knowledge supported and support their integration.

In countries ruled by Islam during the Middle Ages, the Jews (Mozarabs) lived in a state of relative peace. The most successful integration with the Islamic community, took place in the context of Andalusia. Medicine, then, was a particularly fertile ground for meeting, based on rules of temperance and moderation.

Moreover, just in Andalusia it added to the old practice, which was only a clinical and empirical one, a complete academic and educational teaching. One of the greatest Andalusian scholars of the Middle Ages, Isidore of Seville, in the medical section (Book IV) of his Encyclopedia in twenty books entitled Etymologiae or Origines, which included all the knowledge of the Dark Ages, had drawned the etymology of “medicine” from “modus”, that is the "right size" that must guide the one who professes it as Plato taught.

The knowledge collated by Isidoro included - as a part of the scientific universe - the knowledge derived from those technai which became with Boethius (480-524) "arts of the trivium - grammar, rhetoric, logic - and Cassiodorus (480-550)" crossroads of the arts "-arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music.

Isidore said:
He wonders why some of the medicine is not among the liberal disciplines. For this reason: that those deal with individual subjects, while medicine embraces them all. We can agree that the doctor should know the grammar, in order to be able to understand and explain what he reads. Similarly, the rhetoric, in order to be able to define illnesses through valid arguments. Moreover, the logic, in order to be able to distinguish and treat the causes of illness with the help of reason.
Likewise, the arithmetic for the calculation of hours in paroxysms and days during periods of illness. Likewise, the geometry, for the properties of the parties and the position of points, of which he will teach that it is worth noting of them. The music also should not to be unknown, since it is stated that this discipline has solved many cases of disease, as was that of David, who healed King Saul by the evil spirit by using the art of melody. The doctor Asclepiades recovered a man subject to frenzy by making listen to music. Finally, he should know astronomy, by which he may contemplate the star system and the changing of the seasons, since, as a doctor says, our bodies change with the ownership of the skies. For this reason, medicine is called the second philosophy, since both disciplines are complementary to man (Isidore, 2004, pp. 355-387).

In Andalusia, five centuries after Isidore, Jewish doctors who had access to the court of the Caliph, were masters of both theoretical and practical knowledge, that they were custodians of a general conception of the world and man, as well as bearers of a global understanding of man himself, and of a knowledge of the organism in all its parts. They were keepers of knowledge able to draw a productive practice of health and wellness from this anthropological understanding and technical knowledge. During the Caliphate of Cordoba, then, and in particular in the domain of 'Abd al-Rahman III (929-961 a.D.) and that of his son al-Hakam II (961-976 a.D.), the economy, science and the arts reached its highest splendour.

At that time the cosmopolitan Cordova was by far the largest city in Europe and one of the three largest ones in the world. In that context the intellectual life of Jewry could develop. Thus, amalgam of Jewish and Arab culture, absolutely unique in the history of the world, represented the golden age of Medieval Sephardism.

Apart from the ancient medical knowledge, the learned Jewish doctors of the Caliphate of Cordoba synthesized and implemented recent scientific knowledge acquired in the Islamic Caliphate of Baghdad.

Prominent among them was Hasday ibn Shaprut (915-970 a. D.). «Patron of the new era», as reported by Roth (Roth 1980: 853-854), Hasday ibn Shaprut was not only personal physician, but also a trusted advisor of the caliph Abd ar-Rahman III. «His inclination was towards languages. Therefore, he reached a good knowledge of Arabic, both spoken and written, and of Latin». He was a member of that great culture spoken in three languages - Hebrew, Arabic and Latin - which stood for many years as the dominant character of the learned Jews of Andalusia. «In addition, like most of the Andalusians, he knew and spoke the Romance [Ladino], which was a dialect that was evolving [...] and that will become the language of Spanish people. His strongest passion, however, was the medicine, the study of which he dedicated all his energies».

«His reputation for excellent physician exceeded all measure when he announced he had discovered the secret formula of Teriaca». The Teriaca or Triaca was a remedy that was traced back to Andromachus the Elder: Nero's physician.

He would have achieved it by changing the Mithridates, a preparation of such a name as related to Eupator Mithridates, king of Pontus and enemy of Rome, who, according to a legend, had been refractory to snake venom to the point that he escaped from repeated attempted poisoning perpetrated against him. In the 1st century A. D., in Mithridates recipe viper flesh was added: it was thought that the snake venom or virus would be able to resist any virus or poison, that is, any toxic or harmful substance introduced into the body. So the celeb Triaca was born. According to Pliny the Elder, it was composed of 54 ingredients and therefore provided with a very broad spectrum of activity that made that drug the definitive antidote, so that the remedy for all diseases, also called “the mother of all medicines”. It was to Hasday ibn Shaprut's merit that he focused the composition of this panacea, «whose formula was lost with the passing of time» and, continuing on this pharmacological line, of
having <<translated De Materia Medica of Dioscorides from Greek into Arabic, with the intermediary of the Latin. It was the celeb Treaty of Botany and Medicine brought as a gift to Cordova by a Byzantine Embassy in 945 A. D>> (Fioriello 1999: 247-248). Hasday ibn Shaprut was posed as a leader Chief of the Jews of his kingdom by the Caliph of Cordoba. He was the promoter of the Mediterranean circulation of ideas, including medical ones, which was activated by the circuit of correspondence between the questions raised by the learned Jews of Andalusia and the responses (Nagel, 2000) dictated by the wise rabbis and physician rabbis, from Pumbedita and Sura.

Moreover, as a patron and leader of the Jewish community of Cordova, he supported Poets, Grammarians and Talmudists, and thus he played a decisive role in the revival of Hebrew and its transformation into a universal language of culture.

In every field of knowledge, the scholars promoted by Hasday asserted the authonomy of Spain, compared to the traditional centers of Jewish intellectual life in the East, chiefly in Iraq. Like the Muslims, the Jews were ready to learn from Baghdad, but at the same time they wanted to break away from this great example and overcome it.

Their commitment to culture as well, fitted harmoniously within the policy of the Caliphate of Cordoba, which had distanced itself from Baghdad and carried a new Spanish self-consciousness.

**The inquiry among Italian family practitioners**

**Introduction**

The long European history of coexistence with Islamic peoples today knows, in Italy, a renewed chance for opening a peaceful chapter. Islamic immigrated people in Italy need health cares. Health has been defined “fundamental right” by Italian Constitution (art. 32).

The present research, conducted by the Doctorate in “Environment, Medicine and Health” since January 2008 to December 2011, is based on the following hypotheses.

- Western and Islamic Cultures have common roots, based on Greek Thought and Abrahamitic religious faith. Greek roots consented them to implement, in Mediterranean area and since Middle Ages, a medical knowledge based on the care and the respect for the patient, as well as on a rational analysis of disease.

- Religious roots, on the other hand, can affect the relationship between Western physician and Islamic patient, who has to respect the conception of human body revealed in Koranic Writings.

It is assumed that it is possible to retrieve and implement, within the relationship between Western family physician and Islamic patient, the dialogical dimension of the relationship of care on the basis of a targeted educational program, aimed at training family practitioners.

The objective of this research is to detect problems and needs of family practitioners in the care relationship with patients coming from Islamic cultures, who are influenced by Koranic wisdom.

The methodology is based on an empirical research focused on a questionnaire to family practitioners of Bari, a city in the South-East of Italy. It has established a collaboration with a group of physicians of FIMMG (Federazione Italiana Medici di Medicina Generale - Italian Federation of Family Practitioners), which is the greatest federation of family practitioners in Italy.

Now I will give a brief exposure of the characteristics of Islamic conceptions of health and disease, followed by a description of the questionnaire administered to the family physicians participating to FIMMG.
Islamic Cultures and General Medicine

The concept of health and disease in the Islamic world is closely linked to the Koran and its dictates. The disease is largely attributed to the lack of attention to the spiritual dimension of the human being, as well as the expulsion by the will of Allah.

In any case, little attention is paid to the intermediate causal links between these functions and the effects of the disease (Al-Waai, Abu Al-Jundi & Fadl, 1972). Practices promoted by the Islamic medicine, mostly during the Turkish caliphate (XIII-XX centuries), include specific injunctions against amulets, omens and other similar magical practices.

Practices promoted by Islamic medicine include natural remedies such as herbs, special precautions associated with diet and lifestyle. Islamic medicine also promotes healing through faith and, in this case, through prayer and the recitation of verses from the Koran. Many of these practices, usually associated with the care that patients avail themselves through the most sophisticated findings of Western medicine, do not show, in general, harmful effects. Indeed, when used as a placebo, their effects are very beneficial.

On the other hand, there was no consensus among Muslim jurists about the ban on practices such as female circumcision or the cautery, which may cause more harm than good. The literature on Islamic medicine attaches great importance to education of the faithful on the right manner to behave in the event of illness, together with the religious obligations to be fulfilled by the sick. The role of the sick in the Islamic world (Weiss & Lonnquist, 1994) is precisely defined by the Koran. The statements chosen by the sacred writings indicate that those who fall ill are not responsible for their situation.

And there is no fault in those who are afflicted by disease. They have been tested and purified from sins and, if they accept the will of Allah, and bear the trial with patience will be rewarded (Koran, Nour 61).

Islamic law ensures ill individual an exemption from certain religious obligations. The Muslim doctors are required to assess the ability of patients to fast during Ramadan, and the extension of ritual related to vomiting, diarrhea, bleeding, or any sign of disease that prevents the prayer or fasting (El-Sayyad, 1993). Sufferers are encouraged to seek medical treatment, indeed a Hadith says: “O servants of Allah, seek medical care” (Ibn Majah, Sunan).

Nowhere in the Islamic world is the conception of illness as a deviant social behavior, nor is the concept of "pretending to be sick" present in Muslim medical thinking. With regard to medical ethics, Islamic one does not differ significantly from that of other medical knowledge, except for some peculiarities, including the obligation to invoke the name of Allah before any medical examination or treatment, as is customary for any significant act in Islam; the obligation to avoid medications containing alcohol; the obligation to avoid practices forbidden by Islam such as abortion or the tattoo; the injunction not to inform the patient about the severity of his illness when the doctor despaired the possibility of healing, because the "hope calms the patient".

It is difficult to clearly define the exact composition of Islamic medicine, especially in modern times. Activities related to Islamic medicine have been made and supported by individuals and organizations interested in health issues, especially in the Gulf Countries, where markedly Muslim activities are better tolerated. For example, private philanthropists in the '80s built a magnificent "Islamic hospital" in Kuwait, whose main function was to give herbal treatment contained in the Koran and Hadith. The creation of an organization of Islamic medicine was promoted, including prominent figures in the field of public health, and financial support was offered to Islamic social organizations that provide medical care to those who need it in less fortunate Arab countries, such as Palestine and Egypt, where access to traditional biomedical treatment is not always possible.
It is interesting to note, noteworthy, that Islamic medicine does not set itself as an alternative, but as an integration of the biomedical model (Kandel, 1997). Currently, a considerable number of medical conferences and publications seem to focus entirely on Islamic demonstration of consistency of the sacred texts of Islam with modern medical practices.

Regarding the dissemination and institutional authority of the medical practices of Islamic nature, essentially based on the recommendations of the Koran and Hadith, it must be said that currently they do not have an authority comparable to alternative medical practices, such as Chinese medicine. The Universities in the Arab world have not any curricular disciplines of Islamic medicine. The medical practices of Islamic nature are devolved upon self-taught healers, who operate with little control and little regulation. These healers, which are required by the families where there is suspicion that the disease is caused by evil spirits (jinn), base their business on trust in the healing power resulting from the recitation of Koranic verses. One study (Al-Awadi, Al-Hashel & Al Hajer, 1999), performed on a sample of 376 workers in Kuwait, found that approximately 56% of them had made use of the practices of Koran healers, while the 18% of them made use of those practices in the previous year.

About 90% of those who were surveyed indicated that it would encourage other people to use the Koranic medicine in order to improve medical health status, and 55% agree that the jinn have the power to sicken the people. 29% indicated not to be sure.

Within the sample surveyed, 65% believed that some illnesses can be cured only through healing practices related to faith.

These practices, as mentioned above, have not any harmful effects, except when lead to deny or delay needed care. In the research carried out in Kuwait, 36% of people in the sample claimed to use medical practices related to the Islamic faith with no other medical care. In addition to the recitation of Koranic verses, several healers require patients to drink blessed water, sometimes mixed with safran, eat honey or "blessed" dates, or massage the painful area with "blessed" oil. Patients can be massaged by healers who previously have spat on their hands, in order to ensure the transfer of power of Koranic verses from the mouth that has played the sacred verses to the hands that operate on the patient's body.

Records of specific sacred verses may be prescribed and implemented continuously until the problem is resolved. It can be argued that many similar rituals behaviors can lead to improvements, if not physical, at least psychological ones.

The potential for harm in such healing practices, in addition to the aforementioned temptation to consider them as a complete care system, is related to some important matters of hygiene. For example, water can be blessed by immersing printed or handwritten fragments of the Koran, and it may lead to the possibility of chemical poisoning. In some other cases, owing to the strong belief that evil spirits cause disease in human beings, it might be necessary to use a moderate amount of violence on the sufferer with the aim of exorcism. The degree of violence can range from a light slap on the face to severe beatings with sticks and shoes. In recent years, some healers have even used the electroshock treatment of certain disorders (Jalal, 1999). About Kuwaiti workers in a research, no one said that there were no negative effects or death through the use of Koranic faith-based medical practices, but those who might have suffered any negative consequences, as might be expected, did not communicate it easily.

The Western biomedical model is still the dominant, and the most authoritative, paradigm in the Arab world. Many wealthy Arabs use it when necessary, while the less wealthy use it when they can afford it. Meanwhile, one may observe the emergence of Islamic medicine as complementary and integrative model.

Currently, it is not yet known in which locations of the Arab and Islamic world these figures concentrate with greater density.

With regard to immigrants of Islamic culture in Italy, the family practitioners may have
difficulty in symptomatology and diagnosis of diseases, since the Islamic modesty requires never to discover their body, except in the presence of the husband or wife.

The Family Practitioners and the Islamic Patient: Results of research conducted with general practitioners of the City of Bari (Italy)

In order to provide a means of detection consistent with the objectives of this investigation, after formulating and defining the research hypotheses, after stating the object and purpose of the survey, after listening to the authoritative opinions of the Coordinator of the PhD in "Environment, Health and Medicine", Professor Leonardo Soleo, Full Professor of Industrial Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Bari, we administered a questionnaire to the target population of this research: the family practitioners of the city of Bari.

In this case, it was chosen as reference body, the medical association called FIMMG (Federazione Italiana Medici di Medicina Generale – Italian Federation of Family Practitioners), which represents, in Italy, the main union organization of that category. FIMMG managers involved in research are the Regional secretary Dr. Filippo Anelli and the Provincial secretary Dr. Giovanni Sportelli.

At first we thought to identify a significant sample, thanks to the advice of a statistics expert of the University of Studies of Foggia (Italy). Later, however, we opted for administering the questionnaire to all family practitioners who join FIMMG in the city of Bari.

On the basis of the purposes of research and of the results we wanted to achieve, we selected the type of questionnaire to be administered, that is a questionnaire to be administered by an interviewer.

It should be underlined that the questionnaire was designed and developed as a kind of structured interview, characterized, therefore, by all possible 'traps' of this type of interview. In this case, the subject who proposes the questionnaire focuses particularly care on the psychological dynamic of the relationship between interviewee and interviewer, according to the basics of interpersonal communication.

The researcher proposed to put at ease the interviewees who are accustomed, due to the peculiarities of their profession, to be heard and give advice. The interviewer, therefore, making use of a relational mode based on the curiosity about the various aspects of medical profession, has worked at creating the ideal conditions so the doctor could provide more reliable information as possible, taking into account the psychological, motivational, behavioral and socio-cultural variables that can affect his interviewee.

The following difficulty regarded the choice of questions to be used to get the specific type of answers and information requested.

The questions, depending on their technical form, were mainly subdivided as follows:

− Closed questions (which are predominant in the questionnaire). The researcher provided a range of responses previously defined by the research group.
− Scale questions (present in considerable number in the questionnaire). Through them it was used a precise measurement scale (Likert scale) to measure attitudes or opinions.
− Open questions (present in small numbers in the questionnaire, and chiefly used to obtain specific information about the issues already raised in the closed questions and scale questions), through which no default were provided by the researcher, but which allowed full freedom of expression to the interviewees.

The choice between closed questions, scale questions, and open questions, much less numerous than the others, depended on the object that we had proposed to discover and
investigate, that is discomfort of the Western doctor in dealing with Islamic world: a different and at the same time so near cultural universe.

Depending on the content, taking into account the fact that the questionnaire was divided into three sections (the first of which is a section that requires personal data of the physician, the second one is a section about the difficulties that the family practitioner can encounter in the relationship with the Islamic patient, and the third one is a section on the difficulties that the Islamic patient may encounter in Islamic relationship with the family practitioner.

The questions of the questionnaire were divided into:

- Basic questions, consisting of yes-no questions on personal characteristics and professional general practitioner;
- Structural questions, consisting of yes-no questions about the fundamental attributes of the interviewee in relation to research;
- Questions of behavior, consisting of open-response questions concerning facts, concrete experiences of the interviewee in relation to patients coming from Islamic cultures.

In order to facilitate a relaxed atmosphere and the flow of information between interviewer and interviewee, in the case of this questionnaire, from the above mentioned Provincial Secretary of FIMMG Dr. Giovanni Sportelli, a series of phone calls were carried, by which the family practitioners of the city of Bari were being informed of the initiative. During the phone call there has been made explicit reference to the Institution that carried out the inquiry (the University of Bari "Aldo Moro"), as well as the importance for this Body to get the answers of the interviewee. The interviewee has been reassured on the fact that there were no right or wrong answers, and above all, that the anonymity of both the physician and his patients would always be guaranteed, and that the responses would be analyzed in a confidential manner.

Conclusion

Thanks to this research, which is result of a fruitful collaboration between PhD in "Environment, Health and Medicine" of University of Bari “Aldo Moro”, and FIMMG, we aimed to problematize the relationship between Western and Islamic culture, through the privileged point of view of the family practitioner. It is remarkable how, through educational projects conducted within the complex world of Health, it is possible to focus on some of the most important social dynamics of our time, and, through a proper educational planning, orient them towards Integration and Inclusion: necessary and needed objectives in order to be able to govern, and without being overwhelmed, by the epochal changes of our time.

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Can An Educational Paradigm Shift Impact Global Learning?

Ann Whitaker,
Professor Emeritus, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois,
A-Whitaker@neiu.edu

Abstract
This paper focuses on the issue of globalization of education and its possible effects on culture and education. The emphasis is on how various countries view/teach education, the global impact, historical perspectives, Greek philosophers and cultural views.

Keywords: Globalization of education, worldwide, culture, global learning, paradigm shift, changing, global superstructure

Introduction
Nations continue to independently control their school systems while being influenced by the global education processes in order to compete in the global economy.

Globalization of education refers to the worldwide discussions, processes, and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies. The key in the previous statement is the word ‘worldwide’. This means that events are happening on a global scale that affect national school systems. The image is that of global educational policies and practices existing in a superstructure above national and local schools. Nothing is static in this image. There is a constant dynamic of interaction: global ideas about school practices interact with local school systems while through mutual interaction, both the local and the global are changed. In other words, this global superstructure is constantly changing (Spring, 2009).

Dale and Robertson (2003) maintain that globalization of education is an intertwined set of processes affecting education including worldwide discourses on human capital, economic development, multiculturalism, intergovernmental organizations, information/communication technology, nongovernment organizations, and multinational corporations. Some aspects of the global superstructure include global discourses about the knowledge economy, lifelong learning, and global migration.

Global Education and Culture
What has been the impact of the globalization of education on students and their (respective) cultures? How does cultural globalization of education occur? Does cultural globalization occur? Can (one's) culture impact learning?

Our societal institutions impact us just as our individual cultures do. Those basic institutions include family, education, religion, government, business, health, recreation, literature, science, and social welfare. Spring (2009), Ho (1987), Gutek (1995), and others maintain that education is culturally bound and specific to various ethnic groups and changes globally. For example, Gutek (1995) suggests that English education, French education, German education, and Russian education differed from Greek, Roman, and Medieval education.

Greek educational ideas originated in the Homeric epics, which emphasized the man of heroic and knightly bearing. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey supplied Greek education with a model that furnished guiding objectives that influenced that influenced the course of ancient Greek culture. Greek culture and education were also characterized by the dominating and
integrative influence of the community, or *polis*. The Greek *polis* was sustained by the concept of a total community which integrated the lives of its citizens.

Greek philosophers and educators were also concerned with developing an educational theory which could integrate and order their lives. The philosophical and educational theories of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates formed a rich theoretical heritage that had a lasting influence on Western thought.

The Latin legacy exerted a profound influence on Western culture. The Roman Church adopted Latin as its official ecclesiastical and liturgical language. Although the Latin tradition was weakened during the early medieval period, it reasserted itself strongly during the later Middle Ages. The Renaissance classical humanist, in his zeal to restore Latin to its original purity, impressed it on formal education as the official tongue of the educated person. Until the modern period, Latin dominated secondary and higher curricula.

The medieval university was a community of scholars that represented the institutionalization of the theological, philosophical, and intellectual currents of the late Middle Ages. The two dominant patterns were either the student-dominated southern model or the faculty-dominated northern model. The curriculum of medieval higher education consisted of the core liberal arts and sciences, which were foundational to the professional studies of theology, law, and medicine. The mode of inquiry was scholasticism, which sought to integrate both faith and reason.

British education follows the historical generalization that government educational policy is a consequence of political and economic ideologies. British educational policy is determined by the political party that commands a majority in the House of Commons and forms the government. Although the British have prided themselves as being an island nation, it is no longer economically or politically possible due to the impact of Britain’s growing interdependency with the European economy.

French education exhibited divergent tendencies of Rousseau's naturalism and Roman Catholic supernaturalism. Until their expulsion from France in 1762, the Jesuits had been in charge of secondary education. The Christian Brothers and other religious teaching orders had been active in elementary education before the Revolution. When the French philosophers of the eighteenth century objected to the old order, they also attacked the religious and classical orientation of an educational system dominated by the church.

Although Germany had its issues with education, an important characteristic of German education is the extensive development of vocational, technical, and apprenticeship educational arrangement. Germany has a long history of vocational education which can be traced back to Martin Luther's emphasis on the religious importance of vocations as contributing to the welfare of society. Vocational education was further emphasized in the German empire as part of national economic development.

In sum, continuity in the German educational system can be seen by the maintenance of the traditional German educational emphasis on literacy, skill, and technology. The educational system has responded.

In the nineteenth century, Russian political, social, and educational life was dominated by tsarist absolutism. The most clearly anti-intellectual policies occurred in the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1855), whose "Nicholas System" was intended to stop the growth of Russian liberalism by suppressing people as well as ideas. At the Russian frontiers, books and papers of foreign visitors were carefully examined to ensure that no anti-tsarist literature entered Russia.

Russia represents a laboratory of social change in which new education patterns will emerge. Hopefully, these new political and educational patterns will liberate rather than limit human freedom.
The above cited countries have had a global impact on its citizens, its students, learning, culture(s), and its educational system(s). From a cultural perspective, each group has a unique history, different problems, and is diverse across and within the group(s). For example, in this country (USA) non-whites are viewed differently based on their skin color and physical features and are often viewed as primary objects of derision. Hispanics encounter difficulty with assimilation, bilingualism, destruction of their traditional family roles, and immigration from their traditional homeland. Asians encounter a similar fate: assimilation, bilingualism, destruction of traditional family roles, and immigration from their traditional homeland. African Americans, many of whom were born in the USA, encounter and endure psychological dislocation due to slavery and its enduring effects. Native Americans struggle with the distortion of their history as portrayed by Europeans. They are victims of colonization in their own land. Mexican Americans encounter racial, religious, and cultural superiority as well as segregated schools. Puerto Ricans have had to deal with independence and citizenship, Americanization, and deculturalization.

Global education and learning consists of many schools and cultures on a local and national level. Consequently, our educational system and the schools can no longer operate as an island. Learning cannot occur when educators, counselors, principals, administrators, social workers, school clerks, parents, church leaders, and community activists disconnect students from their (native) land, culture, and history. Perhaps the globalization of education should be considered from a holistic perspective with intergovernmental organizations, global and local school leaders and citizens, multinational learning, international nongovernment organizations, and popular culture.

Cultural Implications

Many scholars debate the exact meaning of the term culture. Banks (2001) maintains that culture may be seen as the knowledge, beliefs, values, skills, and behaviors of a social group. Culture is learned and transmitted from one generation to the next. Culture also changes as situations and the needs of a people change. Culture is learned, shared, and changed. Culture is constructed; that is, it is not "natural," it is not something that exists apart human history and experience. Culture may be identified as the ways in which a group of people have come to solve the problems of survival and existence.

Culture has several dimensions according to Ho (1987). The dimensions include nature, time, people relations, work/activity, and human nature. Each of these dimensions point out the perspective of European Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and Latino Americans. Interestingly enough the European Americans are the only group that advocates "mastery over" nature whereas the other four ethnic groups advocate "in harmony with" nature. This "view of nature" may suggest that despite the cultural difference there is no need to let our differences inhibit our ability to learn from other cultures.

A cultural immersion experience involves learning outside the classroom. The class focuses on an assignment where the students become immersed with a group with whom they differ in regard to belief, ethnicity, ability, and with whom they have had little or no previous experience or contact. The group the students interact with may be in their community or a school. In addition the students prepare a pre and post self-assessment of their level of cultural understanding using Banks' (2001) model and create an evaluation rubric. This activity results in understanding (another culture), enduring understanding, and viewing expected learning outcomes.

Paradigm Definition

A paradigm shift in our (United States) current educational teaching may enhance global
and cultural learning. Kuhn (1970) points out that a paradigm is a common body of belief or an accepted model or pattern. He discusses paradigms as universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners. Paradigms are examples of scientific practice which provide models for scientific research. Men and women whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards for scientific practice.

There are different perspectives based on research training and practice. An example that Kuhn (1970) cites is that a chemist and a physicist would question whether a single atom of helium was or was not a molecule. A second example of a scientific revolution was when Galileo and the telescope settled the argument concerning whether the earth is earth-centered or heliocentric. Kuhn (1970) further states that when the scientific community becomes dissatisfied with the prevailing methodology, various worldviews of the proper scientific community compete, with one finally prevailing and thus becoming the new paradigm. This change constitutes a scientific revolution. This change would be as follows:

NORMAL SCIENCE \(\rightarrow\) ANOMALY OCCURS \(\rightarrow\) COMPETING PARADIGMS \(\rightarrow\) PARADIGM WINS \(\rightarrow\) NEW THEORY

An educational paradigm shift might look like this:

OLD PARADIGM \hspace{1cm} NEW PARADIGM \hspace{1cm} PARADIGM SHIFT
Curriculum-Centered \hspace{1cm} Child-Centered \hspace{1cm} Focus on Student Interests

The paradigm shift would significantly change the focus of education to become "student" centered rather than "teacher" centered. Dewey (1938) advocated years ago that education should be child-centered rather than curriculum-centered. This need for a paradigm shift can be seen in the differences in the ways classroom lessons are taught in other countries. Stigler and Hiebert (2009) observed teachers teaching math lessons in Germany, Japan, and the United States.

German lessons usually unfold through a sequence of four activities.
* Reviewing previous material.
* Presenting the topic and the problems for the day.
* Developing the procedures to solve the problem.
* Practicing.

Japanese lessons often follow a sequence of five activities.
* Reviewing the previous lesson.
* Presenting the problem for the day.
* Students working individually or in groups.
* Discussing solution methods.

Four activities characterize the U.S. lessons.
* Review previous material.
* Demonstrating how to solve problems for the day.
* Practicing.
* Correcting seatwork and assigning homework.

Although the instructions in the United States shares some elements with the German pattern, more time is devoted to practicing definitions and procedures and less time to developing the technical details and rationale of procedures. Yet the three patterns share some basic features: the class reviewing previous material, the teacher presenting problems for the day, and students solving problems at their desks. It appears there is some international agreement about the importance of these activities. But on closer inspection it becomes clear that these activities play different roles. For example, presenting a problem in Germany sets
the stage for a rather long development of a solution procedure, a whole-class activity, guided by the teacher. In Japan, presenting a problem sets the stage for students to work, individually or in groups, on developing solution procedures. In the United States, presenting a problem is the context for demonstrating a procedure and sets the stage for students practicing the procedure.

Differences in the core activities of lessons were also noted. The focus of the German pattern is an activity in which the teacher leads the students through the development of a mathematical procedure. This is not found in either the American or the Japanese pattern. Also the Japanese pattern includes an activity in which the teacher summarizes the major point of the lesson. The differences in kinds of activities and in the roles that similar activities can play within the different systems generate large differences across systems of teaching in different cultures.

Educational Paradigm Shift

What then happens to students of various cultures who are not included in the majority culture? We know that cultural realities exist. We see societal repression, institutional rejections, cultural realities, environmental contexts, modeling, and a weak attempt at affirming diversity on the part of some educational institutions.

When cultural ties and connections are sabotaged amnesia occurs on the part of the student. With deculturalization there is complete or partial loss of memory. With this loss of memory the person has no idea of who they are. This was seen earlier with the various ethnic groups whose culture and history was taken away as they became Americanized. They were people who lost and continue to lose their spiritual and psychological history. Remember, culture is passed on from generation to generation and when you are cut off from your history and heritage and forget your own story one suffers from amnesia and becomes a dead people.

The educational paradigm shift can incorporate Stigler and Hiebert’s (2009) views:

* incorporating global educational ideas of fruitful diversity of cultures
* educational institutions becoming catalyst for international cooperation
* educational institutions becoming standard bearers
* viewing culture as cognitive and emotional skills
* protecting and promoting cultural diversity
* viewing and valuing the knowledge of old people (Africa, Japan)
* valuing intercultural competencies
* assessing the gap between culture and education
* become innovative in education through cultural diversity
* recognize and understand that education is an empowerment process and a cultural right

The impact of a paradigm shift can assist educators and students to become defined by their potential and not by their culture. We can learn from other cultures such as, Germany and Japan and enhance our learning and connectedness in this global society. Perhaps we can shift from an old paradigm (cultural repression)----to a new paradigm (cultural realities)-----to an educational revolution (globally affirming and accepting cultural determinants).

Implications for Education

What are the implications for education? First (and foremost) it is imperative that people who work with children/students (in/out) of the field of education clearly understand that teaching is a cultural activity. Second, (cultural) identity is not separate from one's culture. People want to stay rooted in their culture. Third, when you know the history of a people you value who they are. And fourth, let's not intentionally distort and forget the history and
culture of those whom we teach. Let’s recalibrate our thinking and teaching processes as we entertain an educational paradigm shift to assist in understanding the practices and policies of the globalization of education worldwide.

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Education Reform through Youth Media Advocacy: An Interdisciplinary Service Learning Approach

James Kelly, PhD,
Associate Professor of Social Work, Carlow University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
jmkelly@carlow.edu

Jennifer Snyder-Duch, PhD,
Associate Professor of Communications, Carlow University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
jsnyder-duch@carlow.edu

Abstract

This paper describes the theoretical and methodological connections between social work and media studies. A Youth Media Advocacy Project demonstrates the applicability of this approach in a service-learning course that links college and high school students who use media and advocacy skills for education reform. This course serves as an example of imaginative curricular designs for activist student involvement.

Key Words: Interdisciplinary studies, social work, media studies, student advocacy, service learning, education reform.

Introduction

The connections between social work education and media studies in the 21st century are natural and meaningful. These disciplines share social constructionist, feminist, and political economy theories, and are closely aligned in their values concerning social justice, dignity of the human person, person in the environment, rights and responsibilities, and the rights of the poor. Social work programs have an opportunity and obligation to more consciously develop interdisciplinary curricula that connect advocacy theory and methods (Hick & McNutt, 2002; Hoefer, 2005; Netting, Kettner, & McMurdy, 2007; Schneider & &Lester, 2001) with media studies to prepare students of both disciplines as professionals, citizens, and community leaders living and working in our complex social environment. Media studies programs often seek methodological support for activism spurred by expanded awareness through media literacy approaches of systemic injustice and the need for media reform.

The central purpose of social work to empower people, particularly those who are oppressed due to the forces of poverty and prejudice (National Association of Social Work, 2008) connects with media scholars and activists (Gerbner, 1999; Jhally, 2000; Kilbourne, 1999) who argue that our current media system does not include all, and especially does not work to inform those from disenfranchised groups of policy decisions that affect them. As social work education emphasizes students’ abilities to empower people to be self-directed and self-supporting via access to resources – food, clothing, healthcare, shelter (e.g., Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2010; Kirst-Ashman, 2008), media studies recognizes that we live in a world today where information is a key resource, and it is not readily accessible to all. A basic premise of media studies is that the media play a central role in creating our social reality through their form (McLuhan, 1994; Meyrowitz, 1985; Postman, 1985) and their content (Gerbner, 1999; Jhally, 2000; Kilbourne, 1999). Therefore, the goal of empowerment by providing access to information is a shared concern for social work and media scholars.

Social work and media studies share particular interest in promoting social justice for marginalized groups in society. The work of media scholars examines the media industry, content, and professional practices, as well as the government policies that affect media production and dissemination. Incorporating the notion of social justice into this work
necessitates action to strengthen any weaknesses, fill any gaps, and challenge any injustice within the media. By incorporating social work methodology, media students acquire means to positively affect policies and institutions that violate human dignity (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). As evinced by the social work code of ethics, “Social workers should promote the general welfare of society….Social workers should advocate for … social, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice” (National Association of Social Work, 2008, section 6.01). There is a ready-made theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical framework, developed by scholars in social work, which media scholars can use to effectively pull advocacy and social change into their research and teaching. There is a growing interest in the academy in the study of youth, and in particular, a concern for the ways that youth have been marginalized and stigmatized in our culture (Kearney, 2009; Males, 1999). In media studies, numerous studies have focused on the ways youth are rarely portrayed in news media content, and when they are, they are framed as violent (Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001; Dorfman, L., & Woodruff, K., 1998; Goidel, Freeman, and Procopio, 2006; Youth Media Council, 2002). The exclusion from the media is particularly significant for girls, young people of color, and poor and working class youth. Further, ideas or stories that are routinely included in the media gain legitimacy. On the other hand, “ideas that are excluded from the popular media or appear in the media only to be ridiculed have little legitimacy” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003, p. 163).

Justice for youth, then, would include recognizing that they are “disenfranchised from the process that creates their social world” (Frey et al, 1996, p. 112), and working towards remedying this injustice. The Youth Media Advocacy Project aims to empower students in urban public high schools by working with college students to express their views on education reform through the local media. Within a service-learning course, undergraduate social work, media, and other students engage in a facilitative process with high school students to develop media advocacy campaigns to encourage high school students to make their voices heard to influence education policy decisions that impact their lives. University students facilitate discussion with high school students who join the project to help them identify areas where they desire change in their education, and then together they develop and carry out a media plan to influence relevant audiences, including education policy makers, teachers, fellow students, parents, and community members. The university students involved in the project learn advocacy skills, the importance of social empowerment, and how to influence local media. The course is consistent with social work pedagogy because it extends beyond the classroom walls and engages students in community work; empowers college students and teens by teaching advocacy skills; values the personal experiences and competencies of those involved and the importance of giving voice to the disenfranchised; and emphasizes the interdependent relationships necessary to produce social change. The project provides students with the tools to “speak” through the media, an empowering ability for young people to advocate for social justice in the 21st Century.

Social Work Mission, Theory, and Methodology

The mission of social work is to enhance human well-being and to help meet the basic needs of all people. Social work education strives to imbue students with values that promote advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups. First, social work education seeks to provide skills that support the mission to promote the empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. In so doing, social workers strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice by 1) enhancing the capacity of people to address their own needs, and 2) promoting responsiveness of organizations,
communities, and other social institutions (National Association of Social Workers, 2008, Preamble).

The hallmark of social work education is its emphasis on advocacy rooted in a set of core values:

- Inherent dignity and rights of individual
- Giving voice to the powerless
- Self-determination
- Compassion and relief of suffering
- Empowerment based on a strengths perspective and capacity building
- Social justice -- “strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.” (National Association of Social Workers, 2008, Preamble)

Social work education focuses its methodological approaches through a variety of theoretical lenses. Of particular importance is the ecological perspective that views human behavior contextually within biological, psychological, and social environments (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2010). This environmental context makes it possible to understand the individual, family, group, organization, and community as developing/adapting within interrelated environmental habitats that include resources and nutrients that contribute to human functioning, as well as barriers and pollutants that inhibit that functioning. Pollutants may exist in the physical environment, such as toxins in the air and water, but they also may degrade the psycho-social environment, as evinced by the impact of racism, genderism, and classism. Just as human physical health may be affected by the pollution carried by air and water, so too may psycho-social health be degraded by these “isms” that are transmitted via media. Media portrayals of groups based on negative stereotypes affect attitudes and beliefs about members of those groups in profound and often destructive ways that can result in institutionalized bias and prejudice, and unfair and unjust social policies.

These institutional and social ramifications of media-supported injustice are the targets of the curriculum generated through our collaboration of media studies and social work. Several basic premises of ecological systems theory link Social Work and Media Studies:

- media contribute to the ideological environment;
- media affect, support, and/or conflict with biases and prejudices;
- media portrayals of groups support stereotypes;
- media stereotypes contribute to “social pollution,” e.g., racism, genderism, classism.

**Characteristics of Social Work Advocacy Methodology**

Social workers embrace an ethical requirement for Advocacy that is operationalized through systematic activities to influence decision-making in unjust or unresponsive systems. The commitment and praxis related to advocacy distinguishes social work from other helping professions. Social work education includes over a century of scholarship devoted to the theory and practice of advocacy that has evolved perspectives and approaches that include the following general qualities (Schneider & Lester, 2001): social work practice is action-oriented in its opposition to injustice, i.e., works directly to cause change in unjust systems; it is not neutral in its exposition of core values related to the maximization of human well-being; it links policy to practice such that social workers must be knowledgeable of, and actively influencing, relevant policies of institutions, including media organizations and government, as they may affect social justice; and it seeks to empower individuals and groups to act on their own behalf (pp. 203-204).
Social work is rooted in human rights and values stemming from a rights-based orientation that informs social work education’s approach to preparation of students in widely ranging settings from direct practice with individuals and families (e.g., social welfare agencies, behavioral and physical health care, and private practice) to community and societal level practice (e.g., community organizing, government programs, politics). In all these diverse professional roles, social workers are united by a common body of ethical standards that mirror/complement the emerging aims of media studies. Foremost, social work education emphasizes the dignity of the human individual. A complementary ethical principal honors the importance of human relationships. These basic values are circumscribed by social work’s commitment to advocating for social justice, and it is here that social work media studies share their natural and practical connections.

**Media Studies, Social Work, and Social Justice**

In presenting the Youth Media Advocacy Program, social work and media studies faculty have been working together to develop this interdisciplinary approach in the context of a media advocacy grounded in values shared by social work and media scholars who adopt an activist perspective. In particular, the concepts of justice, common good, dignity of all humans, and rights and responsibilities are central to our approach.

Those who see justice as a central element of media studies see a particular purpose to their teaching and research. Frey, Pearce, Pollock, Artz & Murphy (1996) explain,

> If we start from the premise that people must be enfranchised in the production of the speech acts, episodes, relationships... essential to human life, then communication and social justice concerns might be focused on the ways in which people are often disenfranchised from the language game and how they are and might be re-enfranchised....A concern with social justice from a communication perspective thus identifies and foregrounds the grammars that oppress or underwrite relationships of domination and then reconstructs those grammars. (p. 112)

Communication scholar R. L. Cohen (1991) said “justice is done when those who should have, do have; when each gets his or her due; when what people do have is appropriate to what they should have” (p. 240). This definition is useful to media studies for several reasons, but most patently, it contextualizes the need for media reform. It creates impetus for us to help students imagine a different media environment. This idea of media justice is clearly pointed out by McChesney and Nichols (2002) who assert that in the United States, the media belong to us, the people. This notion is central to our character and function as a democratic society. An active and vibrant media industry is able to act as a watchdog over government and business, maintain a high level of culture for our education and leisure, and educate and inform all citizens so that they can be active in our political and social systems. Justice would be done when our media system in fact fulfills these obligations.

Additionally, the amalgam of both social work and media studies produces a focus on dignity of the individual that includes the right to be treated with dignity in the symbolic world – the world of news and entertainment – as well as the physical world. Many research studies show that oppressed groups are ignored, trivialized, or further victimized in the media. The pervasiveness of the media and the significant ways that it has been integrated into our social and political systems begs for a media environment that fairly portrays women, people of color, teenagers, the elderly, and the poor and working class. A curriculum informed by the values inherent in “media justice” would incorporate methods to create change in the media system. In other words, media scholars would not only question what needs to be changed in the media system, but they would also ask, how can we change it?
Further, students steeped in a social work/media studies curriculum would be in the community, working with members of disenfranchised groups, to create change for themselves. This connects to the central concern of social work in its mission to “…treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity…,” and to promote “socially responsible self-determination…” by helping individuals to increase their “capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs” (National Association of Social Workers, 2008, Ethical Principles).

The themes of the common good and rights and responsibilities are central elements of social work theory and practice that fit well within a media activism approach. A key conceptual orientation of social work focuses on the interplay of the person and the environment recognizing the dynamic interplay of the role of the individual and the social, political, and economic context. These themes are also present in communication, but perhaps this is where communication scholars, including those in media studies, need a little nudge to make activism more prominent in the discipline. Fairness and responsibility in media portrayals and reporting is critical to all areas of social reform. As McChesney (2000) argues in his political economic analysis of the media industry, “…the corporate media system is undermining the necessary conditions for effective governance. A media system set up to serve the needs of Wall Street and Madison Avenue cannot and does not serve the needs of the preponderance of the population” (p. xiii). In fact, the truly disturbing and complex problems that face women, racial minorities, and the poor and working class have not been adequately addressed by the current U.S. media system whose primary goal is selling products to consumers.

In the information age, it is important to remember that people have the right to be informed about their own rights and responsibilities as citizens and members of their communities. Scholars and activists argue that our current media system does not include all, and especially does not work to inform those from disenfranchised groups of policy decisions that affect them. Social Work focuses on the empowerment of people to be self-directed and self-supporting by providing access to resources – food, clothing, healthcare, shelter (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2010). We live in a world today where information is a key resource, and it is not readily accessible to all; therefore, the goal of empowerment by providing access to information should be important to media scholars and professionals as well. Media scholar and activist George Gerbner (1999) said,

The condition of the physical environment may determine how long our species survives. But it is the cultural environment that affects the quality of any survival.

We need to begin the long process of diversifying, pacifying, democratizing, and humanizing the mainstream storytelling process that shapes the cultural environment in which we live and into which our children are born. (p. 15)

The Youth Media Advocacy Project

Purpose of Project

The Youth Media Advocacy Project (YMAP) is collaboration between Carlow University’s Media Justice Project and Greater Pittsburgh Student Voices (GPSV) and is supported by a grant from a major local funder. The goal is to encourage Pittsburgh area high school students to make their voices heard. The project intends to provide students with the knowledge, skills and support to use the media to influence education policy decisions that affect their lives. The project supports students to garner earned media coverage and also create and place high quality paid media such as print ads and radio spots. As part of a for-credit course, university students are trained in media industry and practice, education issues
and policies, and advocacy skills. The university students facilitate discussion with high school students who join the project to help them identify areas where they desire change in their education, and then together they develop and carry out a media plan to “get their voices heard” by the educators, elected officials, community leaders, and other people whose decisions affect the education environment. The student groups consult with media professionals on their work. Also, they meet with education and/or civic leaders to present their plan for change in education. Thus, the central goal of YMAP is to acknowledge the dignity of youth – particularly African-American teenagers in urban schools – who feel their voices have not been heard. The project is intended to provide them with the tools to “speak” through the media.

There is a growing interest in the academy in the study of youth, and in particular, a concern for the ways that youth have been marginalized and stigmatized in our culture (Kearney, 2009; Males, 1999). In media studies, notable research has shown that youth are rarely portrayed in news media content, and when they are, they are framed as violent (Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001; Dorfman, L., & Woodruff, K., 1998; Goidel, Freeman, and Procopio, 2006; Youth Media Council, 2002). The exclusion from the media is particularly significant for girls, young people of color, and poor and working class youth. A basic premise of media studies is that the media play a central role in creating our social reality through their form (McLuhan, 1994; Meyrowitz, 1985; Postman, 1985) and their content (Gerbner, 1999; Jhally, 2000; Kilbourne, 1999). Further, ideas or stories that are routinely included in the media gain legitimacy. On the other hand, “ideas that are excluded from the popular media or appear in the media only to be ridiculed have little legitimacy” (Croteu & Hoynes, 2003, p. 163). The fact that youth and the issues that are meaningful to them are rarely seen in the media suggests that we do not recognize our young people as valuable. We do not notice the ways that they contribute to our communities and to society at large.

Justice for youth, then, would include recognizing that they are “disenfranchised from the process that creates their social world” (Frey et al, 1996, p. 112), and working towards remedying this injustice. In addition to advocating for education reform, teens participating in the Youth Media Advocacy Project work to influence the media to treat them with dignity. They do this by creating their own media products and having them placed and distributed in the local media. These products are meant to fill gaps in the media that have been identified by the teens. Also, they influence the media by meeting with media leaders and professionals to ask for more accurate and meaningful coverage of youth and issues important to them.

Service Learning in the Youth Media Advocacy Project

Service learning has garnered wide acceptance as an experiential pedagogy in that it combines community service with academic instruction. This pedagogy incorporates critical, reflective thinking with personal and civic responsibility, and involves students in activities that address community-identified needs. Successful service learning courses develop students’ academic skills and commitment to their community (American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.).

The Youth Media Advocacy Project’s approach to service learning activates students’ classroom learning by involving them in meaningful, practical application of theory and methods in the community. In weekly in-class meetings, the college students investigate key concepts and issues related to media industry and practice; education issues and policies; and advocacy. The college students acquire theoretical grounding in basic concepts of relevant theories including Social Construction, Cultivation, Agenda-Setting, Ecological Systems, and Social Action Theory. They engage with high school students prepared facilitate joint activities in which they skillfully advocate for change, and in particular, use the media to draw attention to an identified target for education reform. Moreover, the college students
actively develop and hone skills in group facilitation, issue identification, and social marketing while engaging with high school students participating in the project.

The Youth Media Advocacy Project Outcomes

The project began in January 2010, and has involved over 500 high school students working with over 75 college students. Among their media advocacy projects are the following:

- produced a documentary title Behind the Books about education issues and the characteristics of effective teachers, that aired on community cable TV, and has been viewed by Pittsburgh School Board members, principals, and teacher groups;
- wrote and recorded a radio ad about negative stereotypes of teenagers, which aired on a local popular FM music station;
- created print ad concepts about education which are being placed on billboards and in newspapers;
- toured radio and TV stations, and learned basic skills of broadcast media production;
- wrote, recorded, and broadcast radio ads about negative stereotypes of teenagers
- developed print ads about education and placed on a billboard and in a newspaper;
- advocated for change in meetings with leaders in education and in the media;
- organized a community march for peace.

The Youth Media Advocacy Project continues to attract talented, committed students who have learned of the project from past students. The ongoing success of YMAP encourages participation by university students in YMAP who report that they enjoy learning advocacy skills, media production and media relations skills, methods for social empowerment, and alternative approach to media studies. They state that they value a number of key components of the YPAM experience, including:

- collaborative work experience;
- mentorship experience;
- the applied nature of the project;
- seeing their groups’ work disseminated;
- connecting with members of the community.

Conclusion

The operating principle of Youth Media Advocacy Project is to empower teens by supporting them to advocate for themselves rather than speaking for them. This is a very significant part of the model as it adds a meaningful component to the concept of social justice, which is being achieved through more than the traditional idea of service. In other words, the Youth Media Advocacy Project engages a group who has been disenfranchised in a process of claiming their rightful place in the decision-making that affects their education. Through this program, community youths have become active in reforming their own education system. By using media to disseminate their messages, teens are gaining the attention of a large and sometimes broad community audience. In addition, by presenting their education concerns and through the skillful planning, production, and use of media, they are confronting the local media industry and challenging its decision makers to take youth seriously.
The university students involved in the project learn advocacy skills, media production and media relations skills, the importance of social empowerment, and, overall, an activist approach to media studies. They learn how their expertise in media and advocacy can contribute to the dignity of young people. They facilitate the role of youth in contributing to the common good. They learn the interplay between the media and the social rights and responsibilities of individuals, in this case, young people. This is the result of an interdisciplinary partnership between social work education and media studies. The Youth Media Advocacy Project, developed as an alternative to traditional classroom-bound teaching, provides an empowering learning experience for college students working with high schools students by combining media studies with social work theory/methodology in a service learning course that is strongly undergirded by a shared commitment to creating a more just society.

References.


The Effects of Different Error Correction Methods on Word Stress Pattern and Sentence Intonation Accuracy

Hassan Iravani,
Payam-e-Noor University, Iran
Hooman Saeli,
Oklahoma State University, USA

Abstract
The aim of this study was to disclose which method of error correction is the most effective one on a selected group of learners in an Iranian context. The study was conducted by incorporating 4 methods of providing corrective feedback in 4 groups of upper-intermediate EFL students (N=43). The members of the first group underwent the teacher explicit, immediate correction, the second one the teacher explicit, delayed, the third one self- and peer-feedback, and the last served as the control group of the study. The pre-test and post-test of the study were the a list of unknown words embedded in Yes-No and Wh-Questions, and statements. The obtained results confirmed that the first method of correction, explicit, immediate correction by teacher, is the most effective treatment method in the scale of current study.

Keywords: corrective feedback, explicit feedback, immediate feedback, delayed feedback, self-correction, peer-feedback

Introduction
There has been a range of approaches towards correcting errors in language teaching and learning. Teaching trend is always changing and developing. These changes, respectively, are principally due to changes in dominating teaching methodologies. There are widely-differing viewpoints regarding the possible advantages, or on the other hand, disadvantages of the errors. Within the classroom context, the teachers, as practitioners of methodologies, are inevitably vulnerable to taking different positions concerning the issue of error correction on the basis of their own previous L2 learning experiences or prescriptions of methodologies. They even may become more frustrated, especially in case they have been prescribed to follow the controversial and contradictory ideas among L2 researchers. Most teachers will, in turn, hold divergent attitudes towards the provision of corrective feedback, ranging from ineffective and possibly unfruitful (e.g., Truscott, 1999b), to beneficial and efficient (e.g., Russell & Spada, 2006), and possibly even indispensable for some grammatical structures (White, 1991).

Many significant researchers in the field of second language acquisition have emphasized the significance of the learners’ errors. Among them is Corder (1967) who states that the errors can be viewed as significant in three different ways: first to the teacher, since, in case of undertaking a systematic analysis, the extent to which the learner is progressing would be shown. Second, they are an invaluable source unveiling the method and strategies by which language is learnt or acquired. Third, they are also indispensable to the learner, since the making of errors can be regarded as a device leading to language learning and hypothesis testing. (Corder, 1967).

The purpose of this study is to find out which method of error correction is the most effective one on different group of learners. Different teachers’ positions regarding corrective feedback can be investigated as a continuum. To begin with one extreme end, some teachers believe in the total absence of correction and view it as a type of impediment which hinders
the students’ communication flow. On the other extreme end, some other teaching practitioners see the immediate and explicit correction of errors as an essential factor preventing the students from internalizing the ill-formed language structures. Numerous other positions would fall between these two extremes. However, the aim of this study is to investigate 3 different methods of error correction on 3 groups of students along with another group whose members would receive no corrective feedback. The researcher hopes to cast light on the controversial area of correction of methods and contribute the Iranian teaching practitioners in employing better methods while dealing with widely differing students with different language learning backgrounds, learning styles, expectations, and needs.

Literature Review

Reasons for Corrections of Errors

According to Havranek (2002a), the majority of second and foreign language learners think of corrections as essential and want to be corrected regularly (see e.g. Havranek, 2002b; Schulz, 2001), even though many at the same time find corrections embarrassing to a varying range of degrees. He (2002a) continues to argue that most teachers also assume that corrections are important, but they frequently worry about whether potential negative affective reactions may not outweigh the positive effect on the learners’ language development (Kleppin & Konigs, 1991; Schulz, 2001). It should be noted that students naturally have the urge the English they produce to be intelligible, and they usually expect to be corrected (Ur, 2000). On the other hand, Truscott (1996) holds that this is a misguided endeavor and that teachers should abandon grammar correction because it fails to achieve its objective. As cited in Ashwell (2000), in response to Truscott (1996), Ferris (1999) has offered some reasons for continuing to give error correction. These have, in turn, been rebutted by Truscott (1999b). As cited in Bitchener (2008), studies that fail to compare the effects of corrective feedback and no corrective feedback do not provide evidence of the effectiveness of corrective feedback (Ferris, 1999, 2004; Truscott, 1996b, 2004).

Appropriate Methods of Error Correction

According to Lyster (1997), much done in the area of error correction is borrowed the framing questions used by Hendrickson (1978) in one of the first comprehensive reviews of the issue of error correction in the classroom, that is,

1. Should learners’ errors be corrected?
2. When should learners’ errors be corrected?
3. Which errors should be corrected?
4. How should errors be corrected?
5. Who should do the correcting?

Actually, Hendrickson (1978) takes such factors into consideration as the presence of correction, the timing of correction, the types of errors to be corrected, the manner of correction, and the corrector.

As Loewen (2007) states, depending on which journal articles a teacher refers to, he or she will find error correction described on a continuum ranging from ineffective and possibly harmful (e.g., Truscott, 1999b) to beneficial (e.g., Russell & Spada, 2006), and possibly even essential for some grammatical structures (White, 1991). In English learning process one might be given the right to take widely differing positions regarding selecting the underlying proponents of his/her unique teaching context and experience. However, the eventual efficiency of method incorporated depends on the fact which method of error correction has the highest correlation with the desired pronunciation accuracy and fluency.
According to Lee (2004), direct error feedback (i.e., overt correction) involves the provision of the correct forms or structures for students’ faulty sentences (Hendrickson, 1980). Indirect error feedback refers to providing feedback on student errors without giving the correct forms or structures.

Carroll (2001) distinguishes between two types of feedback: positive and negative. The first one confirms that a given form, string or interpretation is possible in the language, whereas the latter confirms the contrastive position, that it is not possible in the language. Finally, she concludes that, “… the ‘‘best’’ feedback and correction is probably the most explicit _ which is least likely to occur” (p. 390).

Different methodologists usually recommend different types of corrective feedback. One important dichotomy is presented as following:

- Explicit vs. implicit methods of treatment;

Regarding the issue of explicit vs. implicit methods of error correction, Varnosfardani and Basturkmen (2009) stated “Explicit correction refers to the process of providing the learner with direct forms of feedback.” According to Carroll and Swain (1993), teachers can explicitly state that the learners’ utterance is wrong. By doing this, they direct the attention of the learner to the erroneous point. Explicit correction in this study consists of metalinguistic explanation of the erroneous structure.

Implicit correction, on the other hand, refers to the process of providing the learner with indirect forms of feedback. Making rational references is quite crucial for learners in order for them to be able to detect the ill—formed structures on the basis of the corrective feedback provided on the side of teacher in a rather non—direct fashion. In other words, learners need to deduce from the evidence that the form of their language production is responsible for the comprehension hindrances.

There still exist many controversial debates over the efficacy of either of these two methods of providing corrective feedback. As cited in Bitchener (2005), contrastive to studies which disclose that both students and teachers have a preference for direct, explicit type of feedback rather than indirect feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Rennie, 2000; Roberts, 1999), several studies report that the latter leads to either greater or similar levels of accuracy over time (Ferris et al., 2000; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982).

In addition, as cited in Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006), DeKeyser (1993) found no difference between the group that received extensive explicit feedback and the group that received limited explicit feedback. However, some studies support the application of explicit feedback in classroom contexts. According to Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006), Carroll and Swain (1993) and Carroll (2001) claimed that the group of subjects that received direct metalinguistic feedback outperformed all of the other groups in the production of sentences involving dative verbs and noun formation and that this type of feedback aids generalization to novel items. Furthermore, according to Chaudron (1988, p.145), repetitions, one of the mostly employed types of implicit feedback, caused ambiguity since they could be comprehended as including “either a negative or a positive nature”. However, whenever correction is preformed, it requires to be done with extra sensitivity to avoid the students from embarrassment and demotivation (Ur, 1996).

**Different Types of Feedback**

The teachers, who are familiar with the distinctive features of various types of feedback, would eventually be enabled to implement the most fruitful method of correction in dealing with the learners’ errors. One of the most important dichotomies which can be pointed out here is the notion of positive vs. negative feedback.
While providing positive feedback, the teacher offers the correct form of the deficient form of the language which has been produced by the students. In this method, the teacher directly points out to the ill-formed structure, and consequently, makes an effort to amend that structure by incorporating the feedback centered directly on providing the accurate form. According to Ellis (1998) “Negative feedback shows learners that an utterance they have just produced is incorrect. It serves, therefore, to help learners notice the gap between their own deviant productions and grammatically correct productions.” Johnson (1988, p.93) also has argued that “learners need to see for themselves what has gone wrong, in the operating conditions in which they went wrong”.

Another important issue to mention is the concept of peer correction and peer feedback. There are numerous positions taken towards the role of peers in the language learning contexts. Peer feedback actually occurs in a broader set of learning activities in which students work together in groups or pairs in order to attain some specific pedagogical objectives. Three prominent learning theorists whose works are directed at supporting group activities are Piaget (1959), Vygotsky (1962, 1978), and Dewey (1966) as cited in Jacobs (1989). According to him, Piaget and Vygotsky, while differing in several ways, both advocated the merits of interaction of language learners with others in classroom contexts. According to Vygotsky, if the learners are to obtain proficiency and accuracy in any given area of language, having interaction with peer-classmates would gain considerable amount of weight.

Peer feedback actually occurs in a broader set of learning activities in which students work together in groups or pairs in order to attain some specific pedagogical objectives. Three prominent learning theorists whose works are directed at supporting group activities are Piaget (1959), Vygotsky (1962, 1978), and Dewey (1966) as cited in Jacobs (1989).

After reviewing the most important areas of controversy, it should be noted that the current study is conducted to shed light on the following research questions:

1) Is there any significant difference between the various error correction methods in pronunciation accuracy (word stress pattern and sentence intonation)?
2) Is there any significant difference between the first method of the study (explicit and immediate) and the second method of the study (explicit and delayed)?
3) Is there any significant difference between the first method of the study (explicit and immediate) and the third method of the study (self- and peer-correction)?
4) Is there any significant difference between the second method of the study (explicit and delayed) and the third method of the study (self- and peer-correction)?

**Methodology**

**Participants**

The subjects of this study had either passed the final exam of the third book of the Interchange series, or taken the placement test of the institution. They willingly registered into 4 different classes and were considered as intact groups. The students fell in an age range of 21 to 43. The first group consisted of 15 students, the second one 14, the third one 15, and the last one 16 students, making up a total of 60 students. The first group served as the first experimental group, taught by the researcher, himself, the second group as the second experimental group, taught be the researcher, himself as well, the third group as the third experimental group of the study, again taught by the researcher, himself, and finally, the last group as the control group of the study, taught by one of the most experienced teachers of the center. It is worth mentioning that the researcher had more than 7 briefing sessions with the respective teacher and observed the control group sessions for 5 times.
Instruments

The last method incorporated to the 4th group of this study was the total absence of correction. Actually, this group served as the control group of the study.

The first test, serving as the pre- and post-test of the study, comprised indeed a list of 50 new words of the first Passages book. As to examine the intonation accuracy of students as well, the aforementioned sentences were embedded in Yes-No and Information questions, and affirmative and negative sentences. The questions and statements were chosen according to the standard questions and statements of Longman Dictionary, Fourth Edition so that they would be of a more authentic nature.

The second test was actually a homogeneity test administered before the beginning of the course. The test was borrowed from Tay (2005), which consists of 3 standardized placement test full packages. The test comprised one writing test followed by 20 listening, 20 reading, and 30 language use (grammar) questions. The writing section was administered and rated in regard to the guidelines of Tay (2005, p. 20), and the other three objective sections were rated according to the answer key provided by Tay (2005). If to be placed at the first Passages book level, they students had to obtain a score ranging from 9 to 10 concerning the aforementioned guidelines. In order to place the students at the fist book of Passages level, they had to obtain a score ranging from 50 to 61 from the total of 70. Another significant issue is regarding the timing of the homogeneity test. For writing section, the students were given 20 minutes, for listening section 15 minutes, for reading section 20 minutes, and for language use section 15 minutes, making a total 70-minnute homogeneity test session.

Procedure

The following would present the main dichotomy of the study, teacher-centered method including two main error treatment methods, explicit and immediate, and explicit and delayed, in addition to student-centered method including peer- and self-correction methods:

1) teacher-centered methods (1. explicit and immediate, and 2. explicit and delayed)
2) student-centered method (peer- and self- correction)

The members of the first group underwent explicit and immediate method of correction. In this method, the teacher interrupts the students and their flow of communication, corrects them, the students are required to repeat the corrected word or phrase before they continue the flow of speech or negotiation of meaning.

The members of the second group of study underwent explicit and delayed method of correction. This group served as the second experimental group of the study. In this method the teacher still dominates the class, but in a rather less obtrusive way. Actually, whenever a student makes an error, the teacher does not offer corrective feedback in an immediate manner. However, he waits until the student is finished. The next step to take is pointing out to the ill-formed structure, and then, correcting the student explicitly by providing a standard, well-formed structure.

The third group members underwent the method of self and peer-correction. According to the principles of this method used in this study, the teacher is no longer the only dominant figure in the classroom contexts. It is not him/her who corrects the students explicitly and in a straightforward fashion, but instead, he/she offers the students some alternatives to turn them capable of correcting themselves and the other classmates.

Data Analysis Method

After administering the pre-test, performing the error treatment methods allocated to each group during the course, and eventually giving the post-test, 2 scores were available, the
former indicated the pronunciation proficiency of the subjects in the pre-test regarding the issues of word stress pattern and sentential intonation accuracy before the beginning of the course, and the latter was indicative of the students proficiency regarding the same issues in the pre-test after the end course and undergoing the allotted methods of treatment. The type of data would be interval; due to this fact, various methods of interval data analysis could be applied to the study in order to interpret the results of the research. In this particular study, the researcher utilized ANOVA to analyze the results gained from the pre- and post-tests. The final correlation between the Means of scores gained by the students in the pre-test and post-test, regarding each method of correction, would finally disclose the fact that which method of error correction had been the most effective one on its respective subjects. In addition, the correlation found needed to be significant. The higher the correlation was, the more successful and effective the method would be. The final results gained can be referred to in the Results Chapter. For further information please refer to Pallant (2007).

Result

The summary of all data gathered from the results of the pre- and post-tests of all groups is available in Table 1 and is presented below.

Table 1. Summary of the 4 groups’ Pre- and Post-Tests Means

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<td>9.39503</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5.98517</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35.8605</td>
<td>10.49622</td>
<td>43</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The data gathered from the normality test of the study is presented in the chart below (Table 2). The data gathered from the pre- and post-tests of all four groups was proven to be quite normally distributed by a normality test called Kolmogorov-Smirnov.

Table 2. The Normality Results of the Scores of Pre- and Post-Tests of the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests of Normality</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td>.155</td>
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</table>

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
In order to obtain further information on the points of the difference between Means, a post hoc test, scheffe, was incorporated to disclose the precise differences among groups. The results are displayed in table3.

**Table 3. Multiple Comparisons Table (Scheffe Measure)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE_</th>
<th>Scheffe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) group</th>
<th>(J) group</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.36059</td>
<td>.887</td>
<td>-5.0101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>6.3030</td>
<td>2.25520</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>-.2855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>-9.7416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 29.189.

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The last important point worth mentioning is regarding the figure of Estimated Marginal Means. As to this figure, it is fully comprehensible that the subjects of the four groups of the study manifested varying performances during the treatment course as following. The data is presented in Figure 1.

According to Table 3 and Figure 1, all four null hypotheses were rejected. The difference between the Means of the Pre- and Post-Tests of the first (explicit and immediate) and second (explicit and delayed) method of corrective feedback provision was proved to be significant. It was clearly manifested that the members of the first group showed a greater deal of change in their performance (development in word stress pattern and sentence intonation accuracy) in comparison with the members of the second group. Members of third group of the study, did not manifest considerable change in their performance over time and members of the fourth, control, group of the study manifested the smallest amount of change regarding their performance (word stress pattern and sentence intonation) over the course duration. It is worth pointing out that the difference between the Means of the Pre- and Post-Tests of the third (self- and peer-correction) and the fourth (no corrective feedback) was not proved to be significant. For further information please refer to Table 3 and Figure 1.
Discussion

The students of 4 different groups underwent the 4 methods of error correction to facilitate the liability of distinguishing between the advantages and disadvantages of each method employed. The first method, which is the immediate, explicit correction on the side of teacher, was proved to be quite successful in an Iranian context, while this method of correction is censured due to its allegedly counterproductive effects on the students’ negotiation of meaning and the other communicative facets of language. It is widely believed that this method would probably bring about negative, irreparable outcomes in the students’ communicative abilities. On the contrary, it was proved that if the immediate correction is implemented in a friendly atmosphere, it would bring about positive changes in their pronunciation accuracy.

The efficiency of second method or the delayed and explicit feedback stands in a lower status regarding the eventual proficiency of the students’ pronunciation accuracy. Upon using the delayed, explicit method of correction, students may be sidetracked by factors such as the content of the conversation, the ultimate goal of any given conversation, which is negotiation of meaning, and some performance variables, such as fatigue, the other students and so forth. In the Iranian context of English learning, it was perceived that when an error is corrected on the spot and the students are required to repeat the corrected form before continuing, the corrected form would be of a more durable nature in the interlanguage of the subjects.

The next method, which was a student-centered method consisting self- and peer-correction, was proven to be quite futile in some language learning contexts. The most prevailing problem regarding the issue of self-correction was the deficiency of the students’ competency in pronunciation properties of language, which eventually lead to their being
incapable of correcting themselves, even by the presence of the teacher’s hints and alternatives.

The last method was the total absence of correction. Group 4 of the study served as the control group of the study. The subjects of this class did not receive any form of corrective feedback regarding the ill-formed structures they generated throughout the course duration. They were proven to possess rather the same level of proficiency in English word stress pattern and sentence intonation accuracy after the course. Due to the absolute lack of corrective feedback in the classroom context, just a few of them made some superficial improvements in their pronunciation accuracy.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to cast light on the problem that whether the application of repetitious corrections in the class would lead to attaining the desired improvements in the word stress pattern and sentence intonation of language of the learners or not. The students of 4 different groups underwent the 4 methods of error correction to facilitate the liability of distinguishing between the advantages and disadvantages of each method employed. In the event that the same group of students would undergo all of the processes of correction, it actually turns to be quite painstaking to determine that whether the accuracy attained by the students after taking the post-test is the consequence of the first, second, third, or the fourth method of error treatment. The aforementioned fact thoroughly justifies the underlying reasons behind incorporating 4 discrete groups to do the research.

In most foreign Iranian language learning classroom contexts, teachers and learners pay considerably less attention to the role of corrective feedback. The possible reasons can be sought in areas such as the blind following of the prescribed components of methodologies, the incompetency of the teachers, and finally, deep cultural differences between Iranian students and those of other contexts and cultures. The undeniable significance of the corrective feedback is that it is considered a necessary means of drawing the attention of the learners to the deviations found in their own Interlanguage and the Standard English or any other target language. In many cases, teachers and students may refer to the fact that corrections do not always bring about the desired changes in the students’ Interlanguage towards making it a better approximation of the Standard English. If the corrective feedback contributes the students and facilitates the production of a corrected structure by the learner who has made the same, but inaccurate English statement before, it is considered as successful.

When tracking down the string of possible influential factors involved in the learning process, one may confront with the fact that the corrections may not result in immediate and permanent improvements in the learner’s language. However, when an in-depth observation is made on the language learning process, the fact would be fairly elucidated that English learning process is one of long-term nature. This is one possible reason that the desired and pre-planned developments do not take place in the learners’ Interlanguage overnight. Immediacy and on-the-spot nature and spirit of most of the corrections made in the class, which were proven to be quite effective in Iranian contexts, would enable the students to master the difficult aspects of English pronunciation in a long run.

The positive contribution of corrective feedback to language learning still persists to be a controversial issue while overgeneralizing the findings of any study. Since many years ago and only recently, the amalgamation of different pieces of evidence has reassured the learners and teachers of the fact that corrective feedback can be facilitative, rather than debilitative, in at least some facets and aspects of the foreign language learning. Another controversial issue among the researchers and teaching practitioners is the unfeasibility of distinguishing
between the improvements made as a possible result of corrective feedback and those more deeply affected by some other variables involved in the process of learning. However, such research demands a greater scale research and is definitely beyond the scope of this study.

One cannot certainly surmise the issue that which method of error correction is the most appropriate one in practice. Even these days, some teachers comply with the Behaviorist principles and apply its respective principles to their classroom activities and types of corrective feedback offered to the students.

We should not ignore this issue that most of the methodologists and teaching practitioners would rather take an eclectic approach towards language teaching and error correction methods, which means to seek and pick the best features of each method, cement them, and devise new methods of teaching and error correction out of them; therefore, the final error correction method will be an appropriate and well-gauged product of the best features of all of the aforementioned methods.

The most important advantageous benefit of incorporating the eclectic approach towards language teaching is that the teacher can set a proportionate balance among the rudimentary educational variables, such as pedagogical purposes, the students’ abilities and backgrounds, their needs, and the application of the most effective teaching and error correction methods in different periods of time.

One possible consequence of application of this method in classroom context is that the compatibility potential of the teacher and his/her respective teaching method would be boosted to a considerable degree; thus, the teacher can switch from one method of correction to another one when there is a need to do so; this is the plasticity advantage of the eclectic approach over the other strictly structured methodologies.

I personally think that this advantage is an undeniably prominent one over the other methods of correction, since the chance of confronting a number of utterly homogenous students, with homogeneous abilities in a single class is not so high; therefore, any method of teaching seeking success in mass scale requires to be qualified and equipped to satisfy the needs and interests of all of the students. Actually, widely differing teaching and error correction methods can be employed while dealing with different students, even with miscellaneous abilities, capacities, and learning potentials.

When confronting the nowadays’ altering and improving world, the flexibility of each method of error correction can guarantee its success and wide-range application in practice to a certain degree; the reason could be sought in the fact that sometimes mere and blind following of the strict, prescribed, and pre-determined principles of a particular method may not be feasible to incorporate while encountering with all the students’ needs and pedagogical objectives in a single course; thus, the teacher and the students may not find the opportunity to incorporate their potentials for taking a thoroughly creative approach towards teaching and learning.

References


Influence of aspirations and materialism on achievement goal orientations

Soontornpathai Chantara,
Lecturer, Department of Design, Saraburi Vocational College,
Vocational Education Commission of Thailand, Saraburi, Thailand,
soontorn.chantara@gmail.com

Ravinder Koul,
Associate Professor, Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies
Penn State University, Malvern, PA, USA,
ramankoul@yahoo.com

Abstract

Much has been written about the origins of motivation and aspiration, but little is known about which factors influence motivational goal orientation and its relationship with the aspiration and religiousity of vocational students. This research examined the relationship between students’ motivational goal orientation, aspiration index and religiousity. Data was collected from a large sample of students of vocational and technical colleges in Thailand. The result of regression analysis indicated certain factors that influenced mastery learning depending upon aspiration and religiousity. Mastery goal orientation was found to be positively related to religiousity and intrinsic aspiration (physical well-being). Conversely, performance goal orientation (approach and avoidance) was positively related to materialism and extrinsic aspiration (image). Moreover, these findings were true for both male and female in every disciplines. We interpreted these results in terms of Self-actualization Theory and Self-determination Theory in Social Psychology. The findings leads us to understand the influencing factors of students self-motivation and contribute to the literature on previous studies.

Keywords: Aspirations, Materialism, Achievement goal orientations, Life and religion, Vocational education

Introduction

Attitude of students is very important to drive them to focus on their studies and future life goal. It drives then to focus on their career path as well as students’ personal needs or their own personal aspirations and ambitions (Pimpa, 2007). Thus; Sterling was point out the rising of diverging interests and values that willing to be sustainability education in future (Sterling, 2004).

In developing a country's competitiveness, development of the middle-level manpower is one of the main issues to be considered. Life and career skills become very important to prepare student for post-secondary education and workforce (Lai, 2011). Eventually, Thailand realizes the importance of this matter and emphasizes the need to increase vocational and training which is going to be in force in the very near future. There was requiring administrative system that should promote unity in policy guidelines and variety in Thailand human resources management (Atagi, 2002; Bhumirat, 2005). As an illustration, labour market demanding these day, Vocational Education Commission in Thailand is one of the most important organization to produce and develop vocational manpower at all levels for the general public (National Statistics Organization of Thailand (National Statistics Organization of Thailand, 2008).

The current strength situation of vocational education in Thailand has more than 800 vocational education institutions (public and private). There are currently over one million
students enrolled in the various vocational study pathways (Vocational Education Commission of Thailand). Despite that, the reflections of employer which state the graduates have weaknesses in both theory and practice from labour market showing lack of quality of Vocational education in Thailand.

As has been said, we generally perceived that how important of vocational education need to develop, but there are infrequently research which encouraging vocational student neither motivation nor aspiration, as previous only to particularly at the elementary school, high school or university (Lai, 2011).

**Research conceptual framework**

From the numbers of review literature, we found that Achievement goal theory is a specific theory, which developed to understand achievement behavior in academic tasks and school setting (Midgley, et al., 1998 ), Expectancy-value theory of motivation and can describe a person’s reflection on their motivation, Self-determination theory is about experiencing freedom to make choices (Schunk, 2008) which has required the apprehension of innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness according to humanistic and existential theory by Fromm , Maslow and Rogers (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The Aspiration Index by Kaser & Ryan (Kaser & Ryan, 1996) refers to people's intrinsic aspirations that contain life goals like relationships generally and personal development versus extrinsic aspirations.

Certainly, there are various approaches to understanding human characteristics which are complex and extremely important (Dornyei, 2005). Naturally, human beings are individual differences in culture and material growth by nation, also higher and transcendent nature and unpredictable emotions and their attitude (Maslow, 1976 ; O'Leary, 2010). Evidence of the significant understanding of motivation has been set out in Maslow’s ‘Hierarchy of Needs’ followed by many alternative sub-theories that influence motivational approaches, such as expectations of achievement and value outcome (Schunk, 2008).

Values, beliefs, perceptions, interests and actions are essential component of motivation that are intimately relate (Lai, 2011). Moreover, culture also serves as a structure of the thoughts, actions, practices and creativity that lead to build a system of values which guides people’s ‘generalized plan’ or a ‘cognitive blueprint’.

Religio-psychical orientation among Thai community is characterized by their religious beliefs in illogical fatalistic and supernatural attitudes. Komin had found that The Buddhist Thai significance indicate of the values rankings and cognitive humanity of Thai people (Komin, 1991).

Materialism is need for wealth, fame and Image that influences various aspects of people life (King & Mitchell, 2010). There an evident of Thai appearance in social status pressure to materialistic behavior and attitudes (Larry, 2008). Moreover, Materialism oriented in Thai education and society behavior research still has very few.

The different definitions of “good life” (i.e. a life of luxury) and “necessities of life” (everyday expenses such as food, cloth and housing) needed to be expanded. Namely, Thai are very ego oriented (Komin, 1991). Ego oriented values tend to make Thai student rarely criticism and express their ideas and then affecting to their learning manner. Please note that, even the differences of Thai values from other nation especially from western had been studied, but there are a small number of researchers who examined a culture of larger power distances and strong social relations as Thai (Komin, 1990;1991).

To summarize, we found that past research had been studied on only between two variables, there are certain link between motivation goal orientation and aspirations, aspiration and materialism (life), but not between three of them which can identify important
factor influence to motivation goal orientation of students. Lack of numbers which studies in Thai socio-culture context must be concern (Textor, 1992 ; Persons, 2008). Moreover, vocational student are rarely investigated comparing with high school and university students, even there are one of the most important manpower to developing country as Thailand (Lai, 2011).

This paper reports the results of an investigation into Vocational students’ aspiration, goal orientation and life and Religion. Data for this survey study was collected from students enrolled in six main majors in Vocational Education Commission in Thailand. Our investigation was designed to answer the following research questions: First, What are the relationships of Aspirations and Materialism and Achievement Goal Orientations? Second, do they have intra relationship between each other? Third, what factor of Aspiration Influence on Achievement Goal Orientations? And finally, what factor of Life and Religiosity Influence on Achievement Goal Orientations? The findings from this study contribute to the literature on previous circumstances of Aspiration.

Research Method

Participants

This survey research analyzed data, we collected data with efficient way by large number of respondents (N = 1,670) refer to Technical and Vocational Education and Training students in Thailand (TVET) in year 2010

Measure

The theoretical framework summarized to three important categories of survey questionnaires: Aspirations, Goal orientation and Life and religion.

Aspirations

Aspirations; the 35-item adapted and translates to Thai from the validated Kasser and Ryan (1996) questionnaire, which it matured Aspiration Importance, Aspiration likelihood and Guiding Principle according to Self- determination Theory. Participants responded to each entry on a 7-point Likert scale (Kaser & Ryan, 1996).

Goal orientations

The 18-item Thai questionnaire was based on motivational achievement goal theory which had been studied (Alisa, Koul, & Kongsuwan, 2010). The surveys measure how students perceived mastery orientation, performance approach orientation and performance avoidance orientation. The 5-point Likert scale had been used in this section

Life and religion

The 31-item in last categories we were survey about Life and religion. The Life and religion Thai questionnaire was adapted from past research (Ontakharaiia, Koul, & Nean, 2008 ); we selected sections that can answer that how students feel about their religion and life is that related with their aspiration index. The 13-item Attitude towards religion and 18-item Three categories of Materialism was used: Success, Centrally, Happiness. The participants were required to response 5-point Likert scale.

Analysis

Factor analyses by the exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation.
Pearson’s Correlation Analysis of Aspiration and materialism on achievement goal orientations.

(1) Intra-correlations between variables
(2) Aspiration and Goal orientation
(3) Aspiration and Life and Religion
(4) Life and Religion and Goal orientation

Results

Factor analyses

Aspirations scales factor analysis

The exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation of 35 items of ‘Aspirations scales’ shown only factors “Image” (e.g., to have my name appear frequently in the media) and factors “Physical well-being” (e.g., to have a physically healthy lifestyle), cumulative percentage of variance accounted for 60.86% of the total variance. Cronbach's alphas values were .800 and .819. Note that, Factor loading < .4 are suppressed.

Goal orientations scales factor analysis

The 18 items of ‘Goal orientations scales’ exposed tree factors, accounted for 56.96% of the total variance. Cronbach's alphas values of the factors “Performance avoidance goal” (e.g., I don’t want my teacher to evaluate me because she may find me incapable), “Mastery goal orientation” (e.g., I feel satisfied when I learn new things in my class) and “Performance approach goal” (e.g., I feel good when I do better than other students) were .841, .809 and .740. Note that, Factor loading < .4 are suppressed.

Life and religion scales factor analysis

Last of all, the varimax rotation factor analysis of 31 items of ‘Life and religion scales’ shown two factors, “Materialism” (e.g., I like a lot of luxury in my life) and “Religiosity” (e.g. my religion calms my emotions when I am upset or hurt) accounted for 55.13% of the total variance. Cronbach's alphas values of Materialism and Religiosity were .841, .809 and .740, Note that, Factor loading < .4 are suppressed.

Pearson’s Correlation Analysis

The Aspiration and materialism on achievement goal orientations Correlation analysis are shown in Table 1

Intra-correlations between variables

Correlation analysis shown that relationship within Aspiration and Life and Religion were positive related. Furthermore, Goal orientation shown that Mastery goal orientation were high related with Performance approach goal orientation (r = .316, p < .01) than performance avoidance goal orientation (r = .079, p < .01).

Aspiration and Goal orientation

We found positive related of ‘Image; more on Performance approach goal orientation (r = .359, p < .01) and Performance avoidance goal orientation (r = .279, p < .01), but very low positive related with Mastery goal orientation (r = .091, p < .01). Moreover, ‘physical well being’ positive related only with Mastery goal orientation (r = .309, p < .01), but negatively related with performance avoidance goal orientation (r = -.114, p < .01).
Aspiration and Life and Religion

Interesting point that ‘Image’ high positively related with ‘Materialism’ (r = .377, p < .01), but very low positive related with ‘Religiously’ (r = .125, p < .01). Thus, ‘physical well being’ shown small positive related with ‘Religiously’ (r = .230, p < .01), but negatively related with ‘Materialism’ (r = -.149, p < .01).

Life and Religion and Goal orientation

We found that, ‘Materialism’ was significant positive correlated to Performance avoidance goal orientation (r = .544, p < 0.01) correspondingly with Performance approach goal orientation (r = .450, p < .01), but no related with Mastery goal orientation. In addition, ‘Religiosity’ positively related with Mastery goal orientation (r = .375, p < .01) more than performance avoidance goal orientation (r = .112, p < .01) and Performance approach goal orientation (r = .076, p < .01)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Image (extrinsic aspiration)</th>
<th>Physical well being (intrinsic aspiration)</th>
<th>Materialism</th>
<th>Religiosity</th>
<th>Mastery goal orientation</th>
<th>Performance approach goal orientation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Performance approach goal orientation</td>
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</table>

** P< .01 ,  * P< .05

Conclusion

The aim of this survey study was investigated influenced factor and relationship between motivational goal orientation, intrinsic aspiration and extrinsic aspiration and religiosity of vocational students. Data for this survey study was collected from students enrolled in only main majors in Vocational Education Commission in Thailand which may have differences characters of students.

Our findings verify intra relation between goal orientation, strongly positive relation between Mastery goal orientation and religion outlook. In the other hand, Materialism and Image positive related to Performance goal orientation as well. This respects Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: self-growth, impression management and social comparison were discussed to understand all relationships. These results contribute to the literature on previous circumstances of Aspiration.

Student’s motivational achievement behavior is caused by many senses according to Maslow; Brophy, Eccles and Wigfield; Locke and Latham; Covington; Atkinson and Raynor (Dornyei, 2005). Aspirations be a great capable of describe a person’s reflection on their motivation which very important to predict student’s future choices of behavior, engagement, persistence and actual achievement. Moreover, materialism and religion orientation was considered that related with identity, personality, self-expression and image which linked to aspirations and vocational student motivation goal orientation.

Thai social characteristic (Komin, 1991), social-values, social hierarchy (Textor, 1992), religious-orientation and materialism in Thai peoples (Larry, 2008) are one of significant
factors that possibly influence Thai ways in education and future life goal which it contrast with western or event other Asian culture (Komin, 1991). Self-actualization by Maslow (Maslow, 1976) and self-growth in Thai-Buddhism wisdom (Klausner, 1993) possibly comparing to explain Thai life and aspirations. Collectivism thinking style of Thai student may relate with materialism and image (Hallinger, 2004).

Relevantly, our the understanding of motivational goal orientations, aspirations and religiosity oriented in vocational education student context be able to lead educator to encourage student to be self-motivated and achieving in their self-aspiration.

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World language education students’ inter-continental blogging during study abroad

Dana E. Webber,
The Pennsylvania State University, PA, USA
dew225@psu.edu
Orrin T. Murray, PhD.,
The Pennsylvania State University, PA, USA
orrinm@psu.edu

Abstract
This is a case study demonstrating how using a combination of modern digital tools such as notebook computers, the Internet, and video may contribute to beginning teachers’ development of competencies for language learning and teaching in ways that would not be possible without the devices. Part of a larger initiative, the specific piece of the program being reported involved eight (8) undergraduate World Language Education students who took an elective course that required them to blog amongst themselves from their host countries during study abroad; five (5) of them also volunteered to participate in a focus group interview a year later. Their original and follow-up statements tell their own stories of how this experience was, and will be, beneficial.

Keywords: Language Teacher Preparation, Study abroad, Technology

Introduction
Given the possibility that notebook computers with ubiquitous wireless Internet and affordances for viewing, editing, and producing video may be powerful learning tools for educators, researchers at a large Northeastern University in the United States were interested in exploring what would happen when K-12 World Language Education students had unlimited access to such tools and were able to communicate to teacher educators and peers via an institutional blogging platform about particular issues specific to their study abroad experience during the semester. This research project was part of a larger initiative called EDUCATE (Exploring Directions in Ubiquitous Computing and Teacher Education), which affected the two-year-long Methods block that participants had begun the semester before going abroad. EDUCATE’s original ideals focused on extending the support that the teacher preparation program could offer to World Language Education students (Murray & Zembal-Saul, 2008). In that spirit, Methods instructors had required that virtually every assignment for the block be submitted online; the first one was a language learner autobiography (Schumann & Schumann 1977; Bailey, 1983) in which each student posted on blog about the way they had been taught second languages and posted responses to their peers’ histories. Other submissions included lesson plans and commensurate reflections, self-critique aided by video footage of their teaching, methods and materials analyses, and so on. Image 1 below illustrates how participants were immersed in collaborative teaching and reflection (Dewey, 1910), in addition to the languaculture (Agar, 1994) being learned (LBL) – all under the umbrella of technology. It should be noted that academic blogging had been programmed into their World Language Education undergraduate curriculum, and therefore each student had experience with blogging before studying abroad.
This study differs from those done previously in that the online interaction takes place among U.S. students who are all studying abroad in different locations rather than between students of different nationalities or between at-home and study abroad students. Furthermore, it takes into account both linguistic and extralinguistic issues which are borne not from the online interaction itself but from interaction between the participant and the LBL that is subsequently discussed online. Additionally, communication is conducted mostly in English (to maintain accessibility to all participants) and sometimes in the LBL for the benefit of peers placed in countries with a similar languaculture. Finally, there were no contrived tasks to be completed between participants; students were to simply express personally salient facts about their experience regarding each short prompt and respond in kind (substantially rather than superficially) to those of their peers. They were encouraged to maintain an academic and thoughtful tone even while sharing their heartfelt feelings and reactions.

Method

Participants engaged in required study abroad in either Argentina, Ecuador, France, Germany, or Spain consented for researchers to collect and analyze online submissions on a central website (see Image 2 below) for an optional Methods course called “World Languages Connections.” Required topics were entitled “Arrival, Family, Home, Routine, School, Town, Politics, Entertainment, Economy, and Return to the U.S.” Other posts included cultural observation reports and summaries of interviews with host community members. Blogs were monitored and minimally moderated by a World Language Education Methods instructor. The purpose of the exercise was for World Language Education students to connect cultural-linguistic and pedagogical knowledge to practical application in furthering their own and others’ education.
Researchers’ questions and subquestions addressed what technology use can contribute to World Language teacher preparation during study abroad that cannot be achieved without it. For example, is technology utilized to facilitate discourse in a way that is not able to be accomplished by other means? And if so, how does this potential contribution support developing language teachers’ abilities to teach a second language? Furthermore, researchers sought to discover participants’ perceptions of technology. How often the topic was broached without prompting and what was said about it (whether prompted or not) was expected to indicate whether changes in attitude toward technology occurred, and if so, whether participants believed that such change was pertinent to their becoming a better teacher. Data included blog entries, responses, and focus-group interview answers. The overall hypothesis was that this activity would contribute to the evolution of participants’ competences related to pedagogy, language, and / or culture in a unique way; thus, it would inform evolutionary World Language Education Methods practices at University level.

The number of participants listed for Inter-continental blogging is only a fraction of the original Methods block cohort due to the timing of abroad experiences (spring versus summer) and the choice to opt out of the elective course being researched. Data sources most pertinent to inter-continental blogging are highlighted below as well (See Image 3). Data was collected with minimum disturbance to participants. To protect privacy and confidentiality, a random pseudonym was assigned to participants and people they referred to prior to data collection.

As participants submitted assignments on blogs, pdfs were made of all blog posts and comments as they appeared in the virtual environment. A preliminary read of the data was done, and pdfs were filed in two different arrangements for subsequent reviews: per student, and per assignment, as shown below in Image 4. Looking at the data by assignment allowed researchers to become familiar with each assignment and general themes that arose within it.
from the corpus altogether. Reviewing the data by individual student allowed researchers to consider how each individual responded personally to each assignment. An additional pass through the posts and comments focused on where the course purpose was being enacted: what cultural-linguistic and pedagogical knowledge participants claimed to have gained, what they said about it, and how it was responded to by their peers. Subsequent passes revealed that passages of learners’ threaded discussion fit into an Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) framework developed by Byram (1997). Evolution of ICC in students’ blogs appeared similar what Elola & Oskoz (2008) described in reference to a different type of blogging. During the final passes, those interactive quotes were placed within the most pertinent ICC category.

**Image 4**

**Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment 1</th>
<th>Pseudonym1</th>
<th>Pseudonym 1</th>
<th>Assignment 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pseudonym etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 11 etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results**

Adapted from Byram (2000), Table 1 below lists five (5) ICC categories and their definitions. Tables 2a-e that follow it illustrate categorized blog discussions demonstrating ICC-building potential in posts (P), responses (R), acknowledgements (A), and additional responses from other participants (R2, R3), through quotes and per location. AS1 = Alicante, Spain: Student #1; AS2 = Alicante, Spain: Student #2; BA = Buenos Aires, Argentina; MG = Marburg, Germany; PF = Paris, France; MPF = Montpelier, France; QE = Quito, Ecuador; SS = Salamanca, Spain. As Byram suggests, feelings (F), knowledge (K), and action (Act) are shown in posts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICC category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own; interest in other people’s way of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>about another country and culture of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>evaluating… on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries; ability to change perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills of discovery, interpreting and relating -</td>
<td>ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Cope with living in a different culture</td>
<td>operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P / R</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>• I wonder why it is that the dancing little girls shocked me so much. Is it that it was actually something bad? or is it that the US has ingrained in our minds that it is bad? Because, I mean, if that had happened in the US, I feel as though it would be considered not exactly child pornography, but somewhat close. I mean, with all the people watching and cheering it on and everything.</td>
<td>QE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I had a culture shock of my own. Botellón is very popular here, especially with the younger kids 14, 15, 16, and maybe even younger … standing on the pier along the water just drinking.</td>
<td>AS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>• I only eat free-range meat in the States. So, basically, I'm like a vegetarian since free-range meat is so expensive. While I was here, I didn't want to make things difficult for anyone and I wanted to try new things, so I've been eating meat.</td>
<td>QE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 2a  
### Attitudes Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>&quot;I have issues with texture mostly. But I've eaten everything that's been put in front of me here. I even ended up eating joue de boeuf.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&quot;So, cow cheek, huh? Sounds to me like that would have an interesting texture&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>&quot;I'm going to practice tomorrow to tell the girls I'm not playing, but I'm worried about how this is going to affect my experience with them. I wonder how our own decisions can make or break our study abroad experiences. I wonder if anyone has come across those make or break decisions yet.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>&quot;How did telling the girls you're not playing anymore go over? … I hope that this decision does not affect your experience in a negative way-I'm sure the girls will be understanding, health does come first, please! No more collarbone (sic) breaks for you, or any breaks I hope!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&quot;As for rugby, telling the girls went fine. It was no big deal and they totally understood. The coach said that I was more than welcome to continue training with them and just play non-contact … I practice again tomorrow.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Table 2b  
### Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P / R</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>&quot;As many of you living in Europe may have found, smiling is frowned upon - literally… I smile, and get a blank face in return. It is a general thought among Germans that Americans are very superficial&quot;</td>
<td>MG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| R     | "I was cracking up when I read, "Smiling is frowned upon." ¡Qué lista eres! ...aka You're clever!... I knew people here don't smile, but I did it anyway b/c it's habit. However, a few dirty looks and a couple unwanted advances later, I quit that habit cold turkey ;)
In regards to your wondering, I don't think I was informed, nor was I misinformed. I don't believe you can learn culture from a book."                                                                 | AS1      |
<p>| A     | &quot;I know what you mean when you say that you can't learn culture from a book. It really is true. There is no way to teach cultural norms, etc. You just have to experience them. Plus, adapting is the fun part.&quot;                                                        | MG       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>During Carnival, it is custom to throw water at people and spray them with foam.</th>
<th>QE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>We participated in Carnaval this weekend too...I think our Carnaval is about 5, too. I got so many good ideas for next Halloween! I was really impressed with how creative and good all of the costumes that I saw the Spanish people in. Also, I didn't know about the history. That's really interesting, and I had no idea. And I'm pretty sure we don't do the bull fighting with Carnaval.</td>
<td>AS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>I think it is super interesting to see how everyone's Carnaval is different. Here everyone dresses up...I mean everyone--from little niños to people who are the same ages of our grandparents and older.</td>
<td>AS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>… I know some people who traveled south for it, and they expected it to be a lot more festive.</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P/R</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>• Why is it that Spain has been able to keep its tuition costs down, but schools in the States keep hiking them up.</td>
<td>AS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>• I definitely agree with you about the money situation. It is very hard living here especially with the conversion rate. I have also noticed the price difference with the University...because I live in the dorms. It only costs 400 euros per year (Fall, Spring, and Summer) to live in the dorms... It is a little frustrating, but in the end you have to remember that we are receiving one of the best educations. People I know in Spain do not do nearly as much as we do when it comes to education.</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Critical Cultural Awareness Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>• That is definitely true about the education and I am glad that we've been a part of the … program at …</th>
<th>AS1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>• …the frustration I experience at times with the other kids in my program. We all came here to study and learn Spanish, but we all speak in English. If study abroad was meant to be easy they would call it vacation. Of course there are times when I want to speak in English, but as the old saying goes, &quot;When in Rome...&quot; Also, as if we didn't already stick out enough, the huge group of kids speaking English definitely seals the deal.</td>
<td>QE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>• As for your other frustration, you're really putting things into perspective for me. I agree… I think a lot of people feel that way, but also feel foolish if they are speaking Spanish and then the person they're speaking to is speaking in English… But yeah, I'm going to try to start making more of a conscious effort to speak less English and more Spanish. In response to your wondering about what the Spaniards must think when they hear us not even trying to speak Spanish, it made me think of times when I've been in Redifer and there would be a few native Asian speakers near me. And I always thought it was weird that they would speak their native language in public, but I was never offended, or it never bothered me. Yet yesterday, in Granada, I was doing something in a big group, and we were being loud, obnoxious, and speaking English. That was when I realized that the people around us were probably realized that the people around us were probably annoyed, because I know I would have been.</td>
<td>AS2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Skills of Discovery, Interpreting, and Relating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P / R</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>• The attitude of the teachers is also much different... Professors here do not want to be &quot;bothered&quot; by their students. They come to class, give their lecture, and then leave. It's more than likely that they will not stay to talk to you and answer your questions. One of the IES students tried to introduce herself to her professor, and he left without a word. Students here are expected to be much more independent than in the States.</td>
<td>PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Hey Kendra! ...I am the only foreign kid, not just American, foreign kids. 50 Spanish kids and me. The professor will listen and he does answer back, but not for long. He always seems to be busy after class, but he's always 10 minutes late and doesn't answer e-mail. I am lucky to have a friend or two that I made the first day of class when the professor didn't show because she is more than a miracle.</td>
<td>AS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F: La cosa que no me gustó fue un bocadillo con berenjena fria y algo como &quot;cream cheese&quot; en pan blanco.</td>
<td>AS1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: “berenjena…” No sabía la palabra en Inglés.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>And our grading system's out of 10 points too! The other day I got something back and it was marked 7'75 (with an apostrophe). I was really disappointed in my grade, but that's not considered a bad grade here.</td>
<td>AS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>... a lot of teachers don't use a lot of points. For example, one of my big exams was only out of 10 points … I'm used to big tests being out of 100 points, so that was a little weird when I got my test back</td>
<td>QE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2e  
**Ability to Cope in the LBL Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P / R</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Do Ecuadorians judge me differently when they see me with my exchange group? Often, when I am alone, people (Ecuadorians and people from the US) think that I am from here, and they start talking to me in Spanish, but when I'm with my exchange group, they automatically know that I'm not from here.</td>
<td>QE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Coping Continued**

| R | • F: About the being judged thing …  
|   | K: let's face it, I don't look like I have Spanish heritage  
|   | A: We were in the airport and the guy asked me a question in English… I automatically answered him in Spanish. With a very surprised tone of voice he says, "Oh, you speak Spanish?" and we continued the rest of the passport checking in Spanish. | AS1 |
| P | • Are people noticing that you are from the USA, and how are they reacting to this? I found this to be very challenging this past weekend, and it is extremely unfortunate. | SS |
| R | • I haven't really had a lot of people recognizing me as an American. I'm pretty happy about this. … I always at least attempt to communicate in French, unless it's a tourist who very clearly speaks English. Unfortunately, this plan has a tendency to backfire. A lot of the French seem to speak very softly, or I'll be talking in a place where there's a lot of noise (the metro, a store, a tourist location, etc.). If I ask them to repeat themselves or say that I didn't hear, they automatically speak in English. | PF |
| A | • I have that problem too with simply not being able to hear people! | SS |
| R2 | • I'm going to comment on your response to Natalie's comment. I can't even tell you how many times someone has said something to me in Spanish and I either didn't hear them, didn't realize they were talking to me, or wasn't fully paying attention so I say "qué" (what) and they assume I just didn't understand and start talking to me in English. It's so frustrating, because once they go into English, it's hard to get the conversation to go back into Spanish. My new way to counter this situation is to put my hand up to my ear as I say "qué" so they know it's that I just didn't hear them. Also, sometimes, I just go, "¿Qué? No puedo oír nada." (What? I can't hear anything.) It seems to help. Not to mention, I've also been trying to meet more people that only speak Spanish. | QE |

In addition to the categorized blog entries above, participants posted without being prompted the many ways that they employed blogging, Skyping, and texting to benefit themselves and others; and they planned to use technology for language teaching and learning in the future:

• I really did enjoy this blog. These are things that I actually have thought about a bit.
• I was just reading your blog only to realize that I had to react to it. Lucky me! I did the work without realizing it =)
• … the use of technology was key. I spent two full days in Spain sky[p]ling with 6 middle school Spanish classes. I made a powerpoint with pictures and I talked to them about them...Where I was, what I was doing, things I had tried, etc. They asked excellent questions and it was so cool to see their interest.
• I am also not supposed to comment on yours either Jane, but I thought I would leave a comment. It made me so happy to read both of your comments about learning German! Do it!

Furthermore, when asked during focus group a year after study abroad, participants said that blogging contributed to their learning through increased time on task, inherent repetition, built-in comparisons, community building, automatically-archived documentation to revisit, and maintenance of relationships with people in host countries; they claimed that they felt less isolated during study abroad than they would have felt without blogging, and said that they continue to use technology to help themselves and students. They claimed that the online environment was natural, informal yet professional, and that the discourse was genuine. They added that they were thankful for the experience and that it should be required.

Discussion

Intercultural Communicative Competence is a priority in language teaching because ideally a language learner will develop into an ‘international speaker,’ and go even beyond relating well with an ‘other’ toward helping to facilitate that process on a broader scale (Byram, 1997; Elola & Oskoz, 2008); moreover, given the challenges of possessing and imparting “all the knowledge that learners will need … it is important to help learners develop skills that allow them to recognize and resolve misunderstandings, discover new knowledge, and apply that knowledge to new circumstances” (Elola & Oskoz, 2008, p. 456) on their own. These skills involve interpreting and relating, plus discovery and interaction (Byram, 2007, p. 61), which includes an awareness on the learners’ part that their own values play a role in how they evaluate and respond to those of others (Byram, 2007, p. 63). Beyond that, Yam (1984) suggests that typically, students differ from their teachers in age and often in background; therefore, the student is ‘other’ and teachers should learn not just to say or do things but how to go about those functions in the classroom. ICC may lend teachers insight to that end.

Evidence in the form of quotes from participants’ postings in the blog site interaction suggest that the type of online activity described here can help World Language Education students further their development of ICC. On the blog site, participants indeed explored and shared ideas about types of attitudes, knowledge, awareness, skills, and abilities described by Byram (1997, 2000). In this collaborative online reflection it appears that participants encouraged each other with problem solving techniques and ways of thinking about issues that they may not have come up with on their own in isolation. And it is difficult to imagine how this discourse could have been supported between students living so far away from one another without the technology that was used. Researchers have noted that the asynchronous quality of this online interaction “gives students the opportunity to reflect carefully on what they want to explain, to search for factual and statistical information to support their ideas, and to phrase what they mean more carefully” (O’Dowd, 2006, p. 108). It also overcomes constraints of time zone difference that may interfere with attempts at synchronous discourse.

Conclusion

In this case, it seems that technology – blogging in particular – was used to facilitate discourse in a way that may not have been able to be accomplished as well by other means. The extent that this could contribute to evolution of World Language Education students’ competences as developing language teachers is great in the realm of Intercultural Communicative Competence.
For this reason, it is recommended that Methods course instructors of World Language Education consider such blogging as a learning tool for World Language Education students during the semester abroad as part of a larger program infused with collaborative teaching and reflection supported by technology. Image 6, below, is a sample model of such a program.

Image 5

References


The portrayal of a new linguistic identity among young Malaysians on Facebook

Azianura Hani Shaari, Academy of Language Studies, University Teknologi Mara Malaysia, Malaysia. yan_hani@yahoo.co.uk
Associate Professor Dr. Lee Su Kim, School of Language Studies and Linguistics, University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia sukim25@yahoo.com
Associate Professor Dr. Siti Hamin Stapa, School of Language Studies and Linguistics University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia sitihami@pkrisc.cc.ukm.my

Abstract

Online communication settings provide a stage for its users to behave the way they always wished to behave or to say words that they are not allowed to utter in face to face conversations due to certain perceptions and prescribed cultural values (Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2006). This paper discusses the findings of a research study that seeks to investigate how Facebook may perform as another platform in altering or even reconstructing certain identities among its users. As an individual’s identity is signified through the patterns of language he employed, it is observed that the new pattern of language in online interaction settings might contribute to the changes and reconstruction of identity among its users. This is basically determined through the use of certain words, contents as well as synchronized language patterns employed by its users. With the corpus of 324, 362 words of Online Communicative Language derived from a one year of Facebook-conversation among 120 young Malaysians from different ethnic groups, mother tongues, and cultural backgrounds, it is hoped that the study will gain insights into the real scenario behind the practices of online writing and communications among the young Malaysians; which somehow signifies a reconstruction of an online identity among the young users; regardless of the cultural differences and backgrounds they carry in real life. Virtual Ethnographic was employed, which involved daily observations and documentations of actual conversations on Facebook in a period of 12 months. Looking beyond words, data were then analyzed using Content Analysis, in identifying the relationship between language, ideologies and the signification of identity reconstruction process. The study managed to provide some new insights on the issue, in researchers’ attempt to help reducing the barriers among online users of different generations in Malaysian society.

Keywords: Online communicative language, online communication setting, identity

Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to find out whether the content, features and patterns of online communicative language signify the reconstruction of identity among young Malaysian-Facebook users. By comparing some values observed by those who practice the traditional Malaysian cultures given by early researchers with the current scenario, discussion of findings revolves around the issue of identity reconstruction and the acquisition of some new or foreign values amongst the new generation in Malaysia, in online communication settings.
Traditional Values of Malaysians

Malaysia is very well known as a multicultural country that consists of people from different races and beliefs where the Malays, Chinese and Indians stand as the three major ethnic groups of the country. The preservation of different cultural values and practices whilst maintaining the peacefulness and harmony among its people makes this country a very unique and charming land to explore. One of the factors that contribute to this harmonious life is the resistance of certain ethical values being practiced by the people such as humility, peace, responsibility, respect, simplicity, tolerance, unity and many more. In defining Malaysian cultures, there are some common values that can be seen through the patterns of communication amongst the people and these values somehow shape the unique traditional identities of the entire community.

Firstly, the traditional Malay community is very recognizable with the attitude of ‘un-openness’ in many ways of their conversation. To avoid the feeling of dissatisfaction on the other party, they do not express both positive and negative feelings too openly. They also believe that this way of conversation will maintain the sense of respectful towards the others; hence the good relationship will be sustained within each other. To preserve harmony, the truth may not always be out in the open conversation. “There is an emphasis on a high context form of communication” (Asmah, 1996: 19). This indicates how traditional Malays would normally pay attention to their surroundings, communication purposes as well as their audience in their daily conversation, as words and ideas are never express directly in order to maintain solidarity and protect each other’s face. As the concept of ‘face’ is highly valued in the Malay culture, indirectness is highly emphasized in their communication strategies.

Chan (1992) analysis on traditional values of the Chinese summarizes that the values of family and filial piety is among the most prominent in Chinese culture. These values would include the reverence and paying respect towards the elders and early ancestors. “Harmony is a keynote of existence. Individuals strive to reconcile divergent forces, principles and point of view to maintain harmony” (Chan 1992a:211-17 as quoted in Irwin 1996:38). With all the great values being taught in Confucian teachings, the Chinese always try to avoid argumentations and ‘face’ is highly protected in their conversation. Politeness and gentleness play crucial roles in their strategies of communication. Like Chinese and Malays, the Indians who observe traditional culture also preserve the same cultural values in their norms of interaction. Face saving, politeness, and indirectness are three important aspects that are very synonym with their pattern of interaction. Valentine (1994) study revealed that the elements of politeness are very well marked in their daily conversation strategies.

In facing the demand of the global work place and modernization, the modern Malaysians then began to adopt and adapt many foreign values and practice them in their daily life. These modern Malaysians who practice new values such as being open minded, practice the spirit of competitiveness and accept challenging ways of getting things done, had passed this new set of norms and values to their children who stand as today’s new generation of modern Malaysians. And this new set of norms and values are highly reflected in their styles of conversation. There are some major events occurred in the country that contribute to the changes of values, ideologies and perceptions among the Malaysians, which lead to the modification of language usage and their patterns of conversation. The acquisition of English for instance, gradually led to the infiltration of the other cultures into the community. The use English Language has brought so many impacts on Malaysians’ attitudes of communication as well as some changes in their traditional values and identities (Lee Su Kim, 2010).

With the advent of information and communication technology nowadays, the development of language, culture and identity can no longer be seen as a stagnant process. By taking place in online communication settings, it is believed that English language is now expanding and branching itself into another variety of Online Communicative English
(Ferrara, Bruner and Whittemore 1991; Crystal, 2006), which somehow reflects the identity of its own speech community.

**Theoretical Framework**

**The Relationship between Language, Society and Identity**

As one’s identity or identities are signify through the patterns of language, choice of words or phrases, symbols, grammatical forms and linguistic consistency he uses, it is therefore important for the researcher to identify the patterns of Malaysian Online Communicative English Language before coming to a proposal of whether this new pattern of language in online interaction environment contributes to the construction of a new identity among its users, especially among the young users in Malaysia. This paper however will only discuss the final part of the entire research, which aims to find out whether the new features and patterns of online communicative language signify a reconstruction of identity among the participants on Facebook.

The fact that language is highly related with one’s identity is always undeniable. Lee Su Kim (2003) found that, towards certain extent, language does bring impact on one’s development of identity. Kramsch (1998) explains that “language expresses cultural identity, as it is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value”. In other words, language plays an important role in signifying one’s identity. As language functions as a representation of one’s identity, other important criteria that come together with this would be the cultural values and norms, interpreted through the use of certain words and styles, in people’s conversations. Lee Su Kim’s (2001, 2003, 2005, 2010) years of research on the constructions of one’s identity through the use of English in Malaysian context found significant variables in studying the formation and reconstruction of one’s identities.

The first variable is “neutrality and directness of English” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 31). It explains how speakers feel more comfortable to express their feelings and emotions using the English language compared to their first language due to the intercultural knowledge that comes together with the language such as being direct and open minded. Another variable would be the “reflective, decentering quality of English” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 34), which explains how English brought impacts on speakers’ identities, broadening their mind and perceive things such as their own and others’ cultures from different perspectives.

As one’s identity is not stagnant, it changes and modifies with different social functions, settings, and roles that people normally play in many situations. The differences of identities are portrayed through the use of certain words, the patterns of language, intonations and many more. A person might use certain jargons and words he won’t be using in formal situations as they may not be understandable by everyone. As one basically makes his identity visible through the language he uses, it is clearly stated that language and identity are somehow intersected with one another. The differences of languages, choice of words, sounds or dialects not just indicate one’s social belonging, but also deliver information about the speaker’s background, cultural values, belief, and personality as well as education level.

Joseph (2010) outline several reasons contribute to one’s constructions of identities. It is noted that the formation of identity of an individual or a group of people relies upon several important phenomena. The first phenomenon is when members of one speech community share the same norms (Joseph, 2010). Joseph (2010) brings out the concept of “interpretative community” (Joseph, 2010; 14) which describes one community that shares the same norms through their readings, whether it comes from their education, common reading materials or even media and communication. As identities developed through one shared ideology (in some situations), members of this community might not have any direct physical contact with one another, but they are somehow connected by sharing the same beliefs and set of norms.
through their readings practices that create certain ideologies. Next, when a group of people have the same interests towards something for quite some times which encourage them to take part in one common activity and share one particular pattern of language pertaining to the activity. This pattern of language may only understandable by members of the same speech community. Thirdly, when a group of people “shares a deep cultural unity” or agreement (Joseph, 2010; 15) through one shared language that somehow create an invisible bond (Fichte, 1808), where “nature has joined those who speak the same language” (Joseph, 2010; 15). It may be not the language itself that unite the people, but the constant use of certain expressions, jargons, or words in that particular language transmits or forms a new culture, thus shape an identity.

Meanwhile, Bucholtz and Hall (2010:19) also propose a few approaches and principles of the formation of one’s identity, with some are equivalent with Joseph (2010). Some of the important principles in the study of identity would include:

The Emergence Principle

The Emergence principle describes how identities actually lie in a person’s mind, where language reflects one’s “internal mental state” (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010: 19). One’s patterns of language signify his identity and it is basically established through his own self-perception. A person self-perception or self-conception process may change with time, probably due to identity crisis and self adjustments. The establishment of one’s self-conception in forming identity would probably refer to his ability to locate himself in one particular community. Self-conception is also highly related to one’s personality, gender, ethnic groups, attitudes and sometimes academic, occupation and physical characteristics.

The Positionality Principle

The principle basically considers one’s social categories such as age, gender and social class. Examining one’s identity/identities from wider social perspectives, Bucholtz and Hall, (2010: 21) highlight that, Identities consist of: 1) “macro level demographic categories” (such as age, gender, location); 2) local, ethnographically specific cultural positions; and 3) temporary and internationally specific stances and participants roles” (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010: 21).

Indexicality Principle

Indexicality principle defines how linguistic patterns signify one’s identity. As indexical literally means a relationship or some state of affairs, the word index in this context would refer to “a linguistic form that depends on the interactional context for its meaning” (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010: 21). In the process of one’s construction of identity, one basically relies upon his believes and cultural norms that shape certain ideologies. Indexicality principle suggests that a person’s ideologies play an important role in determining the way or patterns of language he should produce. “A sentence that would be appropriate if uttered in one context can seem rude or crazy in another” (Johnstone, 2010: 30). Indexicality suggests that there are a few ways oh how phenomena, including the linguistic

The interrelation of language, culture and identity is also demonstrated in one single concept known as “Identity-Communication Continuum” (Kirkpatrick, 2007) that displays how language is being used in different functions; be it for communication purposes or the establishment of one’s identity purposes. When language users try to fit in or establish themselves as a member of one speech community, they will basically use the informal variety of the language. This particular variety may be intelligible among the members of its speech community and not the others. It also reflects certain features and aspects to indicate their identity such as the influence of cultures, mother tongues and beliefs. As a variety (or
varieties) of one language pronounces one’s identity may not be understandable by the others, speakers may switch to a more standard variety for other communication purposes. These communication purposes include communication in formal settings, and informal settings involving larger group of speakers; with no intention of proving certain identity or claiming certain membership of any speech community.

**The Study**

As the need to understand the new generation basically starts with the need to understand their language, taking part in virtual communities dominated by these people will definitely provide some meaningful insights. What makes this study different from the others would be, apart from its focus on the local context, it also aims to see whether the use of Malaysian online communicative English contributes to the alteration and reconstruction of one’s identity. This assumption stemmed on Lee Su Kim (2010) who states that, “multiple identities seemed to be fostered through ownership of multiple languages, allowing participants to switch and ‘mask’ their identities, dependent on the changing context” (Lee Su Kim, 2010: 89). Lying on several other studies and findings (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010; Johnstone, 2010; Joseph, 2010; Lee Su Kim, 2010), it is assumed that the emergence of Malaysian online communicative English may also contribute to the development of a new identity among the youngsters who seem to be the dominant members of most virtual communities in online communication settings.

**Methodology**

There were two research tools involved in this study, Virtual Ethnography and Content Analysis. Stemmed on the traditional method of ethnographic research, virtual ethnography focuses on the Internet, as a place where real humans’ interaction and communication takes place. Transferring ethnographic research method to Internet research has been accepted as another way of studying humans’ patterns of interaction and identity, in online settings (Markham, 2004; Kendall, 1999). “Reaching understandings of participants’ sense of self and of the meanings they give to their online participation requires spending time with participants to observe what they do online as well as what they say they do” (Kendall, 1999:62). Content Analysis on the other hand, is used to identify the occurrence of certain words, phrases, characters or sentences contained by texts. There are several purposes of Content Analysis, which include to interpret the attitudes and behavioral responses to communications and to discover one’s meaning and purposes as well as the communication trends of an individual or community (Palmquist, 1980).

120 respondents from three major ethnic groups in the country (Malays, Chinese and Indians) took part in online communication as real social networkers on Facebook. The group of sample consists of 30 Malays, 30 Chinese and 30 Indians; equally divided into 15 male and 15 female participants for each ethnic group. Participants included both males and females; aged between 18 to 24 years, from different urban areas around the country. Sample is also a group of college students from various higher institutions around the country. The rationale of selecting the participants stemmed on the fact that this is the group of people who are born and brought up in this Information Age where technology plays a pertinent role in determining one’s life (Baron, 2006; Thorne, 2008) and identity. With such claim and assumption, it is believed that the youngsters are the most potential group of people experiencing this language shift and identity reconstruction phenomena.

Daily observations were made in a period of 12 months and all conversations were documented as a raw data to be analyzed using Content Analysis. Coding scheme and categorizations are identified, personalized and modified before establishing it according to
the words’ consistency, with few consistent categories being added and also omitted during both pilot and real analysis. Data were analyzed using WordSmith Tools 5.0.

**Pilot Study**

Pilot study involved the first 30 respondents’, consist of 10 Malays, 10 Chinese and 10 Indians equally distributed to 15 males and 15 females. Conversations are documented in a period of 12 months. The purpose of pilot study is to identify some regular words to be included in the coding schemes and words’ categorizations. It took almost 3 months for the analysis to be completed as it was done manually, which is by examining every single word and feature occurred in the entire conversations. Even though the use of computers in content analysis is undeniably important, it is believed that in situations which require meticulous investigations, manual observation is believed to be more effective. This is supported by Prasad (2008) as he postulates, “when text must be searched for ideas or themes, or when coding ‘contexts units’ with an eye for, let us say, ascertaining direction of treatment – then human coders are more sensitive than computers” (Prasad, D. 2008: 16). Regular words and features are documented, categorized and coded under certain groups and patterns. Each categorization then is broken into smaller units.

Compilation of data involves all ‘Facebook daily updates (“what’s on your mind” or simply known as ‘status’), comments made on others’ status, as well as all conversations with the others that include identified participants, displayed on his or her wall. Collection of data includes all different types of conversations that appeared on participants’ wall. However, conversations produced by the others that also appeared on participants’ wall are not taken into consideration. The categorizations and coding schemes are made with the help of WordList function provided by WordSmith Tools 5.0. This software provides a list of words derived from the entire corpus, from the highest to the lowest frequency, thus makes it easier for the researcher to identify, allocate and categorize the most frequent and synchronize words into several different sections.

With the help of Word Count Function provided in WordSmith Tool 5.0, a twelve month of Facebook-daily conversation is finalized and gathered, made up of 324,362 words. The unequal number of corpus for each ethnic group however, is due to the different length of daily conversations that were naturally produced by participants. It is found that Malay female participants had the longest length of conversation on Facebook, followed by the Indian female participants whilst the Indian male participants showed the opposite.

**Findings and Discussion**

Finding led to two major factors involved in the reconstruction and alteration of identity among the participants, which are:

1. An alteration of identity through the synchronized patterns of Malaysian online communicative English.
2. Being frank and direct as opposed to the traditional indirectness communication strategies: a reconstruction of identity through the change of norms and cultural values shared by participants.

An alteration of identity through the synchronized patterns of online communicative English language: another sub variety of Malaysian English

As noted by Wong (1978), one of the prominent remarks or significations that pronounce the identity of a community can be seen through the sharing of one particular language pattern or similar language variety. The similar patterns and features of a language employed by one community somehow demonstrate the unity and language ties that connect these
people together (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010; Johnstone, 2010). With the entire corpus of 324, 362 words documented in one year- Facebook’s conversations engaged by 120 participants from three different ethnic groups, one significant finding of the study is the same pattern of language appeared through various types of respelling phenomenon (Shortis, 2007).

Among the popular patterns of language emerged in this online writing activity are partial spelling modifications (31 103 units), which involves minor changes of spelling, such as ‘wat’ for ‘what’ (3448 units), ‘oso’ for ‘also’ (1541 units) and ‘fren’ for ‘friend’ (1144 units) and modifications of spelling that sound like the spoken or Colloquial Malaysian English (3236 units), which involves a total alteration in spelling such as ‘oni’ for ‘only’ (500 units), ‘wif’ for ‘with’ (662 units), ‘ma’ for ‘my’ (2071 units) and ‘tok’ for ‘talk’ (175 units).

One interesting finding is the replacement of /th/ sound by /t/ as well as /th/ by /d/ which was recorded by Wong (1978) in the spoken Malaysian English among her participants 33 years ago which appeared in the data, but in a different version of online communicative language. This signifies how the participants are actually transferring the same patterns employed in their spoken language into their online writing practice. Finding therefore proposes Malaysian online communicative English language as a spoken language in an online- written form. With such attempt of transferring the colloquial Malaysian English (spoken language) into an online writing practice, it is fairly relevant to assume that Malaysian online communicative English also has its own unique features that represent the identity of its users. The following table demonstrates the overall finding:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronized Patterns of Respelling Phenomenon:</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Descriptions and Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Partial spelling modifications</td>
<td>31 103</td>
<td>minor changes of spelling, such as ‘wat’ for ‘what’ (3448 units), ‘oso’ for ‘also’ (1541 units) and ‘fren’ for ‘friend’ (1144 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Modifications of spelling to sound more like Colloquial Malaysian English spoken language/dialect</td>
<td>3236</td>
<td>involves a total alteration in spelling such as ‘oni’ for ‘only’ (500 units), ‘wif’ for ‘with’ (662 units), ‘ma’ for ‘my’ (2071 units) and ‘tok’ for ‘talk’ (175 units), ‘seyes’ for ‘serious’ (31 units), ‘rite’ for ‘right’ (887 units), ‘reli’ for ‘really’ (270 units), ‘bufday’ for ‘birthday’ (913 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The replacement of “th” sound by “t”</td>
<td>5243</td>
<td>‘tat’ for ‘that’ (2127 units), ‘tis’ for ‘this’ (1264 units), ‘tink’ for ‘think’ (218 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The omission of one of more consonants</td>
<td>9040</td>
<td>‘don’ for ‘don’t’ (2319 units), ‘wen’ for ‘when’ (1174 units), ‘yer’ for ‘year’ (160 units), ‘yu’ for ‘you’ (392 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Replacement of “th” sound by “d”</td>
<td>8032</td>
<td>‘den’ for ‘then’ (637 units), ‘dis’ for ‘this’ (862 units), ‘de’ for ‘the’ (2714 units), ‘da’ for ‘the’ (2842 units), ‘der’ for ‘there’ (257 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The loss of vowels in spelling</td>
<td>2203</td>
<td>‘gud’ for ‘good’ (1586 units), ‘luk’ for ‘look’ (97 units), ‘mit’ for ‘meet’ (36 units), ‘nid’ for ‘need’ (289 units), ‘rum’ for ‘room’ (71 units), ‘skul’ for ‘school’ (103 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fillers</td>
<td>47 086</td>
<td>28 types of tail words in phrases and sentences such as ‘lar’ (1021 units), ‘dei’ (502 units), ‘lo’ (2208 units), ‘meh’ (575 units), ‘ni’ (5151 units), ‘hor’ (394 units)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 105 934 units
Not just that, findings also indicate how Malaysian online communicative English actually met the characteristics of a variety such as first language interference and localization of various terms (Kirkpatrick, 2007), an adaptation of non-standard dialect (normally found in spoken language) into online writing practice, and many more. Generally, it is believed that Malaysian online communicative English does not just stands as a mere trend, but in the process of establishing itself as another sub variety of Malaysian English for its users. Findings also significantly categorized the language as a low variety or local dialect and this supports Crystal (2006) who proposes online communicative language as a new variety of English language. As Wong (1978) defines Malaysian English as a variety that represents its speakers, which they feel “very much belongs to them and forms a part of their identity” (pp. 101), it is fairly relevant to assume that the existence of Malaysian online communicative English as another sub variety would also defines its users’ identity, which provide a sense of belonging for its users. The uniformity of language patterns employed by 120 participants from three different ethnic groups in the country has actually bonded these people together, in a very unique way.

**Being frank and direct as opposed to the traditional Indirectness Communication Strategies: A reconstruction of identity through the change of norms and cultural values shared by participants**

In one’s experience of identity reconstruction or alteration, he mainly relies upon his believes and cultural norms that help form certain ideologies (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010; Johnstone, 2010). Findings indicate a clashing of values performed by some participants compared to the traditional values prescribed in their culture. This includes a linguistic attitude that totally against the perceived expectations for their gender. In other words, some participants showed a total diverse of linguistic behavior from what they are expected to perform, or they might be performing, in real life.

Through the process of meaning making, it is observed that participants actually express their ideologies, perceptions and cultural values through the language they used. It demonstrates the essence of “neutrality and directness” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 31) as users found their convenience to express their feelings and emotions in the English language; compared to their first language that comes together with certain cultural boundaries and restrictions. This significantly supports the first finding of this section as 2220 units of words, which were traditionally perceived as ‘taboo words’, being uttered on public by participants in their conversations on Facebook. These words, which might be perceived as normal in other cultures, are indicated as offensive and rude in traditional Malaysian cultures. As the following table demonstrates, the use of taboo words on Facebook indicates how online communication platform as an outlet to convey certain feelings, thoughts and expressions that are culturally restricted in real life.

The study recorded 2220 units of taboo words, being used on Facebook. One of the most interesting findings would be the use of the word ‘bi**h’ that is widely used by the female-Malay participants (37.5 % or 30 units from the total of 80). As female-Malay youngsters are expected to show some good values of graciousness, soft spoken, courteousness, and many more that reflect their sense of femininity and traditional culture, it is therefore quite surprising to see the widespread use of vulgar words such as ‘bi**h’, and ‘f**k’ among these participants. As noted by Asmah Abdullah (1996), finding however is in contrast with the values and communication behavior that they are expected to perform in real life. One assumption that can be made is that Internet allows participants to violate certain values that they feel no longer suitable for them.
Apart from that, it is also learned that most of these taboo words sometimes performed as a joke, to express anger as well as just a plain statement. The following excerpts are taken from the female-Malay conversations on Facebook:

Sample 1

*New b**ch in town... LOL (laugh out loud)*

Sample 2

*You might be sweet, but im the b**ch.*

The above Sample 1 and 2 demonstrate how some of these girls actually used the word ‘bi**h’ to describe themselves. This somehow indicates an acceptance and adaptation of some new values, and linguistic identity among the new generation. One significant suggestion that can be made is that there exist a clashing of values demonstrates by the youngsters compared to the ones prescribed and practiced by the early generation who observed traditional Malay culture that extremely forbids the use of such words in one’s conversation. As the word ‘bi**h’ is a taboo word in the Malay society (and still remain as a taboo word for others from the older generation as well as those who practically observed the traditional values); the finding however, showed a different interpretation and some sort of ‘acceptance’ towards this word, as well as the other foul words being used.

Asmah Abdullah (1996) describes how the traditional Malay culture basically perceives communication as a prominent aspect that signifies many values of the culture. Words are carefully selected and soft intonation is used in order to maintain a good relationship with the others. “There is an emphasis on a high context form of communication. This means that in interacting with others, both verbal messages and circumstances surrounding the communication event must also be taken into consideration” (Asmah Abdullah, 1996: 20). Vulgar words are strictly forbidden as protecting one’s face is always an ultimate priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word 1 unit = 1 word</th>
<th>Malay Female</th>
<th>Malay Male</th>
<th>Chinese Female</th>
<th>Chinese Male</th>
<th>Indian Female</th>
<th>Indian Male</th>
<th>Total (unit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F<strong>k/f</strong>king</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S**t</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy f**k</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy s**it</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damn</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funny s**t</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F**k up</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dum***s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi**h</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As**ole</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With their social position or hierarchy that is slightly lower than the men, Malay women who practice traditional culture are expected to be silent, submissive, obedient, and loyal (Asmah Abdullah, 1996). Their voice is not heard and arguments are prohibited especially towards the men who hold higher position in the family such as the father, husband and elder brothers. Not just that, the Malay women who observe traditional Malay culture are also not encouraged to have an eye contact in conversations with those who stand at the higher social hierarchical position, as a mark of humility, obedience and submissiveness. Since this value may no longer suitable for females in this modern civilization, findings support Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, (2006) on the switched of identity among their participants, in virtual communication settings. Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, (2006) describe the phenomenon as an act of rebellious behavior towards certain restrictions prescribed by their culture and community. 

With such conjectures, it is highly believed that online communication settings provide a stage for its users to show their true colours, behave the way they always wished to behave and say words that they are not allowed to utter in face to face conversations due to certain perceptions and prescribed cultural values. “We characterize a number of participants as engaging in individual acts of gender rebellion against emphasized femininity, a discourse that reinforces women’s subordination to men. By contrast, we found girls bending and switching gender to improvise nonconformist femininities and learning to express parts of themselves that they had been made to feel were taboo offline…” (Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2006: 22).

The use of other words such as ‘f**k’, ‘s**t’ damn’ and ‘as**ole’ among the Malay girls for instance, highly signify a huge transformation of ideologies as well as interpretation of values among the participants. Not just the Malay girls, the use of vulgar words is actually very common among participants regardless of ethnic groups and gender.

The use of taboo words as descriptive words in recounting bad situations

Another scenario is the use of vulgar words for friendly purposes among the male participants but not the females. Unlike the males who use vulgar words in more friendly situations, where vulgar words occurred in the middle of conversations that revolved around friendship and daily activities, the female participants on the other hand employ these words in more intense situations. The female participants normally use vulgar words to express certain feelings of hatred, irritated, annoyed, as well as dissatisfaction. Some situations that support the assumption can be seen in the following excerpts.

Sample 3:
M: WTF today got school

Sample 4:
S: RED DEVILS game ea pg ni??huhuu...i hope this F**k team will 'BALIK KG' huhuu

Sample 5:
J: Eleh, u bukan guy. F**k loi, dorang kata nnti nak suro botak. Mmg tak ah.. Choooooiid!!!
J: They wanna touch my hair. I swear if they touch it, I'll sue them! Suka hati I la nak rmbut mcm mana. Choi!
In Sample 5, J, a Malay girl expresses her disagreement towards the requirement of one training program that obliges all participants to get a haircut. J insisted that she would never follow the instruction and will take legal action if she is forced to do so. As noted by Lee Su Kim (2003) in the quality of “neutrality, and directness” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 31), J might have found a more effective way of expressing her dissatisfaction, which is by mixing English, Malay and Chinese languages in her conversation instead of just expressing it in her mother tongue (the Malay Language). By using the words ‘f**k’ as well as ‘choi’ which means ‘bad luck’ in Chinese language, J expresses her dissatisfaction towards one training program she is attending, which requires the participants to cut their hair.

The above samples clearly point out how female participants use vulgar words in describing situations that involved emotionally disturbances and conflicts. These Malay girls who practice some new values that totally go against the traditional values appeared to be more blunt and outspoken in conveying their feelings of anger and depression. It is also observed that the acquisition of this new value (being frank and direct) in communication does not only limited to female-female conversations, but also in conversations involving participants from different gender. It goes in contrast with the traditional Malay values that are very well known with their attitude of indirectness in most parts of their conversation. Asmah Abdullah (1996:77) demonstrates how indirectness is employed in the traditional Malay cultural values:

> Malays are also uncomfortable in giving and receiving direct verbal criticism as it may cause the recipients to lose face. When it is levelled at them, they may show their displeasure in very indirect ways such as avoiding any form of face to face contact and not showing their support for the sender of the message. If the criticism is severe enough, it may even damaged the relationship, and this is often irreparable...Being frank and direct in one’s intentions are usually not compatible with being respectful...Hence, it can be discomfiting for Malays to ask blunt, challenging and direct questions as they can be seen to be insensitive (Asmah Abdullah, 1996:77).

It is clearly shown how direct criticisms and being blunt are highly prohibited in the Malay traditional culture. As the change of values would interpret the change of identities, it is therefore conclude that today’s youngsters do not observe these traditional values as a part of their personality as they are no longer suitable with their modern lifestyle. It is fairly relevant to suggest that these participants are at the brink of acquiring a new identity and cultural values that might be passed to their next generation.

The used of English surnames

The last phenomenon is the switched to English surnames combined with participants’ real Malay names such as ‘Winchester’, ‘Apple’, ‘Stewart’, ‘Rogers’ and ‘Pinkish’ as a common phenomenon among the Malays who speak entire English on Facebook. Among the factors contribute to this phenomenon is the privilege of presenting oneself virtually without having a real physical contact in online communication settings. As Internet allows users to switch, modify or even put on different identities for different reasons and purposes, Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie (2006) found that, “without a physical body and visual style cues immediately marking gender, early proponents of the Internet imagined cyberspace might free people from social positioning to explore different facets of their identity” (Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2006: 9). Identity switching through various nicknames is not an unusual phenomenon in virtual communication settings (Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2006). What makes the above scenario different from Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie (2006) would be the switched to English surnames, to be appeared as someone from a totally different culture, beliefs and background (the westerner) is somewhat interesting to be highlighted. The use of English language could be one of the factors...
contribute to this trend since it is also found that such phenomenon (the switched to English surnames) does not occur among the Malays who use the Malay language on Facebook. Again, it supports Lee Su Kim (2003) concepts of “neutrality and directness of English” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 31) where speakers found the convenience to express certain feelings and emotions using the language as well as “reflective and decentering quality of English” (Lee Su Kim, 2003: 34), which proposes that the acquisition of this language that bring impacts on the speakers’ identities as it helps broadening their mind in order to judge and see things from different cultural perspectives.

As for the Chinese and Indians, having an English name (as their first name) is seen as a normal phenomenon in the country, in representing their belief and religion. This is however, not a usual phenomenon among the Malays in their real life unless the person is naturally born in a mixed marriage family. The use of English language is seen as a prominent factor contributes to this phenomenon. It supports Kramsch (1998) who stresses that, “when language is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways…language expresses cultural identity, as it is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value” (Kramsch, 1998:3). As English language allows users to cross certain borders beyond their traditional values (Lee Su Kim, 2003), online communication settings moreover, provide a stage to role play such identities. Virtual world allows the participants to carry a different identity and personality, allow them to become the exact person they ever wished to become in the real world, a platform for one's realization of another identity that somehow affects and reconstruct their existing identity in the real world. This is supported by Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie (2006) as they found that “many reported that online activities allowed them to rehearse different ways of being before trying them out in offline situations, where they might have been (or were) reined in or shut down for going against perceived expectations for their gender” (Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie, 2006: 11).

**Conclusion**

There are three words to describe identity; adaptable, flexible and modifiable. One’s identity is never static and permanent, as it is altered and adjusted with different social functions, settings, and roles one play in many situations. For instance, one may not portray a casual identity in a formal situation, and vice versa. The differences of identities are signified through the choice of words, the patterns of language, interests, attitudes, perceptions and many more. A person might use certain jargons and words he won’t be using in formal situations as they may not be understandable by everyone. As one basically makes his identity visible through the language he uses, findings clearly stated that language and identity are somehow interrelated with one another.

Perceptions and ideologies underpinned one’s identity thus demonstrate certain values they wish to portray. As these elements are interrelated, with language stands in the middle of each process and phenomenon, based on the findings, the demonstration of identity reconstruction process via language is summarized at the following figure:
Findings also demonstrate how the shift of values might also be portrayed through the use of certain words and patterns of language. The differences of languages, choice of words, sounds or dialects not just indicate one’s social belonging, but also deliver information about the speaker’s background, norms and values. As virtual communication provides a shield that helps users to conceal their real identities, it provides a new stage for them to bring out certain identities and attitudes that might be forbidden in their real life. As people are expected to behave according to certain values prescribed in their culture, internet offers unlimited boundaries to cross over various languages, norms and cultures. This study however has a number of caveats. As the research only focuses on a group of 120 young Malaysian Facebook users, it is however too early to verify and substantiate this claim on the entire change or prominent reconstruction of identity among all users around the country. Still, one conclusion that can be made is that findings significantly indicate an initiation or a beginning process of identity reconstruction among the participants. Therefore, further research studies are highly needed pertaining to the same issues and concern, using different social networking tools, settings, as well as participants from various cultures and socioeconomic background.

References


Dispelling the myths in regards to bilingualism: effect on bilingual education models

Dr. Lucia Buttaro
Adelphi University (United States)
Buttaro@adlphi.edu

Dr. Graciela Helguero-Balcells
Florida Atlantic University (United States)
gracielaHB@aol.com; ghelguer@fau.edu

Abstract

When one looks at the term bilingualism, all too often there is a negative connotation of what this implies in the educational system at the K-12 level, likewise at the higher education level. There is a misnomer that such a model is just fomenting the lack of integration in the mainstream classroom. This is totally untrue. Dispelling the myths of the bilingual models is what will be presented in this session and indicating the effective manner that this educational model can be utilized to develop programs across the United States and Europe. The first item that needs to be realized is that the myths must be refuted so as to show the errors of understanding of this educational model. Research has indicated that the bilingual model is beneficial to the learners and enhances the learning process, many times exceeding the benchmarks that are put in place. Presently the Bologna Agreement of Europe with the Common European Framework of Reference for language acquisition is a model that must be looked at in regards to the learner's ability of being bilingual or trilingual. There is a move to the trilingualism which in the near future, in many parts of the world, will need to be studied. In the United States there needs to be a greater push for bilingualism.

Keywords: heritage for today's bilingual education classroom

Introduction

When defining bilingual education the Department of Education has stated it is: "...the use of two languages, one of which is English, as mediums of instruction for the same pupil population in a well-organized program which encompasses part or the entire curriculum and includes the study of history and culture associated with the mother tongue. A complete program develops and maintains the children's self-esteem and a legitimate pride in both cultures" (Guthrie, 4). There are two ways of implementing bilingual education which are either the two way bilingual education or the one way bilingual education. In the case of the two way bilingual all students develop dual language proficiency as a result of getting instruction both in English and another language. The curriculum is geared to be taught in both languages. Here all the learners have an opportunity to achieve a knowledge base and proficiency in the languages. The one way only targets the group of learners that are English Language Learners only hence the bilingualism is achieved for them. In preserving their native language it gives them the advantage to compete in the work force later on. From a historical viewpoint the issue has been a roller coaster and to date the issue is still being debated.

In early 1967, Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas and six others co-sponsored Senate Bill 428, a bill that eventually became the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. More than 100 witnesses testified in favor of Senate Bill 428 during the Senate labor and Public Welfare Committee’s Special Subcommittee on Bilingual Education Hearings, and several major arguments in support of bilingual schooling for Spanish-speaking students were advanced.
(Lyons, 1995). Four arguments follow: (1) to prevent the scholastic retardation which resulted from providing English-only instruction to children dysfunctional in English language skills (though they arrived at school with at least an array of conversational abilities in Spanish), (2) to stem the psychological oppression experienced by Spanish-speaking students in all-English classrooms, (3) to prevent the loss of Spanish-speaking students’ potential; bilingual development, and (4) to promote effective home-school collaboration (Lyons, 1995).

**Preventing scholastic hindrance**

Spanish-speaking children, especially Mexican American children in the American Southwest, had experienced decades of English only instruction in public schools. The expectation was that these children would integrate successfully into the unilingual educational system. However, data regarding dropout rates in several Southwestern states revealed differently. In his testimony to the Senate, Senator Yarborough stated the following:

The problems of Spanish-speaking children are highlighted by a survey that has been made of the median number of years completed by all people of Spanish surnames in the Southwest. The 1960 census showed of all people of Spanish surnames, those in Arizona had completed an average of 7 years of schooling; in California, 8.6 years of schooling; in Colorado, 8.1 years of schooling; in New Mexico, 7.7 years of schooling; but in Texas, only 4.7 years of schooling (United States Senate, 1967, p. 267).

Senator Yarborough also noted that, in these states, Anglo students 14 years of age and over had completed an average of 12 years of schooling (United States Senate, 1967). Clearly, Spanish-speaking children were not benefiting scholastically from all-English instruction. Bilingual education, it was argued, would not only enable these children to learn English through the use of the home language, but likewise process school curriculum accordingly. At the time, information regarding the implementation of a successful bilingual education program (Coral Way Elementary School) in Dade County, Florida was available (Mackey & Beebe, 1977), and promising experimental bilingual education programs had been launched in Texas, New Mexico, California, Arizona, New Jersey and St. Croix, Virgin Islands as well (Castellanos, 1983; Keller & Van Hooft, 1982).

**Stemming psychological oppression**

The onset of the First World War I 1917 “fostered sentiments of nationalism and isolationism in United Stated society, and existing concepts of cultural pluralism shifter toward the idea of cultural assimilation of all ethnic groups into a common monolingual, monocultural, English-speaking society” (Ambert & Melendez, 1985, p. 5), and these sentiments continued until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Minority ethno linguistic groups “were expected to learn English, forget their native language, and adopt the American way of life” (Ambert & Melendez, 1985, p. 5), particularly through English-only schooling.

Throughout the aforementioned period, Mexican American students were punished if they spoke Spanish in school. The “No Spanish Rule” was an educational policy that “emanated from the belief that Mexican American culture was inferior and damaging, i.e., that it interfered with intellectual and emotional development” (Ramirez, & Castaneda, 1974, p. 107). This practice was adopted by many school systems in Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and California to discourage Mexican American students from speaking Spanish. A San Antonio Mexican American student gives a verbal account of the “No Spanish Rule” and its effect on his self-concept:
If they caught you talking Spanish, they would send you to the office and give you a warning. They would give you along lecture about, if you wanted to be an American, you have got to speak English. And you were not a very good American ... I mean; they are telling you that your language is bad. You hear it at home. Your mother and father speak a bad language, and you speak a bad language (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1968, pp. 189-190).

During the Bilingual Education Hearings, expert witnesses commented “on the psychological damage which such practices rendered unto millions of children” (United States Senate, 1967, p. 1), especially Spanish-speaking children in the five Southwestern states. Bilingual education, it was argued, would enable Spanish-speaking children to develop a positive self-concept via curriculum and pedagogy that validated their native language and culture while they internalized English and school culture, thus benefiting from a culturally pluralistic learning environment. The National Education Association of the United States (1966) reported that “Spanish properly used could be a bridge to the learning of English instead of an obstacle and the Mexican American students could become truly bilingual and bicultural” (p. IV). This publication was “an important part of the Senate hearing record” (Lyons, 1995, p.2). An aspect that has not been taken into consideration is the study of Ellen Bialystok which determined that “those who had been bilingual since youth and who used both languages regularly” (Krashen 2010 p. 29) would maintain their mental youthfulness longer than monolinguals. This is both an educational and health issue that should be considered.

**Preventing the loss of potential bilingual development**

Spanish-speaking children took their ethnolinguistic and sociocultural heritage to school. School culture required socialization and learning solely in English. Spanish-speaking students’ success depended on their ability to learn English and process subject matter in English effectively. Doing so meant that students were grade-level proficient in English. But Spanish-speaking students were not developing English literacy accordingly. The English-only approach in educating Spanish-speaking students was ineffective (National Education Association of the United States, 1966) and accounted primarily for the dropout rates of these children in the five Southwestern states (United States Senate, 1967). Bilingual education, many witnesses felt, would enable Spanish-speaking children to use the home language and culture to adapt positively to the culture of the school and learn content area material, thus developing literacy-related proficiency in the language they knew best. Building a solid schooling foundation in the home language and through the use of culturally relevant instruction was seen as essential in developing classroom proficiency in English (National Education Association of the United States, 1966), hence the pathway for potential bilingual development.

**Promoting effective home-school collaboration**

Mexican American parents were affected by the all-English functioning school as well. While they were predominantly Spanish-speaking, matters associated with school events, including their children’s school behavior, academic achievement or underachievement, and extracurricular activities were conducted solely in English. This dual communication dysfunction produced disconnectedness between the home and school. Thus, Spanish-speaking children were the avenues of contact and information sharing between both entities. A witness stated the following during the Bilingual Education Hearings:

The only contact the school has with the parents is the children and the only contact the parents have with the school are the children. But the child is neither bringing from home to
share at school, nor does he take home to share with his parents (United States Senate, 1967, p. 308).

The witness further added:

When the little ones go home and their mothers ask, “¿Qué aprendiste hoy?” [“What did you learn today?”] The answer usually sounds like this, “Quien sabe! No le entiendo a la maestra,” [“Who knows! I don’t understand the teacher,”] or if he has learned a few words, a few sentences in English, he’ll repeat them to his mother and she’ll answer, “! Quien sabe que dirá! Yo no entiendo inglés, dimelo en español.” [“Who knows what you’re saying! I don’t know English, tell me in Spanish.”] After a few days or weeks she stops asking and he stops sharing (United States Senate, 1967, p. 308).

The above exemplified the disconnectedness between the Spanish-speaking home and the English-only functioning school. Bilingual education, many witnesses argued, would establish effective collaboration between the home and school via teachers, counselors, administrators and other school personnel proficient in English and Spanish bilingualism and biculturalism. Liaison between the school and the Spanish-speaking family was seen as another important component to students’ success (United States Senate, 1967).

The Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee’s Special Subcommittee on Bilingual Education Hearings concluded on July 21, 1967. After much congressional deliberation, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Bilingual Education Act on January 2, 1968, “making bilingual education a federal policy for the first time in the history of the United States” (Faltis, 2006, p. 29). While Senate Bill 428 was originally intended for Spanish-speaking students, especially students of Mexican American descent, the Bilingual Education Act “adopted the broader approach” (Leibowitz, 1980, p. 17) and authorized the utilization of federal monies for the education of non-English speaking students (Baker, 2006).

Effective programs in bilingual education

The long road of creating equitable opportunities for English language learners continues to this day in most parts of the country. In order to better serve the English language learner population in Texas, the Successful School Study was conducted as a result of a recommendation made in a report to the 75th Texas Legislature from the Texas Education Agency and as part of the Commissioner’s Educational Research Initiative for 1998-99. The study started in March of 1998. The principal investigator for the study was the Program Evaluation Unit in the Office for the Education of Special Populations at Texas Education Agency. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi provided the research support for the study. The purpose of the study was to profile the programs, policies and instructional practices of successful schools for Limited English Proficient students. The Texas Education Agency and the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas identified seven school sites during a study of twenty six high achieving, high poverty schools in Texas. These schools also had over a forty percent Limited English Proficient Population. The seven schools were selected from a group of 26 Title I recognized schools in Texas, and also had zero LEP exemptions on the state assessment (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) and a rating of the “Recognized” or “Exemplary” on the Texas accountability system in May of 1997. The seven successful schools selected for the study were Bowie Elementary and Clover Elementary in the Pharr, San Juan, Alamo ISD; Campestre Elementary in Socorro ISD; Castaneda Elementary in Brownsville ISD; Kelly Elementary in Hidalgo ISD; La Encantada in San Benito ISD, and Scott Elementary in the Roma ISD (Texas Successful Schools Study, 2009).
This study was to examine the significant features of successful programs for Limited English Proficient students as evidenced by the 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 results of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), the state of Texas accountability measure for grades 3-8 and 10. The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was a criterion referenced test administered for grades 3-8 and 10 (exit level) in reading, mathematics, and writing (English) in the spring of each school year. The subject areas of TAAS used in granting the ratings are:

Reading (given across grades 3-8, 10)
Mathematics (given across grades 3-8, 10)
Writing (given only in grades 4, 8 and 10)

For a campus or district rating of Exemplary, at least ninety percent of the total students in each subgroup must pass each section of the TAAS. For a campus or district of Recognized, at least eighty percent of the total students in each subgroup must pass each section of the TAAS. For a rating of Academically Acceptable a campus or the district, at least forty percent of total students and students in each subgroup must pass each section of the TAAS. Those district (or campuses) not meeting the standard for Academically Acceptable (or Acceptable) or higher and not achieving Required Improvement in the low performing areas will be rated Academically Unacceptable (or Low-Performing). Subgroups that are included in the comparisons for the ratings are free and reduced lunch vs. non-free and reduced lunch, male and female, and the ethnic subgroups, Hispanic, White, and African American. The tests were administered and taken in English (Texas Successful School Study, 2009).

The focus of the study, at first, was to look at the 2005-2006 school year and to examine what were the characteristics of the different groups that may have contributed to the success of Limited English Proficient Students. Later, the researchers and the Texas Education Agency personnel decided to examine data over three year period. In all cases, the schools either sustained the same accountability rating, or improved. Most recently, the accountability ratings related to the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), the new Texas state assessment, were also examined. As a result the Texas Commissioner of Education and the Texas Education Agency Division of Special Populations were interested in the characteristics of the schools, the administrations, faculties, programs, and the parents of the LEP students that had demonstrated success with Limited English Proficient populations on the TAAS.

**Research design and methodology**

In researching the characteristics of these seven successful schools, the methodology used in this study is of a descriptive nature. Descriptive research is used in the literal sense of describing situations or events. It is the accumulation of a data base that is solely descriptive, and it does not necessarily seek or explain relationships, test hypothesis, make predictions, or get at meanings and implications, although research aimed at these more powerful purposes may incorporate descriptive methods (Isaac & Michael, 1981).

The methodology is an operational framework within which the data collected are placed so that their meaning may be seen more clearly. Two major approaches are used for collecting and analyzing data: quantitative and qualitative. This study uses both the qualitative and quantitative approach. The qualitative approach is typically used to answer questions about the nature of the phenomena with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participant’s point of view (Leedy, 1997). Qualitative researchers regard their research task as “coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992,
Although qualitative research may not explicitly address the issue of generalizability, the concept of transferability is similar (Leedy, 1997).

Quantitative research seeks to explain and make predictions that will generalize to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, conform, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory. Quantitative research has been used in some parts of the study.

The research questions addressed were:
1. What are the district leadership practices that facilitate academic and linguistic growth/success for Spanish language minority students?
2. What are the campus leadership practices that facilitate academic and linguistic growth/success for Spanish language minority students?
3. What are the characteristics/traits of the teaching staff that facilitate academic and linguistic growth/success for Spanish language minority students?
4. What are effective teaching practices that facilitate academic and linguistic growth/success for Spanish language minority students?
5. What are the characteristics/traits of parents and parental involvement on the seven campuses?
6. What are the characteristics of program(s) serving language minority students?
7. What are the goals/expectations for the learners in the bilingual program?

Data Collection:

The study data gathering included a teacher questionnaire and interviews with the district administrator responsible for the district bilingual education program, campus administrator questionnaire and interviews, parent interviews, and on-site school classroom visitations by the research team. The teacher and principal questionnaires were designed and field tested by Mr. Oscar Cardenas of the Texas Education Agency Special Populations Division in the fall of 2005. Subsequently, the number of questions on the teacher questionnaire was expanded by the Texas A & M Research Team. The questionnaire included multiple choice, yes-no, open ended, and liker type questions. Teacher questionnaires were subsequently mailed to all seven schools by the Texas A & M Research leader for distribution to the bilingual teachers that taught at the school during the years designated to the study. Those questionnaires were filled out before hand and brought to the on-site interviews. Principal questionnaires were filled out during the onsite interviews.

The onsite visits consisted of a two day visit to five of the schools and a one day visit to two of the schools during the spring semester of 2006. During the school visits, the research team members had interviews with the district administrator (bilingual coordinator/director), the campus principal, teachers and parents. Classroom visits were conducted at each school site to observe the bilingual classroom for effective bilingual education classroom practices that were consistent with the current research. The research team visited and observed in each classroom for about 30-45 minutes. Non-bilingual education classrooms were also observed to see what effective teaching practices were also present throughout the school. Researchers noted anecdotal records and took notes during observations in the classrooms.

Collected data was then analyzed by members of the Research team. Triangulation, used in all types of qualitative research, is the process of using multiple data collection methods, data sources, analysts, or theories to check the validity of the findings. If similar themes are noted in data collection form the different sources, the credibility of the interpretations is enhanced. The research team collected the data from the district level perspective, the campus administration, teacher, and the parent in an attempt to validate the findings of the study.
Analysis of the data:

The study findings are being reported to support the research questions. Additionally, the data is being divided according to the data collection procedures used, specifically teacher questionnaire responses, teacher interviews, campus administrator interviews, district bilingual director interviews and parent interviews. Each one has a specific target that is being looked at so as to compile a holistic report.

District and Campus Leadership

There are several district leadership practices that facilitate academic and linguistic growth/success for language minority students in this district. In their recent study on effective practices for improved student performance, the Texas Center for Educational Research (2005), points to essential resources for schools. District support for teacher and administration professional training includes regular training practices. Throughout Texas schools, the rate of principal training practices occurs over 54% of the time while teacher training occurs 63% of the time. According to Garcia (1998, p. 77).

…the call for teachers as public and critically engaged intellectuals and cultural workers places teacher work at the forefront of pedagogical politics that raises questions, subjectivist knowledge with which they labor, and pushes classrooms toward a democratizing notion concerning schooling.

Along with the district the campus leadership has indicated that the principals of the successful schools had extensive training in bilingual and ESL education with a Master’s Degree in Bilingual Education. They had also been a bilingual or a migrant teacher thus having knowledge of bilingual education philosophy and theory. Here the question becomes the budgetary parameters to sustain this type of program in the future.

Certification can prove to be essential in the process of a program … several organizations have developed guidelines and certification standards for teachers who work in English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual programs. These standards build on basic program standards and also include proficiency in written and oral forms of two languages, as well as skills in developing students’ language abilities (Hakuta, et al, 1997).

The principal was an instructional leader monitoring and visiting classrooms frequently during the week, focusing the teachers on instruction through vertical and horizontal planning on a weekly basis, and empowering them to make instructional decisions in their classrooms. Teachers expressed that they felt that the principal was collaborative in their leadership with high expectations of the staff and the students. Such practices are reflected in the professional literature,

…specific characteristics crucial to the development of effectiveness and thus to a positive school social climate in bilingual schools include: a safe and orderly school environment, common agreement on a strong academic orientation with clearly stated academic goals, objectives and plans, well organized classrooms, and well-functioning methods to monitor school inputs and students’ outputs (Carter & Maestas, 1982).

One of the focuses of the principal was in providing staff development to the teachers in the area of literacy development on a yearly basis. Updating teacher knowledge makes the difference for students daily through dynamic learning. It is through professional development that the instructors will be better equipped to meet the needs of their learners. The principal also keeps informed on student test scores through open communication with the faculty. An awareness of the quality of testing can make a difference. Additionally, the principal is also made aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff through daily classroom visits. Being very familiar with the community is a key component for
administration and the educators. Parents commented that they felt welcomed at the school which bridges the relationship for the assistance of the learners in the long run. In addition, the social climate is often determined by the principal and her attitude toward the community, “…a well-functioning total system producing a school social climate that promotes positive student outcomes is one characteristic of an effective bilingual school,” (Carter & Maestas, 1982).

Altogether, the characteristics of the principal lay the groundwork for success in the total school program,

…the following attributes are identified as being associated with effective schools and classrooms: a supportive school-wide climate, school leadership, a customized learning environment, articulation and coordination within and between schools, some use of the native language and culture in the instruction of language minority students, a balanced curriculum that incorporates both basis and higher order skills, explicit skills instruction opportunities for student-directed activities, use of instructional strategies that enhance understanding, opportunities for practice, systematic student assessment, staff development, and home and parent involvement (Hakuta et al, 1997).

Teaching Staff

All the teachers at the school are bilingual or ESL certified, which is essential to long term success in the program, (Hakuta et al., 1997). Most of the staff taught at the school for more than ten years, and they attribute this longevity and stability as contributing to the success of the students. There are teachers from Mexico on the staffs of some of the schools that know the finite points of the Spanish language and are able to teach Spanish Language Arts with a high degree of proficiency.

Teachers believe all students can learn and have high expectations. They described themselves as caring, but structured in their approach to the delivery of the curriculum. Second language learners’ success is often predetermined by teacher expectation, (Hakuta et al., 1997). These educators meet on a weekly basis for either vertical or grade level planning. During the planning, the teachers develop six weeks plans to address the needs of the students. Ensuring internal support through regular planning periods creates a successful school climate in the school, research indicates that the successful:

…climate includes the following components: high staff expectations for children and the program, strong demand for academic performance, high staff morale. High staff morale includes the following: strong internal support, consensus building, job satisfaction, sense of personal efficacy, sense that the system works, sense of ownership, well defined roles and responsibilities, belief and practice that resources are best expended on people rather than on educational soft and hardware (Carter & Maestas, 1982).

The development of teacher made materials and teacher designed thematic units enrich the curriculum. They are also able to discuss the progress of students during the planning meetings, and thus able to closely monitor the progress of each student through open communication. Teachers have a limited use of dittos, and they focus on direct, large group instruction, small group activities, and cooperative learning.

Teaching Practices

There are many practices that facilitate the academic and linguistic growth/success for language minority students. The use of both Spanish and English for direct instruction was evident in all classrooms. This is necessary for success with second language learners and does not impede progress in English (August & Shannah, p. 375, 2006). Instruction
delivered in the primary language can have a profound effect on the development of academic English. First, the primary language can be used to teach subject matter. If children know subject matter, they will understand much more of what goes on in the classroom in English, resulting in more acquiring of language as well as knowledge. Secondly, the primary language can be used to develop literacy, which transfers to the second language. There is strong evidence that programs that utilize the first language in this manner are effective in promoting academic English language development (Krashen & Biber, 1998). Willig (1985) and Wong-Fillmore and Valadez (1987) addressed the extensive comparative literature on instructional practices that contribute to the literacy development of bilingual populations. Almost all of these studies included Mexican-American students. Willig (1985) used meta-analysis to combine academic achievement scores from a large set of statistically unrelated studies. This meta-analysis indicated that bilingual education programs significantly enhanced academic achievement, in comparison to English instructional programs. Wong-Fillmore and Valadez (1986) conducted a more traditional review of related independent studies and they reached the same conclusions. Teachers acknowledge equal prestige to both the English and Spanish languages during instruction, and when eliciting student responses, an essential characteristic of success, (Carter & Maestas, 1982; Hakuta et al., 1997). Most recently the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth (August & Shannahan, p. 357, 2006) concluded, “In summary, there is no indication that bilingual education impedes academic achievement in either the native language or English …”

The classroom environment is rich in both English and Spanish materials. Feuerverger (1994) noted that children who made greater use of books in the first language provided by the school had “a greater feeling of security in their cultural background.” Teacher made materials in both English and Spanish were also readily available in the student centers, one of the components of successful bilingual programs, (Carter & Maestas, 1982). There is also an emphasis on vocabulary development through weekly focus in two languages is affirmed by the meta-analysis conducted by Dr. Jay P. Greene, Assistant Professor of Government at the University of Texas Austin which found that after studying seven bilingual education studies involving 2,719 students, 1,562 of whom were enrolled in bilingual education programs in thirteen states found that bilingual education had been successful. According to the study results students with limited English proficiency who have been taught in bilingual programs have performed significantly better on standardized test than similar children taught only in English.

Conclusion

Though hard work and collaboration, the seven successful schools have demonstrated that students can become bilingual and bi-literate if successful practices are implanted by a caring, well trained, and knowledgeable teaching staff. The importance of the leadership of the principal and his or her commitment to developing a systematic program of instruction that benefits all children and focuses on the educational needs of the English language learners is imperative. With this focus comes the support of the central administration of the district and the parents. Working together in a collaborative and collegial manner, the goals of bilingual education, bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism can be accomplished.

The Successful School Study highlighted the many positive practices that are being implemented in bilingual schools to help English language learners become successful in the school curriculum. It is imperative that we continue to nurture the second language development of students so that they will be able to be efficacious in the global market of the future. Are we truly preparing our future generations to be competitive in a global economy by not encouraging the development of bilingualism and biculturalism? Bilingual education has proven to be an effective program for not only developing language but also to develop
the cognitive abilities of students. We must all continue to explore the benefits of bilingualism and encourage programs that promote this benefit for our students and take note of those programs in other parts of the world that have implemented this modality of education.

References


Case-Based Pedagogy Using Student-Generated Vignettes: A Pre-Service and In-Service Language Teacher Intercultural Awareness Tool

Amy Cournoyer.
Lecturer in Education,
Boston University, School of Education, Boston, MA, USA
suecq77@aol.com

Abstract

This qualitative study investigated the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy as an instructional tool aimed at increasing intercultural awareness and competence in the preparation of 18 pre-service and in-service students enrolled in an Intercultural Education course offered in a second language teacher education program at a post-secondary institution. Each participant generated a vignette based on an instructional challenge identified and/or a learning challenge experienced in an intercultural educational setting. The instructor-researcher used the case method approach in the analysis of the 18 student-generated vignettes. Using Shulman’s (1986) conceptual framework of teacher expertise as the target for investigating the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy as a teacher preparation tool, the study sought to identify aspects of teacher knowledge and teacher thinking about intercultural education that were facilitated via the use of case-based pedagogy. Interviews, video-taped discussions, pre and post-case discussion reflection papers, and critical incident reports were coded. The results of the correlation and case study analyses indicate a strong influence of case-based pedagogy on teacher knowledge of the variety of ways in which culture shapes us all; teacher capacity to relate theories to personal and professional intercultural experiences; teacher understanding of how cultural factors impact educational contexts; and teachers’ self-reported abilities to design lessons as well as curricula that promote intercultural awareness in second language educational settings.

Keywords: case-based pedagogy, language teacher education, intercultural awareness

Case-Based Pedagogy Using Student-Generated Vignettes: A Pre-Service Intercultural Awareness Tool

As the student population in our schools becomes increasingly diverse and the world is more interconnected than ever before due to the phenomenon of globalization, there is an urgent need for teacher educators of all disciplines to develop in pre-service and in-service teachers the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively instruct in and prepare their learners for intercultural contexts (Banks & Banks, 2009; Crawford, 2004; Nieto, 2000). Most recently, scholars in the field of second/foreign language teacher education--aligned with standards of cultural competence and goals for cultural learning--have begun to call for the integration of intercultural awareness training in pre-service and in-service language teacher education programs. This advancement is largely influenced by studies that focus on the seamless relationship between second/foreign language teaching and culture teaching, especially over the last decade with the writings of scholars such as Byram (1989; 1994; 1997a; 1997b) and Kramsch (1988; 1993; 1996; 2001). Broadly defined, intercultural awareness refers to an understanding of one’s own and others’ cultures and the ability to comprehend and explain cultural differences; recognizing people have different values, different behaviors and different approaches to life (Byram, Neuner, & Zarate, 1997). Historically, the field of second/foreign language teacher education has been situated within and impacted by the broader academic milieu of general teacher education which, in over two
decades of research, has also demonstrated the paramount importance of intercultural awareness training in teacher education programs through movements such as multicultural education reform and global citizenship education (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Lee, Okazawa-Rey, & Menkart, 2007). The research in the above areas has led to the recognition in the field that second and foreign language teachers need to make their learners aware of and provide them with the tools to analyze the cultural phenomena in their own society and others and they need to help their learners acquire the skills, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness necessary to communicate interculturally (Byram, 2001; Kramsch, 2009). Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged in the literature that second and foreign language teachers need to be able to anticipate and understand their learners’ diverse needs and backgrounds and differentiate instruction accordingly (Field, 2000; Willems, 2002).

In exploring ways to modify the core curriculum in language teacher education programs so as to achieve these goals, researchers conclude that intercultural awareness can only be taught via explicit training (Fox & Diaz-Greenberg, 2006; Sharkey & Johnson, 2003). Specifically, language teachers have to become familiar with basic insights into ethnography, cultural anthropology, anthropological linguistics, culture learning theory, and intercultural communication (Dunnett, Dubin & Lezberg, 1986; Sercu, 2002). Moreover, since language teachers are asked to teach for intercultural understanding, they need explicit training in strategies addressing social and cultural values, the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity, and citizenship (Kelly, Grenfell, Gallagher-Brett Jones, Richards, & Hilmarsson-Dunn, 2004). One way to provide this training is through language teacher development courses that build on teachers’ current practices and beliefs regarding intercultural awareness training: if teachers are taught, via real examples, that language and culture can be presented in an integrative way, they are more likely to incorporate intercultural awareness teaching in language education classes (Byram, 2008; Sercu, 2006). In addition, scholars agree that pre-service and in-service language teacher education programs should provide language teachers with opportunities to evolve their pedagogical and curricular thinking so that they may be more compatible with teaching intercultural awareness and competence (Kramsch, 2009; Larzén-Östermark; 2009). Manuela Guilherme (2002) advances the view that language education should combine theory and practice through a multidisciplinary approach that allows for an ‘interpretative, reflective, exploratory and pragmatic mood’ in order to generate critical cultural awareness’ (p. 215).

Unfortunately, pre-service and in-service language education programs have failed to prepare language teachers adequately for both the integration of intercultural awareness and competence in the language classroom and for teaching a diverse population of learners (Larzén-Östermark, 2009; Sercu, 2006; Teddick, 2005). Researchers concur that the development of intercultural awareness has been relatively absent in language teacher education programs (Dunnett et al, 1986; Guilherme, 2002; La´za´r, 2001; Met, 1993; Ruane, 1999). Despite the increasing importance attributed to the cultural dimension of second and foreign language education, a survey of language teacher education programs suggests that culture is addressed to a small extent and often superficially (Kramsch, 2009; Teddick, 2005). In addition, it has been argued that ‘in some respects, conventional methods of university teaching may be insensitive to the complexity, challenges, richness and potential of intercultural study groups” (Stier, 2003, p. 88). Specifically, researchers agree that there is an overemphasis on the rationalist model in second language teacher education (Day, 1991; Freeman & Johnson; 1998). In the rationalist approach, knowledge and knowledge transfer are viewed as objective and universal; there is no room for experimentation and exploration in the classroom, and there is no focus on the experiences of the learner. In this model, knowledge is imparted to the learner and it is anticipated that the learner will apply this new knowledge to practice. However, the lack of critical reflection, dialogue, and real-life...
intercultural experiences associated with this approach does not help learners gain intercultural awareness (Guilherme, 2002; Larzén-Ostermark, 2009). For two decades, scholars in the field have demonstrated the failure of this approach and have called for a shift to a more sociocultural and dialogic approach (Day, 1991; Freeman & Johnson; 1998; Johnson, 2006; Osterling & Fox, 2004; Richards, 2008; Teddick, 2005; Ur, 1992). The use of case-based pedagogy may be one way to effect this shift.

In an attempt to fill the above gaps in language teacher education and answer the call for intercultural awareness training in language teacher education programs, the qualitative study presented in this article investigated the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes as an intercultural awareness tool in the preparation of a group of pre-service and in-service second language educators enrolled in an Intercultural Education course at a post-secondary institution. This study relates to the gaps in the field defined because it describes a post-secondary instructional approach whose aim is to prepare the students enrolled in the course to integrate intercultural awareness more fully into their language education curricula as well as to effectively teach languages to a diverse population of learners. Case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes was utilized as a means to provide explicit intercultural awareness training in cultural content knowledge of key anthropological, sociological, and intercultural theories; it was also used to develop pedagogical content knowledge of ways to transmit this knowledge to language learners. In contrast to the pervasive rationalist approach in language teacher education programs, this study describes a constructivist approach that encourages a group of aspiring and current language teacher educators to explore with their peers links between theories and practice through reflection, dialogue, and problem-solving. Furthermore, the case method has been introduced and proven useful in the field of general teacher education as an instrument for the development of reflective teachers who make informed decisions (Harrington, 1995; Merseth, 1996; Powell, 2000; Shulman, 1987). Although various studies point to the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy in the preparation of teachers in general education courses and in areas such as science and literacy, scant research exists in the field of second/foreign language education. Given its success in general teacher education courses and other specializations (Merseth, 1996; Shulman, 1987) and consistency with the intercultural goals in the field of language teacher education, case-based pedagogy was explored as a pedagogical tool to facilitate intercultural awareness in this study. At present, there is no existing textbook of language education cases focusing on intercultural issues in language classrooms. As a result, the researcher asked students to provide their own mini-cases, or vignettes, as materials for the course. The use of student-generated vignettes from actual student teaching and learning experiences has never been documented in the literature, and this study aims to report the learning outcomes from the experience as it relates to the gaps in the field of second/foreign language teacher education.

Research Questions

In an effort to understand the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy for facilitating an increase in intercultural awareness, the present study investigates the following two questions: (1) What aspects of student knowledge about intercultural education are promoted via the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes? (2) What aspects of student thinking about the importance and effects of culture on language learning and teaching are facilitated via the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes?

Theoretical Underpinnings

Case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases enables students to share their expertise (normative knowledge), reflect on their professional and personal intercultural
experiences, and critically examine their own assumptions and beliefs; a process that aligns with (1) theories of cognition, (2) adult learning, and (3) social constructivism.

First, this approach is consistent with two cognitive theories of learning: situated cognition theory and schema theory. In situated cognition theory, learning is viewed as emerging and social rather than individualistic and mechanistic. (Greeno, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Shulman, 1992). Situated cognition theory advocates that learners be immersed in a learning environment that closely approximates the context in which their new thoughts, knowledge, and concepts will be applied (Schell & Black, 1997). In line with situated cognition theory, case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes encourages students to collaborate in the analysis of vignettes by applying intercultural theories to professional and personal situations from their own experiences.

Furthermore, using case-based pedagogy in the analysis of student-generated vignettes is supported by theoretical understandings of the value of "narrative" forms of situated knowledge as opposed to abstraction and generalization (Bruner, 1987, Connelly, & Clandinin, 1990). Narratives include opportunities to develop and combine personal and professional knowledge (Conle & Sakamoto, 2001). Bruner’s work suggests that narrative forms of situated knowledge are attached to specific moments in an individual’s life that are memorable and that significant moments in teaching can be recalled in great detail. Case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes invites learners to explore narrative forms of situated knowledge. The vignettes are associated with the emotion of teachers and learners and thereby enable students to more readily retrieve and combine in detail teacher knowledge of context, the profession, and of the self.

Case-based pedagogy using student generated vignettes is also supported by schema theory. In this theory of cognition, organized knowledge is viewed as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world (Anderson, 1977). Research in schema theory concludes “…that simply telling novices what experts know will not produce expertise because telling a novice, for example, how an expert opens the classroom lesson does not tell the novice how the expert arrived at that decision” (Huling-Austin, 1992, p.176). The case study method enables teachers to learn how to build schema, or mental organizational strategies for the examination of issues, in order to make informed decisions. Huling-Austin, Livingston, and Borko (1989) point out that the cognitive schemata of expert teachers store elaborate, complex and interconnected knowledge about patterns, curriculum and students that allows them to rapidly apply what they know to specific cases. By providing teachers with exposure to a plethora of cases, the knowledge of principles, patterns, scenes, and procedures will be stored in their long term memory, enabling them to make rapid, informed decisions.

Second, by drawing on students’ reservoir of professional and personal experiences, promoting self-directed learning, encouraging immediate application of knowledge, and creating transformative learning opportunities, the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases aligns with theories of adult learning (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgarnter, 2007; Mezirow, 1991). Case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes provides adult learners with direct, concrete experiences in which they apply the learning in real work (Mumford, 2005). Moreover, the approach moves the learners beyond understanding to application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The case discussions provide an opportunity for learners to share, reflect, and generalize their learning experiences. In addition, case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes enables learners to recognize that the theoretical learning from the course and their day-to-day teaching experiences are related and relevant.

Finally, consistent with the tenets of social constructivism (Brown, Collin & Duguid, 1989; Dewey, 1916; Vygotsky, 1978), case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases is learner-centered; it fosters a learning environment that supports multiple perspectives or
interpretations of reality and knowledge construction through context-rich, experience-based interactions. In this approach, students are allowed to examine their own beliefs and practices in a non-threatening environment.

In summary, because it relies on peer discussions of real-life, meaningful, and contextual narratives that situate theoretical concepts in practice, case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes qualifies as being consistent with theories of cognition, adult learning, and social constructivism. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that supports the use of case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases in language teacher education:

Figure 1: Theoretical Underpinnings of Case-Based Pedagogy Using Student-Generated Vignettes

Methods
A qualitative case study research method was adopted as the empirical inquiry design of the study in order to provide a comprehensive description of the learners’ intercultural learning experiences with case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes within the boundaries of a real-life context (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2008). The design of the research questions was a cyclical, organic process (Maxwell, 2005). The researcher started with the general question of what kind of learning does case-based pedagogy facilitate. Subsequently, following a review of the literature and an analysis of the data, the questions became more specific. Finally, after transcribing and coding the data, the questions were fine-tuned even further. Multiple sources of evidence in the form of pre-case decision papers, post-case reflection papers, critical incident reports, transcribed interviews, and audio-taped cases provided the researcher with opportunities to triangulate data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusions (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2008). This research design and specific methods of data collection were chosen because it was assumed that they have the greatest potential to capture the information needed to answer the research questions in-depth.

Setting
The setting for the study was an Intercultural Education course required of all students enrolled in the Master’s of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
(TESOL) program and offered to all modern foreign language and bilingual education graduate students at a School of Education in a large metropolitan university.

Participants

The purposefully selected participants comprised a group of 18 students: 12 international students from China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Korea, and Taiwan and 6 US American students. While 15 of the participants were pre-service teachers, 3 of them were in-service practitioners. Of the 18 participants, 14 were females and 4 were males. 14 of the participants were enrolled in the Master’s of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program, 2 were enrolled in the Master’s of Education in Teaching Modern Foreign Language program, and 2 were non-degree students.

Procedure

The study was conducted over the course of a fifteen week semester. In line with theories of participatory action research (Freire, 1970), the instructor of the course simultaneously assumed the role of participant observer and viewed the class as a community of learning. The procedure consisted of three phases.

Phase One

During phase one, or the first week of class, the instructor-researcher required students to compose a one or two-page vignette, or mini-case study, describing an intercultural challenge identified and/or experienced while teaching or learning in an educational setting. These vignettes were a written representation of a real intercultural classroom dilemma the students had experienced either as teachers or learners. In the writing of the vignettes, student had to present pseudonyms in place of the real names of the participants and school involved, keeping the details the same. Participants provided a detailed description of the school, the instructional program, the classroom, and the characters involved (i.e. teachers, students, administrators, parents, etc.), and of the dilemma itself. The vignettes were written in third person and provided a narrative account of the intercultural issue. The perspective remained neutral; the vignette included no stated conclusions or arguments. After receiving feedback on their first drafts, the students edited the vignettes for accuracy and content before the instructor made them available on the course website. Subsequently, one or two vignettes that coincided with the weekly theoretical topics on the syllabus were designated per class meeting. By week two, students received a course syllabus that required weekly readings of theoretical texts about a given intercultural topic, weekly readings of the one or two designated vignette(s), and the composition of two-to four-page pre-case decision essays for each vignette(s) due on the day of the relevant class meeting.

Phase Two

Phase two consisted of case-based pedagogy using the student-generated vignettes. Preparation consisted of the following: First, students read the case and theoretical texts related to the intercultural topic and wrote a pre-case decision essay, and next they prepared solutions and formulated opinions about the intercultural issue at hand. During the class meeting, while discussing the case with one another and the instructor, the students elaborated on what to do in a particular case or how to solve the problem. The following questions guided the in-class case analysis stage:

- What are the issues here?
- How does this same situation look from another character's viewpoint?
- What went wrong here?
• What would you advise the teacher to do at this point?
• What might the teacher have done earlier to prevent the crisis?
• What changes might prevent this problem from happening again?

(Kleinfeld, 1990, p. 73)

Phase Three

Subsequent to each case discussion, students emailed the instructor a post-case essay reflecting on the impact of the case-based discussion on their overall understanding of the theoretical and pedagogical issues involved in the case.

Data Collected

The following methods of data collection were used to investigate the research questions: formal 30-45 minute interviews with all 18 participants at the end of the semester, nine 90-120 minute audio-taped case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes, memos and observation notes of the case-based discussions, pre-case decision essays, post-case reflection papers, and critical incident reports.

Pre-Case Decision Papers. In these two-to four-page essays, students were expected to write and decide on the best solution to the intercultural issue in question on that particular day. The following elements had to be included in the essay: (a) options available for the main character(s) involved in the dilemma, (b) criteria and rationale for a logical decision (c) analysis of options in light of the criteria, (d) recommendation (of the best choice among the options), (e) action plan of how to implement the recommendation (Ellet, 2007).

Audio-Taped Discussions. In class, case discussions were audio-taped and subsequently transcribed verbatim by the instructor. Although video-taping may have provided rich details, the instructor-researcher felt that the tape recorder was far less intrusive. Moreover, the most relevant data to the research questions could be found in the transcriptions.

Post-Case Reflection Papers. For the two-to four-page post-case reflection papers, students responded to the following questions: In what ways did the case study influence your thinking about the case? Did you change your original decision or did the discussion reaffirm your position? What points hadn’t you considered prior to the case discussion? How might the information you gained from this case be applicable to your current instructional setting and/or future instructional settings? What did you learn? What are you inspired to learn more about?

Critical Incident Reports. At the end of the semester, students composed a three-page narrative account on the extent to which case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases impacted their overall understanding of theories and principles of intercultural education and ability to apply this knowledge to professional and personal situations. In this report, students were also encouraged to comment on the extent to which --if at all-- the case discussions influenced their attitudes, values, and thinking about their own and other cultures. Specific examples from their personal, professional, and educational experiences were required to substantiate their perspectives.

Semi-Structured Interviews. A semi-structured protocol was used during the 30-to 45-minute interviews with each of the twenty participants at the end of the semester. The participants were asked to describe the experience of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes; explain what had they learned, if anything, from the case-based pedagogical experience; identify a particular case that they remember the most; discuss whether their thinking about language teaching and learning evolved since the beginning of the semester; compare this course to other courses they had taken in the language teacher preparation program; and provide a metaphor for case-based pedagogy using student-generated cases. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.
Memos and Observation Notes. The researcher composed one page memos after each class meeting to reflect on and summarize her interpretations of the learning outcomes of each case-based discussion of the student-generated vignettes. In addition, to the extent possible, the researcher took observation notes during case-based discussions to record her interpretations of significant dialogues as they related to the study. Moreover, at the end of each interview, the researcher recorded her understanding of and reflections on students’ responses to the interview protocol.

Data Analysis
The interview and audio-taped case discussion transcriptions as well as the critical incident reports, pre-case decision papers, and post-case reflection papers were read and re-read for meaning and insight (Creswell, 2003). This assisted the researcher to become immersed in the data and sensitive to important issues raised by the participants (Maxwell, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Cross-case comparisons were then made to identify and explore commonalities and differences (Creswell, 2003). Data were analyzed with deductive content analysis based on open coding and were grouped into categories based on common themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researcher allowed the themes to emerge naturally, rather than attempting to impose a preconceived set of themes on the data (Maxwell, 2005). Significant codes were pursued as they emerged and each transcript was examined in detail. The data were then grouped according to identifiable substantive and theoretical themes. To ensure that the analysis of the interviews was not merely a product of the ‘observer’s worldview, disciplinary assumptions, theoretical perspectives and research interest’ (Charmaz, 1995, p. 32), member checks were conducted during the interviews and at the conclusion of the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to this practice as an opportunity for participants to recognize themselves, their words and ideas and to understand and accept the researcher’s analysis (Press, 2005). During each interview, the researcher restated or paraphrased information and then questioned the participant to determine accuracy. Member checks conducted after the study were completed by sharing the findings from each participant involved via email. This allowed participants to critically analyze the findings and comment on them. The participants affirmed that the summaries reflected their views, feelings, and experiences.

Four theoretical and substantive themes emerged and were used in the coding and analysis of the data. One of the themes was student understanding of the impact of cultural socialization, or the process of inheriting norms, customs, and ideologies, on intercultural interactions (Byram, 2008; Clayton, 2003). The second theme was the amplification of content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), or the theories, principles and concepts about topics in the field of intercultural education. The third theme that emerged was the facilitation of culturally reflective practice, defined by Schön (1983) as the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. The fourth theme that surfaced was the development of pedagogical content knowledge of how to transmit intercultural topics to language learners and curricular knowledge of how to infuse these topics in a way that addresses the needs of diverse learners (Shulman, 1986; 1992).

Validity threats were addressed via the triangulation of sources, a search for and acceptance of “discrepant evidence”, member checks, and additional readers of the data. The combination of coded interviews, audio-taped discussions, student papers, memos and observation notes served to corroborate the researcher’s findings.

Results
The study presented in this article sought to understand the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes for facilitating intercultural awareness by
investigating how the experience influenced student knowledge and thinking. In an effort to cogently present the findings, this section is organized by the themes that emerged and the corresponding data within each theme that address specific research questions. Evidence from the study suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes promoted intercultural awareness for the participants. Specifically, the approach was found to have a positive impact on student knowledge about the powerful forces of socialization; student content knowledge of key intercultural theories; student capacity to engage in reflective practice on connections between these theories and personal and professional intercultural issues; student thinking about the centrality and effects of culture on language learning and teaching, and student development of pedagogical content and curricular knowledge.

Understanding of the Impact of Cultural Socialization on Intercultural Interactions

For the first research question about the aspects of student knowledge that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitated, the data indicate that a deep understanding among the participants of socialization and culture as a learned set of values and beliefs that underlie all social behavior was promoted. In order to comprehensively and effectively analyze the educational and intercultural issues raised in the vignettes, students often shared with each other aspects of their childhood and school socialization to offer insights to the context, support solutions, or expand on and/or negate cultural viewpoints addressed in any given vignette. Data from the interviews and audio-taped case-based discussions indicated that this interchange of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives enabled students to gain a broader understanding of how culture powerfully influences our own and other people’s thoughts, behaviors, and values.

Adam explained:

In a sense, I think I now understand the, uh, like the ways (pause) in which a person, (pause) becomes a member of their family and community in places like Turkey, China, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, the United States of America and Korea. Does that make sense? I guess, the vignettes enabled us to teach each other about our socialization processes more than a book could. (laugh) This was very impressive and educational and I do not think I would have the opportunity to learn so deeply and profoundly about other peoples’ ways of becoming who they are (Adam, interview, 1/13/10).

The structural integrity, coherency and stability of beliefs, values, and behaviors are rooted in culture. Evidence from the case study analysis indicates that through the case-based experience, some of the participants came to realize that intercultural communication is sometimes frustrating and difficult when communicating with an individual who does not share the same cultural lens. Fatima, a student from Saudi Arabia, explained how the intercultural dialogues promoted via case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes made her consider the causes of frustration:

In order to address these complex, real-life intercultural dilemmas, we had to dig deeply into each others’ cultures, like really deeply. We talked about surprising, uncomfortable, and interesting aspects of each others’ cultures. (deep breath) Sometimes I felt upset during these discussions because my international peers did not agree with (me) or see things the same way I did. And, well, what I now realize is that my strong reactions to some of the vignettes we analyzed was, uh, well, it was a result of the way my culture molded me to think and see the world. (laugh) Not to say that we have to accept everyone’s way as right, but in order to have successful intercultural exchanges, we have to be aware of, be sensitive to the way we all view the world….So, in addition to helping me understand
sociological and anthropological theories, the discussions we had in class gave me an awareness of other people’s cultural upbringings (Fatima, interview, 1/14/10).

Many international students from collectivistic societies remarked that they were not fond of the vignette analysis in the beginning because the expectations for active participation ran counter to how they had been socialized to behave in school.

Xuehan, a student from China observed:
At first, (hesitation) I did not like it at all because I was not used to it. I mean, in China, you speak when you are spoken to. The teacher is the source of all the knowledge. We are just expected to listen. Speaking out would seem too aggressive and impolite. It is just not expected. Now I realize that this thinking is because I come from a hierarchical group orientation. Many of our vignettes were results of clashes between people from collectivistic and individualistic societies. I was shy to share my ideas because I did not want to look like a show-off in front of my peers. I did not want to be the nail that stands out (Xuehan, interview, 1/13/10).

When I asked Xuehan what she thinks of the vignette experience now, she added: 
Now I like them very much because they helped me to understand my own reactions as an international graduate student in the US. I understand my own negative feelings in classes here and reactions to others is probably due to the fact that we are all influenced by our environments. Although I am still a collectivist, I can also participate with people from individualistic cultures. I think I can succeed in both societies now that I understand the rules of the game (Xuehan, interview, 1/13/10).

In one of the vignettes, an intercultural dilemma was described in which two Danish students were expressing to their Chinese teacher during a language lesson their desire to modify the content of the course by studying more political issues. The Chinese teacher was very frustrated. During the case-based analysis on 10/29/10, there was an illuminating dialogue about this between the participants:

Jia Lin, from China observed:
The teacher was very upset because in China we are taught never to question authority. The teacher created the curriculum because she has knowledge about what the students need. Even if the students feel unhappy with the course, they should not question her in class or cause her to lose face.

Evelyn, an American student, replied:
That is really interesting and, well, ya know what, I think it connects to what we just studied about Wurzel’s theory on family orientations and values. (laugh) I think the Danish students were used to a more democratic group orientation in the classroom. They probably could not understand why the teacher was upset.

Banu, a Turkish student added:
This is so interesting! I mean, I think that is why some of us were even reluctant to speak up at first during these case-based talks, right? (laugh) I mean, like maybe there was a fear of being perceived as too aggressive.

Jia Lin concluded:
Exactly. But now I realize that it is actually the opposite here in this orientation. We are considered passive and not good students if we don’t speak up whereas in China, (pause) you would not be considered as a well-behaved student if you spoke up so much.

Stacey, an American student remarked:
So maybe this is how stereotypes start to happen. Ya know, I am embarrassed to admit this, but I used to think that all Asian students were either kind of shy or didn’t prepare for these discussions because at the beginning they didn’t speak up. Obviously, I now know that that is absolutely a stereotype.

The instructor inquired:
This is fascinating! I wonder if the international students also had a similar impression of their American peers…

Kyung, a Korean student stated:
(laugh) Well, now that we are talking about stereotypes,(deep breath) I used to get upset in classes with Americans because I felt like they were abrupt and never gave me an opportunity to share my thoughts in small groups (audio-taped class discussion, 10/29/09).

The researcher’s post-class observation notes reveal that the whole class was laughing, almost with a sigh of relief to have a public acknowledgement of each other’s misunderstandings. This dialogue, spurred by the vignette, suggests that the students in the course were able to gain insights into the ways their culture influenced their classroom behaviors. During the interviews, many participants mentioned that this particular case-based discussion actually helped them to improve their interactions with students from different cultures in other courses. Amanda admitted that the discussions themselves functioned as a forum in which she could ask probing questions to her international peers that she would have never been able or felt comfortable to ask before. As a result of these discussions about real-life issues, she expressed that she gained knowledge of the way culture shapes us all:

It is just interesting to see with our classmates from all over the world that they experience the same problems and feelings in cross-cultural educational situations. So, even though value orientations may differ, we all, as teachers in ESL contexts and even students in multicultural classes, experience the same types of problems. That kind of helped bring us together as a class (Amanda, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

In a separate interview, Yu Jin, a Korean student stated something similar:

I have more awareness of how being raised in a collectivistic or individualistic society shapes us. Now I can find problems that before I would not have even noticed. I would have just ignored. It helped me to open my eyes to my own socialization, expectation, and norms and those of my classmates (Yu Jin, interview, 1/14/10).

Finally, the evidence from this study suggests that the vignette experience facilitated the participants’ awareness of their own ethnocentric attitudes, or their inability to view other cultures as equally viable alternatives for organizing reality. A number of students noted that the experience of analyzing the cases helped them to see the issues from perspectives other than their own. Jae Sung, a Korean male observed:

The analysis is so much more than writing a vignette just once and reflecting on it on your own; by discussing my vignette with others I came to realize that there are several perspectives of our characters and several solutions to conflicts. It was more profound for me (Jae Sung, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

Judy, an American student explained how the vignette experience aided her in understanding the content of the course:

I really enjoyed it. Instead of just reading these little scenarios in books and the author tells us what our reactions should be or the cultural reasons why are reactions are the way that they are in cross-cultural dialogues, we learned from each other’s responses and reactions about the ways that culture effects communication (Judy, interview, 1/13/10).
In response to the question about the influence of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes on student knowledge, the evidence from this study suggests that one facet of knowledge that was promoted for the participants was how the powerful forces of socialization shape all that we think, believe, and do.

**Content Knowledge**

A second aspect of student knowledge that the data suggest was facilitated in this study is intercultural content knowledge, or awareness of intercultural education theories and principles. Moreover, the participants reported that the experience facilitated their capacity to relate these intercultural education theories to personal and professional intercultural experiences. The evidence from the study indicates that the vignette experience deepened the participants’ knowledge and heightened their awareness of the following theories and concepts in intercultural education: ethnocentrism, racism and prejudice, gender socialization, emic and etic perspectives, high and low context cultures, and communication styles. *All* participants reported that case-based pedagogy facilitated their ability to engage in the process of bridging these theories to real life situations. The following remarks substantiate the claim that through case-based pedagogy, the participants were able to see real-life applications of the abstract theories. In an interview with Stacey, she explained:

It helped me to understand the theories. Sometimes you think you know the theories, but in reality you have no idea how to apply them to real-life examples and I feel that the vignette discussions allowed us to make the connection (Stacey, interview, 1/14/10).

In a critical incident report, Xuehan noted:

Because we used them to analyze the problems in almost every vignette, I have a better understanding of various topics such as childhood and school socialization, prejudice and stereotypes, Kluckhohn’s Value Orientation model, and Hall’s high and low contexts theory. More than that, I understand that they are useful theories that I can use in diverse teaching situations (Xuehan, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

Amanda added:

It is very practical. When you are teaching on your own you usually do not have an opportunity to sit around and discuss cross-cultural issues and come up with theory-based explanations (Amanda, post-case reflection, 10/08/09).

In her critical incident report, Weiting, a Taiwanese student, reported that the case-based discussions deepened her understanding of ethnocentrism and awareness of her own ethnocentric tendencies, knowledge she applied in her social interactions at the university:

The vignette experience made me realize that my own ethnocentric attitude was probably the reason why I was having difficulty making friends with people from other cultures. I have become more tolerant and realize that not everybody has to think the same as I do and maybe become more easygoing. For example I had a trip with a friend that I met here who is from a different culture. We have a lot of differences between us in terms of lifestyle so we encountered a lot of issues when sharing the same room. For instance, we eat different foods and we had to make a lot of compromises. So, I just tried to be more tolerant because I know we are from a different culture. Before the vignette discussions, I probably would have just thought he was a weird guy and that there was something wrong with him. We would have had a lot of arguments during the trip. But, now I realize that we are not all socialized in the same way. I think thanks to the vignette discussions, I was able to reflect more deeply on childhood socialization and ethnocentrism when making friends here at the university (Weiting, critical incident report, 12/10/09).
Data from the study indicates that two case-based discussions reinforced the topic of gender socialization and bias in intercultural settings. In response to a vignette written by a Turkish woman in the class whose former Saudi student dropped out of her program and returned to his home country because he could not accept being taught by a female teacher, students said the following during a class discussion on 11/12/09:

Jae Sung stated:
This vignette helps me make connections I had never considered. I had never thought about the impact of my presence as a male teacher in a dominant male society.

Fatima replied:
Yeah, and it reminds me of the Sadker reading that talked about how boys and girls received very different types of education.

Martha, an American student, added:
Well, clearly this guy was taught a certain gender bias when it comes to teachers. Whether that was taught at home and reinforced in school and the community, we do not know. But, this could have been prevented.

The Instructor chimed in:
How?

Fatima responded:
Well the school should provide a cultural orientation before classes begin and gender should come up in the discussion (audio-taped discussion, 11/12/09).

In response to Jia Lin’s vignette about a teacher’s reaction to an aboriginal girl’s attitude towards marriage and professional life as compared to that of her peers, many students admitted that they had never really considered the need to be sensitive to students’ gender socializations. In our interview, Yang, a Chinese student, expressed her knowledge growth around the theme of gender socialization as well as her plans to bridge this knowledge to practice in social interactions and future teaching contexts:

I remember Jia Lin’s vignette the most because it was interesting and I feel more related to me. It’s like more likely to happen to my teaching situation in the future. It made me realize that some of my female students will not have the immediate goals as I do of attending college and pursuing a professional career path. I know we read about gender bias, but I never really thought about how it could affect my teaching so much until we discussed this vignette. I plan to be more sensitive in the future to different students’ gender socializations and roles. Also, I am more careful in my interactions with peers here at school when it comes to topics of gender norms (Yang, interview, 1/14/10).

An analysis of the interview transcripts suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes reinforced students understanding of the roots of prejudice and racism. In a critical incident report, Amanda shared an example of how she recently applied the theories she learned in our class to her instructional setting:

Some students from Pakistan were asking me during a cultural orientation, “Are we done now? Is that it? Are we done for today?” This behavior seemed very rude and offensive because it appeared as if they are not enjoying the orientation and they don’t want to listen to what I have to say. I had never worked with Pakistani students before this moment and this negative interaction could have caused me to think all students from Pakistan are impolite. But as a result of our discussion of Adam’s vignette, which dealt with racism and prejudice, I was able to take a deep breath, and think “O.K., I should take this as a learning and teaching opportunity rather than allowing it to plant the seeds of prejudice.” Therefore, I decided to have an open discussion with them about the the purpose of such orientations and expectations for behavior during orientations here.
compared to similar situations in their context. It was a very fruitful discussion; one that I never would have dared to have before our vignette experience. It made the concept of stereotyping that we studied in class extremely clear (Amanda, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

In addition to content knowledge and praxis, the pedagogical content knowledge that Amanda gained from the vignettes is an awareness of dominant culture expectations and the importance of being explicit. In a similar vein, Yu Jin admitted during an interview that the vignette experience deepened her knowledge of theories of racism and prejudice and altered her view of and social exchanges with her Latino peers:

Maybe in the past, I would think Latinos were too aggressive and dominant. I would ask myself, “what is wrong with them?” But, now I started to understand and appreciate their differences. After the vignette discussions I came to realize that I was prejudiced against them because (they) had different value orientations. I was able to switch or change my method depending on which student I am working with (Yu Jin, interview, 1/14/10).

Evidence from the study suggests that the participants were able to better understand cross-cultural differences in non-verbal communication and apply this knowledge to practice. For example, in a post-case reflection, Sandra noted:

Now, when I have problems with my students, I sort of pause and consider why this student is behaving this way. I wonder and investigate whether or not this behavior has anything to do with his or her cultural background, rather than just seeing it as bad behavior and disciplining them. For instance, when an Asian student did not look me in the eye the other day when I was talking to her, instead of thinking she was rude or disrespectful, I actually took a step back and realized that she may have different non-verbal communication norms. In fact, I realized that she may have actually been trying to show me respect (Sandra, post-case reflection, 12/03/09).

Judy discussed how one of the case-based discussions raised her awareness of cross-cultural communication styles. She explained:

I remember the vignette about the little Korean boy in a second grade American school who got in trouble for biting another little boy on the shoulder in attempt to make friends. The teachers assumed he was being violent and he just didn’t understand. It just makes me think that sometimes the teacher jumps to the conclusion that a student with different ways of expressing things is bad or violent without really thinking it through (Judy, interview, 1/13/10).

During this particular vignette discussion, my Korean students explained to the other students in the class that gently biting each other on the shoulders is a non-verbal expression of friendship. They also went on to say that this behavior is seen as perfectly normal in Korea. The students from other countries were shocked and had assumed, like the teachers in the vignette, that the boy had behavioral issues.

In addition to non-verbal communication knowledge, Yang, a Chinese student, explained in a post-case reflection that a particular vignette aided her understanding of the conceptual framework of high and low context cultures:

Honestly, I did not understand (the) concept of high and low context cultures until we discussed Amanda’s vignette. Now I realize what (a) high context culture truly is and I recognize that I come from such a culture. For example, we tend to talk around the topics rather than being direct about what is bothersome to us. However, when I communicate with colleagues or students from low context cultures, they may need me to explicate my disagreement. I cannot assume that
they understand the message based on the context (Yang, post-case reflection, 11/05/09).

Finally, some students reported that case-based pedagogy aided their understanding of emic and etic perspectives. In a critical incident report, Fatima explained:

Because I studied in a private school with an international curriculum, I proudly assumed that I had both an emic and etic perspective of American culture. But, by engaging in vignette discussions with my American peers, I see that I did not grasp the concepts. Indeed, I only had an etic perspective of American culture (Fatima, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

Adam added in an interview:

Well, I thought I was prepared to teach and understand all of my students as an insider because of my study abroad experience. (laugh) Now I know that I was way off! The vignette discussions taught me that I am coming from an etic perspective. I should really caution myself from assuming I know this insider perspective simply because I have traveled to another country. I plan to teach students about etic and emic perspectives in my language classes and show them different perspectives of a culture (Adam, interview, 1/13/10).

Thus, in response to the research questions about the impact of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes on student knowledge and its influence on praxis, the evidence from the study suggests that this methodology facilitated intercultural content knowledge for the participants as well as their ability to apply these theories to personal and professional situations. This was succinctly encapsulated in Judy’s metaphor for the experience:

It is like the mother bird teaches the baby bird how to fly. We all have the knowledge, but the vignettes help us to really acquire that knowledge by applying it to real life situations (Judy, interview, 1/13/10).

Culturally Reflective Practice

For the second research question about the influence of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes on teacher thinking, the data from the study suggest that the methodology promoted the process of cultural reflective practice for the participants by encouraging them to think about how cultural factors impact educational contexts. For instance, some of the participants reported that the vignette discussions caused them to think about how their own cultural identity, values, and beliefs should be explicitly shared with their students when describing classroom policies. Additionally, all of the students expressed that they should consider the impact of classroom policies from their cultural perspective on students from different cultural perspectives. Consider Jae Sung’s observation:

I realized that not all of my students share the same value orientations as I do. Before the vignette analyses, I had enforced certain rules or policies for classroom behavior without really explaining why. I had assumed that my students all viewed education through the same cultural lens as myself as a Korean man. But, now I will share my cultural expectations to that policy but I will also have to understand the impact of that policy from their cultural perspective as well. I had assumed that I did not need to explain why they need to do certain things and comply with the policy. Because of the cultural implications, it is valuable to spend time with them early on and give reasons for following the policy (Jae Sung, interview, 1/13/10).

Stacey admits that the vignette analyses enabled her to become a culturally reflective practitioner with the diverse group of high school English language learners she teaches:
I learned to be more reflective and to understand really how I am teaching my classes and how I interact with students. The analyses helped me to develop the skills that I need to be active cognitively, and the ability to analyze my own behavioral skills, my cognitive skills, and my classroom management skills. So, while I am working with the class, I am more conscious than I was before of cultural competencies toward being more effective in the moment. It really caused me to self-monitor. I am more aware of my choices as a dominant culture authority and the implications of these choices for my students (Stacey, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

In addition to being critically reflective of the effects of their own culture on the educational context, many of the participants also reported that the experience encouraged them to consider how their students’ cultures impacted the learning context. Amanda shared a recent experience:

We had opportunities to see solutions that actually work. If we step back and use this tool, this way of thinking, then we can look at the situation more objectively, rather than emotionally. So, for example, recently, at my school, (pause) just using everything we have learned in the vignette discussions, I was able to stop and pause and think about what I perceived to be as my students’ off the topic comments about a book we were reading. They were not following the line of analysis I had anticipated. But, I stopped and thought, that maybe this is coming from their culture and not sort of react so quickly and negatively about it (pause) or jump to negative conclusions about the students. So even though this behavior seemed strange to me, I stopped to think that maybe it is normal for them. Maybe they interpret and discuss stories differently in their culture (Amanda, interview, 1/13/10).

With reference to the vignette about the Korean boy who was punished for biting another boy on the shoulder, Amanda explained:

It is so important to figure out where the student is coming from and what their real intention is and then maybe explain the cultural differences and not just assume that he is a bad boy (Amanda, post-case reflection, 12/03/10).

In a post-case reflection, Banu expressed how this experience changed her thinking entirely:

I had never before thought about culture as something to be considered for every class. In fact, before these discussions, I only thought that culture was a fun topic that I could bring up on Fridays and I would only talk about food, music, etc. Now, the way that I think about culture has changed entirely. I realize that even if there is a culturally homogenous group, there still could be great diversity. I also realize that culture is far deeper than food, music, etc. I have changed the way that I think about teaching culture too. My students need to be prepared to communicate with others and if I teach them the language, that is only part of successful communication. I am responsible for introducing them to the differences in culture too so that they can communicate effectively. I will now think about culture every day in my language classes. I also realize that I need to pay more attention to the cultural differences in class and not brush them aside (Banu, post-case reflection, 10/08/10).

Taking the above data into consideration, it is evident that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes influenced student thinking for this group of participants by encouraging them to be culturally reflective practitioners.
The Development of Curricular Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

In response to both the first and second research questions, the data suggests that case-based pedagogy influenced participants’ knowledge of and thinking about effective curricular planning and instruction in intercultural settings. Specifically, the data gleaned indicates that the participants gained an understanding of and the capacity to reflect on the design of lessons as well as curricula that promote intercultural awareness in intercultural educational settings via case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes. In fact, all participants admitted that the vignette discussions encouraged them to expand their knowledge of, thinking about, and design of curricula that fostered equitable educational opportunities for all students. For example, when asked what she had learned specifically from the cases, Banu stated:

I will investigate my students’ backgrounds first before I meet the class. Before this vignette experience, I would have never thought about doing something like that. But now I see how crucial it is to successful educational outcomes (Banu, post-case reflection, 10/08/09).

Other students mentioned the importance of being a teacher as ethnographer in order to design appropriate curricula. Consider Martha’s reflections in her critical incident report:

One of the first things we are taught in our language methods courses is to consider our students prior knowledge and experiences. The vignette discussions made me realize that this is vitally important when designing curricula for multicultural classes. Some of the concrete ideas that I got from this experience are to try to find out as much as I can about my students’ backgrounds before class even starts. I can do this by researching information about their culture and language and prior educational experiences. I will also use the idea of dialogue journals as a window into my students’ lives (Martha, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

Many students reported that this experience encouraged them to include diverse content and perspectives in their curriculum and teaching. Doug, an American student, described the curricular and pedagogical knowledge as well as culturally responsive strategies he learned from the case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes:

I am able to look at classroom problems from different perspectives and when I am speaking to students, I want to make sure that everyone's perspective is being heard. There were several vignettes where the teacher just took their own ethnocentric point of view and was blind to the other side. So when I choose materials, I want to make sure that they are balanced and tell a comprehensive, global view of the historical event. I also realize that not all students learn in the same way and so I try to vary instruction and methods to address different learning styles and intelligences. Before the vignette discussions, I hadn’t considered that not all of my students learn the way that I do. Also, with my instructional strategies, I want to make sure that I allow all students to share their opinions or perspectives, even if it is not aligned with my own experiences and understanding (Doug, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

In both interviews and critical incident reports, quite a few participants described the influence of case-based discussion using student generated vignettes on their curricular knowledge. Stacey remarked:

After these discussions, I realize that my current curriculum is very biased. I need to bring in materials that extend beyond one perspective (Stacey, interview, 1/14/10).
Weiting also discussed the new curricular ideas she learned and plans to incorporate in her language classes:

As a language teacher, I always taught grammar and vocabulary. I now have ideas of how to teach culture. What’s more, I want to try to bring in guest speakers for a more emic perspective. I also want to encourage my students to have multicultural perspectives and break out of their own ethnocentric view. That may be difficult, but perhaps I can start by bringing in a wider range of global topics and perspectives (Weiting, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

In a pre-case paper, reflecting on a vignette that described a group of Western students asking a Chinese teacher to discuss the sensitive perspectives on China and Taiwan’s relationship during a language class, Jia Lin stated:

I do not think these types of political issues are relevant in a language class. The teacher should simply tell the students that this topic is very sensitive and should be avoided (Jia Lin, pre-case paper, 11/05/10).

However, in Jia Lin’s post-case reflection, she confessed that the discussion made her realize the value of integrating sensitive cultural issues into her lessons and curriculum. She wrote:

I had never imagined that we could openly talk about the issues between China and Taiwan. It was a topic that caused tremendous discomfort and tremendous learning. Before the discussion, I did not think I would have ever brought this topic up in my country, for reasons you may imagine, but I do think it educated a lot of my peers from the US, Europe, and the Middle East who were not aware of the issue. I really think it is important to talk about tough issues like this to enlighten others. As such, I will consider allowing students to brainstorm current cultural topics of interest, find relevant and linguistically appropriate reading materials on these subjects, and allow for open dialogues of these issues. However, the vignette discussion made me realize that having such discussions about controversial cultural issues will require a good deal of trust between students and teacher. This environment of trust must be established through learner training, as our professor has done, during the first few weeks of class. I will now go back to China to teach and remember that I must really set the stage by establishing a respectful and tolerant learning environment during the first few weeks of class. In the pre-case reflection, I thought that by dismissing their interest in this uncomfortable topic, I would avoid problems. Now I realize that this dismissal avoids learning and that the topic was only uncomfortable to me because of my environment (Jia Lin, post-case reflection, 11/19/09).

Evidence from the coded transcripts suggests that case-based pedagogy promoted pedagogical content knowledge, or the ability to transmit in depth knowledge of a particular subject by making it accessible to students. For instance, most of the participants noted that the case-based discussions provided them with the knowledge of instructional selections from among an array of teaching methods and models. Kyung described her desire to model and encourage respectful engagement in her classes:

What I got out of this experience is that I should strive for more sensitivity in my relationships and interactions with students. Maybe that can be a lesson for my students on how they should treat each other. I really like the idea brought up in the last vignette discussion that describes having students co-author a contract for respectful behavior and discuss different cultural expectations for behavior in their home countries. I think that teaching them in this way will help them learn both language and culture (Kyung, post-case reflection, 9/24/09).

In a post-case reflection, Sandra added:
I think it is important in my modern foreign language class to discuss the idea of ethnocentrism. When teaching, I always realized that many students were very ethnocentric when I exposed them to the different food, music, and activities of French culture, but I would often ignore this problem. I just figured that it was just the way some students think and there is nothing I can do to change it. Yet, this last vignette discussion gave me some wonderful pedagogical ideas for actually teaching students about ethnocentrism and I plan to use them in my teaching. For example, I will have the students read the article “Culture of the Nacirema” and have them reflect on and discuss this etic depiction of American culture. I will ask them to have small group discussions, in French, in which they brainstorm aspects of American culture that may seem strange to people from Francophone countries. I now realize that learning these cultural topics is both an integral part of learning the language and can serve to motivate my students to know more about a seemingly ‘strange’ culture (Sandra, post-case reflection, 10/1/09).

In addition, many participants expressed that the vignettes made clear the importance of being transparent and explicit during the teaching and learning process. Judy’s reflection exemplifies this point:

I cannot assume that everyone understands the learning process in my class. Not everyone is from the dominant culture and is aware of dominant culture expectations. In addition, not everyone shares the same orientation to learning that I do. Because of this, I should be clear about my objectives, goals, and expectations (Judy, post-case reflection, 10/15/09).

Participants’ responses indicate that case-based pedagogy promoted the tailoring of and adaptations to instructional activities based on the specific students in the classroom. For example, Fatima explained:

I am now going to use thoughtful grouping and try to incorporate a range of instructional activities for the range of learning styles, interests and readiness levels of my students (Fatima, critical incident report, 12/10/09).

Evelyn reported:

The vignette discussions made me aware of the detrimental consequences of ignoring your learners’ backgrounds and preferences. I hadn’t realized that I was just teaching in the way that I like to learn. After this experience I think that I will try to design activities that meet the needs of field sensitive and field independent learners and of learners with different intelligences. One multicultural strategy is cooperative learning. Your suggestion of thoughtful grouping based on cultural backgrounds made me realize that we can encourage our students to understand each other better by assigning them to work with the “other” (Evelyn, interview, 1/13/10).

Thus, the findings from the study suggest that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitated participant understanding of and thinking about intercultural pedagogical content and curricula knowledge.

Discussion

The field of second language teacher education has reconceptualized its knowledge base by acknowledging the centrality of intercultural awareness training in the preparation of second/foreign language educators. Scholars in the field agree that language teacher education programs should provide pre-service and in-service teachers with opportunities to develop intercultural awareness. In addition, researchers in the field agree that language educator programs should equip pre-service and in-service teachers with strategies for
promoting intercultural awareness in their language classrooms. Despite the call for these changes, the literature in the field points to a lack of emphasis on the development of and effective ways to transmit intercultural awareness in language teacher preparation programs.

This study aimed to describe the scope and type of learning that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitates in an Intercultural Education course. Specifically, it aspired to gain a clearer understanding of how case-based pedagogy influences teacher knowledge, thinking, and praxis.

According to Shulman (1987), expert teachers should possess deep content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, or the ability to transmit that knowledge to learners, and curricular knowledge. The evidence from this study suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes promoted the participants’ knowledge in these three key areas. In terms of content knowledge, the results of the case study analysis indicate a strong influence of case-based pedagogy on student knowledge of the powerful forces of socialization. The intercultural dialogue and exchange of ideas and opinions offered the participants an opportunity to learn about and from each other’s cultural lenses. Through the discussions, they came to reflect on their own socialization and its impact on cross-cultural dialogues. The students from collectivistic societies obtained a deeper understanding of their own frustrations in individualistic classroom settings and vice versa. In addition, the case-based discussions of student-generated vignettes heightened many of the participants’ awareness of their own ethnocentric attitudes.

In addition, an analysis of the data suggests that case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes facilitated the participants’ knowledge of various anthropological, ethnographic, culture learning and intercultural communication theories. Specifically, knowledge of key concepts such as ethnocentrism, racism and prejudice, gender socialization, emic and etic perspectives, high and low context cultures, and communication styles was fostered. Also, the evidence points to the influence of the experience on the participant’s capacity to relate theories to personal and professional intercultural scenarios through praxis.

The findings from the study also point to the potential of this instructional approach to promote pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge. Most notably, the participants indicated that it honed their abilities to design culturally responsive lessons as well as curricula that promote intercultural awareness and competence in intercultural educational settings.

Furthermore, data from the study suggest that the vignette discussions influenced student thinking by promoting the process of culturally reflective practice for the participants. Particularly, the participants reflected on the implications of their own cultural identity and presence as a teacher in a multicultural setting. Moreover, they considered the influence of their students’ cultural identities on the learning and teaching process.

There are several shortcomings and suggestions for further studies that can be identified in this investigation. First, the duration of the study is a limitation. In the future, it would be more reliable to have a longitudinal study. In addition, to confirm the effects of case-based pedagogy on participant learning, studies that follow the participants into their classrooms during their first years of teaching may increase the validity of the findings. However, it would be challenging to control for variables. The sampling size was small so it would be constructive to investigate the learning that takes place as a result of case-based pedagogy in multiple courses to support the findings.

The present study unlocks the potential of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes as an intercultural awareness tool. Since very little research currently exists in the field of second/foreign language teacher education on ways to explicitly promote intercultural awareness and competence in pre-service and in-service language teacher education programs, this study could open the door to new possibilities by encouraging teacher-
educators to pursue further research on the effectiveness of this instructional approach. Further studies that follow pre-service and in-service teachers into their classrooms after learning via this approach in order to examine the broader impact of it on their pedagogical and curricular choices would advance our understanding of its influence on pedagogical content knowledge and praxis.

All of the students responded favorably to the use of student-generated cases which holds promise for its use in other instructional contexts. More research is needed to verify the efficacy of student-generated cases in the facilitation of intercultural awareness for pre-service and in-service second language teachers. In the absence of textbook cases or cases generated by instructors dealing with intercultural issues in second language teaching and learning contexts, the documented potential of the approach in this study paves the way for further research.

The participants in this investigation comprised students from various parts of the world; such an intercultural classroom composition is not always possible. Therefore, further research exploring the depth and breadth of learning that occurs when using this approach with a homogeneous group of learners would be illuminating for language teacher educators working in such contexts. Additionally, future studies on effective ways of preparing language teacher educators for the successful implementation of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes will be invaluable since most language teacher educators have no experience with or knowledge of this approach. Finally, research on the effectiveness of case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes as an intercultural awareness tool in general teacher education courses and professional development programs could shed light on the method’s potential to address what the literature describes as unsuccessful attempts to integrate intercultural awareness training.

The field of second language teacher education has been calling for explicit intercultural awareness training in language teacher education programs for the past two decades. In the very least, the present study should inspire future research on innovative approaches aimed at answering that call. Without such research to guide language teacher educators, pre-service and in-service teachers will not be adequately prepared for the challenges of teaching language in the 21st century.

Conclusion

As second and foreign language teacher educators, we have the responsibility to build effective programs that help pre-service and in-service teachers acquire and teach the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with people from different cultures. We have the capacity to empower future language teachers to serve as agents of change in the lives of their students by creating equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. Moreover, our courses can and should promote the understanding of the concept of culture, the variety of ways culture manifests itself, and the importance of exploring their own cultural backgrounds. Case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes holds promise as a tool for achieving these goals at a time when no other explicit intercultural awareness training strategies seem to exist in second language teacher education programs.

References


The current state of issues on the coverage of children’s rights in the media at schools of journalism and communication in Azerbaijani universities

Tarana Mahmudova, Assistant Professor of Journalism,
Baku State University, Baku, Azerbaijan
terana_melody@yahoo.com

Abstract

Different kinds of information have become more accessible for the population through mass media, mainly through the Internet. In the last several years, the Azerbaijani media has made considerable progress in areas that were previously forbidden to speak about, such as women/gender issues, religion, etc.

However, fields related to children’s rights are often not covered in the media due to several factors. The protection of children’s rights is an important link to democratization, and if practiced, it would accelerate democratization in the entire society. Children’s rights, as a part of human rights, are tightly connected to ethical issues. This issue is a weak spot of the Azerbaijani media and its society, but can be improved by education and enlightenment. UNICEF-Azerbaijan has started a project related to the coverage of children’s rights in the media. Several Azerbaijani universities have joined this project, and are developing modules related to the coverage of children’s rights in the media.

How should students be taught in this regard? What kinds of factors should be taken into account in creating course curriculum? Do former Soviet republics need special knowledge or training to raise awareness?

Keywords: Human and children’s rights, professional journalism vs propaganda, ethics, teaching methodology, practicality

Introduction

In different periods of history mankind most assuredly gives priority to different values. It is quite obvious that in the present day, the entire world gives some priority to human rights. This aspect of life is so important that issues related to it are not considered to be an internal affair or right of any country. In other words, human rights now have a global nature. Children’s rights, being a part of human rights, are also a highly important problem of today. A society where human rights are considered to be a priority issue also focuses on the issues of children’s rights. However, human rights and their multifaceted conditions are not the same in various countries. The situation in each country depends on its history, political system, and culture.

The Office of UNICEF in Azerbaijan has started a new project in the area of fair media coverage of children’s rights and development of children’s journalism. This project makes provisions for organizing courses on media coverage of children’s rights in the country’s leading faculties of journalism. The project will be implemented step-by-step in 2011-2015. Which factors can ensure success of this project? What format of training would be more effective? How should the training process be connected to practices which will result in the most fruitful results?

Findings

Though Azerbaijan has joined a number of international conventions on human rights, a lot of work has yet to be done. The annual reports by U.S. Department of State, Amnesty
International, Human Rights Watch, Norwegian Helsinki Committee and other organizations reveal serious defects related to human rights in Azerbaijan. Backwardness in the area of human rights is typical for all post-Soviet countries. The former USSR was founded by armed and forceful annexation of dozens of countries and millions of people and ethnic groups to the Socialist camp. A system founded on violence can exist only by means of violence. Over 70 years of dictatorship and regular repressions were striking examples of disregard for human rights. That was clearly seen in the area of education, which is considered one of the country’s most important social institutions.

Many people in the former USSR, especially the older generation, still describe the Soviet education system as very strong. But is that true? Soviet scientists obtained more achievements in the fields of mathematics, physics, chemistry, etc. It can be stated with certainty that the Soviet chess school was strong as well, though it wasn’t directly related to education. All those fields have one common characteristic, they have very minor or no relationship with the society and social issues. If we consider it carefully, we will see that the above mentioned fields were mostly those which require individual work methods. There wasn’t a need to research the society and the processes therein or to study the public opinion. That is the subject of research in the humanities.

But really, what was the status and conditions prevalent in the area of humanities in Soviet times? We have no reason to speak of any progress in that area. Almost all of the areas of humanities were loaded with Marxism-Leninism principles and served that ideological propaganda. Any area of humanities regardless of its nature and type was brought in to comply with the works and ideas of the Communist ideologists even if they were not related to the fields of science. There was an impression that those people knew much about history, philosophy, law, journalism, ethics, esthetics and other humanities, but this is obviously far from truth. At the same time fields with a special focus on human beings like sociology, psychology, and gender studies were entirely dismissed. Humanitarian subjects are called so because “…human beings are both the subjects and objects of knowledge.” (Hekman, 1990, p.94)

The main goal, certainly, was to keep people under the influence of a powerful propaganda machine. Human beings and their rights, along with their interests and desires, were never accepted as important. Consequently, it is no coincidence that the people who heard nothing but this propaganda all their lives could speak only in the patterns imposed on them by the media day after day, and they didn’t even know how to think independently. Of course, the media which is considered one of the main institutions of any system never was or could be human being oriented under such conditions. An ordinary audience would not be able to discern where information ends and propaganda begins and would easily fall prey to propaganda since they wouldn’t know any difference.

Media are very effective at creating stereotypes because they are sometimes the only source of information we have about other groups and because they often present a distorted view of those groups. (Straubhaar, LaRose, Davenport, 2009, p.421)

However, realities will and do change. The world is being globalized and dialogue between countries is growing wider. With the borders of post-Soviet countries now open, citizens can travel to foreign countries and learn new cultures. As a result of this new interaction, their worldview is gradually changing. As they become better acquainted with the world, they can compare the conditions found in their countries with what they see in other societies and make certain conclusions. According to “The Individual Differences Theory” (DeFleur, Ball-Rokeach, 1989) when people see different, positive examples, it makes them desire to compare the novelties they see with their own condition, reconsider their present state, change it and improve it.
Certainly, it is not so easy to make repairs in a short period of time given the damage caused by a system where human beings were not seen as a priority, especially if the governing methods of the old system are still in use. In order to make a society and its governance focused on human beings and their rights and interests, first of all education should be ethical. From this point of view, UNICEF-Azerbaijan’s initiative related to the coverage and protection of children’s rights as well as the teaching of courses on them in universities is worthy and to be praised. UNICEF has been implementing this project in several countries and it is interested to see it become a global character as a part of human rights. A number of leading universities in Azerbaijan are planning to publish a special textbook to be used in teaching the course “The Coverage of Children’s Rights in the Media” in the faculties of Journalism.

The main goal of the project is to provide to the future media representatives necessary information about children’s rights and their fair media coverage. Which factors are to be considered first in organizing courses on the proper media coverage of children’s rights? For the course to be successful there should be a unity of theoretical and practical knowledge and patterns of effective impact which should be prepared and understood. When determining and evaluating scientific principles of a proper coverage of children’s rights in Azerbaijan, a number of specific factors including traditions have to be considered. Of course, the media in Azerbaijan, just like in any other country, does report on children to some degree, but how effectively? Going forward, what should the criteria evaluated be based upon? When does a child draw the media’s attention? Are children’s rights among the priorities of the media? Finding answers to these questions is also one of the necessary conditions for organizing the course. To this end certain reports related to children in newspapers and websites have been obtained to test the validity of issues related to children’s rights.

The research covers ten months, from July 2010 until April 2011. Both state and independent newspapers are included in this research, as well as some web-based resources. Both Azerbaijani and Russian-language outlets are included in research. Children’s rights related issues covered by local media include:

- News coverage of UNICEF’s activities (In Azerbaijani language newspapers – 6; In Russian language newspapers – 5)
- Child adoption (6/6)
- Education (5/3)
- Children’s Rights (5/6)
- Violence and exploitation of children (5/2)
- Health (2/5)
- Early marriages (4/2)
- War (2/0)

Articles on these topics are published only in Russian language newspapers:

- Children’s leisure activities, children's camps
- Ecology and children
- Juvenile offenders
- Abandoned children

Newspapers are put in order by the number of stories published in them: “Olaylar” – 8 articles; “Kaspi” – 6; “Sharq” – 4; “Ekspres” – 3; “Uch nogta” - 3; “525-ci gazet” – 3, “Azerbaycan” – 3; “Respublika” – 2; “Xalq” – 1; “Azadlig” – 1 Russian language newspapers: “Zerkalo” – 16; “Ekho” – 9

In the course of the research websites were analyzed as well. During the analysis it was discovered that all the materials available online were short news reports about events taking
These figures indicate that even though the research covered quite a long period of time, the newspapers and websites didn’t contain much material related to children and children’s rights. The articles about children and children’s rights were mostly published in independent newspapers. State newspapers present one-sided views and show the situation as being good or getting better. According to them, there’s virtually no problem. This tendency can be seen in articles published in independent newspapers. Usually independent experts discuss various issues from a more critical position. But representatives of the government institutions unambiguously support the same opinion: everything is very good. There are three state newspapers (“Azerbaycan”, “Respublika”, “Xalg”) and one government-oriented newspaper (“525-ji gazet”) published in the Azerbaijani language. Articles related to children’s rights are scarce in the newspapers published during the period covered by the research. And most of those articles are reports on the initiatives taken by the state in partnership with the Office of UNICEF in Azerbaijan to encourage mothers to breast-feed their babies. Those articles present the initiatives as improving the situation that was good enough anyway. The newspapers give no report on any problems related to children or their rights. This can be explained by the fact that media is still treated as a “propaganda machine”, as it was in the Soviet system.

Approximately half of the materials are short news and other reports. The other half consists of analytical materials. Those are published under the following headings: Burning Issues, Research, Various, Social, Details. Headlines are mainly informative or challenging. The latter ones are given to reports of different meetings and summarize the main idea of the meeting discussions. Only four articles had headlines in a question form.

Articles about the issues of children and children’s rights can mostly be found in the newspapers which are considered to be more or less independent. A total of 34 photos was published within the articles. Short news reports do not give any photos. The photos given in the reports about meetings are the ones that were taken at the meetings. And photos published with the analytical articles are obviously not original. Though sometimes they do relate to the article, it is quite clear that they are not taken from the Azerbaijan reality, but most likely copied from the Internet. For example, the article “Why Do the Girls Get Married Early?” published in “Uch nogta” newspaper dated April 2011, talks about marriage of under-age girls and shows its evil whereas the photo given in the article shows a happy couple where the bride is obviously not under-age or an adolescent. Three articles published in “Olaylar” newspaper on different dates were provided with the same photo. In the article “Children, Beware of the Cage!” published in July 11, 2010 issue of “Zerkalo” newspaper there is a photo of juvenile prisoners in a punitive institution gathered in a room and lined up. Their faces are clearly seen and they can easily be identified as Azerbaijani teenagers. Even though the article talks about the general state of juvenile delinquency in Azerbaijan, it is absolutely wrong to publish pictures of individuals. This is a manifest violation of children’s rights and a choice that can jeopardize their future life.

There are problems related to placing the images of the bereaved children in the electronic media. In Azerbaijan local government representatives often come to the institutions for orphans and children with physical defects to give them gifts. Those visits are usually recorded and broadcasted by television channels. The fact that orphans and children with physical defects are videotaped at close range and shown on TV is accepted as a normal practice. It is quite obvious that the correspondents who record these events are concerned about propagating the local government’s activities more than about children and their vulnerable situation.
This example demonstrates that media still plays the role of a propaganda machine, as it did in Soviet times. However, it would be wrong to say that these issues exist only in Azerbaijani media. This situation is common for the media all over the world.

It’s not just the developing world where some people’s voices are not heard. People with disabilities, people of colour, children, and poor people rarely influence the content of mass-media products. Journalists are unlikely to interview these people, and as a result, stories are rarely written specifically about how they will be affected by news developments. They are also absent from or underrepresented in the workforces of mass-media organisations. (Waltz, 2005, p. 26)

The research of newspapers clearly showed that even though the published materials are written about children, the children themselves are not present there. In other words, children are not allowed to speak, their thoughts are not known. For instance, in October-November 2010, “The Month of Children’s Rights” was organized in Neftchala region with the support of the Office of UNICEF in Azerbaijan, but newspapers published only factual reports of that initiative – what meetings were held, where they were held, etc. There was no report about what the children themselves learned and what was changed in their parents’ worldview. The thoughts of children who participated in the event or of their parents were ignored.

Children themselves do not act as the source of information. Only experts act as the source of information about children’s rights in the country. Articles generally are more expert-oriented. There are no orderly materials of research; that is, we do not find the consistent presentation of the issue itself and of its consequences and development, though the issue’s development does need to be researched. For instance, even though there was an article about a 2-year old child who died because of doctors’ carelessness, there was no follow-up to this news – no report on whether the doctors were punished, etc. In February 2011 a 5-year old girl was beaten to death by her father and step-mother and this news was broadly presented in both printed and electronic media; however, later we do not find any material about the investigation of that crime. This indicates that the media is more interested in giving sensational materials.

In the newspapers the authors’ personal opinions about the fact and the issue prevail in most of the articles dedicated to children’s problems. Few of the articles about children and their problems are related to certain traditions. The main reason is that a child is accepted in this culture as a person who, having no life experience, is unable to freely make decisions and always needs to be guided. This tradition is proved even more by the fact that none of the researched materials gave a child’s opinion – a child is believed to be unable to say anything serious. Even if he/she says something, it won’t matter. By this reason, children are forced to play their part – if your opinion is not needed, then you don’t need to think and take the initiative. Most certainly, some families have different family relationships at home, but the society as a whole has this traditional attitude to children.

Culture and children’s rights

Azerbaijan culture also contains the elements of shame-based culture which is inherent in Eastern countries. In this culture the positions and relationships in family and society are based on an hierarchical system. Adults enjoy a special status, they know everything and always make right decisions. For young people, objecting to adults and sharing their own opinion is not positively accepted and considered as shameful. The adults decide which school and which university they are to study at and whom they are to marry. If a child disagrees with adults or expresses his/her opinion in their presence it is not welcomed and considered to be shameful. He/she has to wait until he/she is grown up and can make independent decisions. As a result, children and young people cannot make their voices heard and fulfil
their dreams. Inability to express oneself and constant suppression of one’s desires causes emotions of anger and complexes deep inside the person. Then he/she attacks the younger ones with the anger. Thus the vicious circle continues.

In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture.”(Lippman, 2004, p.44) “The family – whether intact, single-parent, happy, or dysfunctional, small or large – is the child’s first ‘school.’ Parents and older siblings, as well as nearby extended family, are models for the baby, sharpening attitudes as well as walking styles, food preferences, self-esteem, and numerous other facets of the emerging person. (Schwartz, Matzkin, p.179)

Of course, in this kind of culture it is difficult to have an exchange of opinion. It is prohibited to discuss certain subjects, especially those related to women’s issues and women and child abuse, because their open discussion is considered shameful. However, not discussing those issues produces a false impression that there is no problem at all. This can do even more harm since hiding problems and not discussing them openly in the society will prevent people from searching for solutions and taking measures.

**Ethics and children’s rights**

Children know very little about their rights; they are unprotected and do not have enough knowledge to defend themselves. The knowledge of legal ways of protection mostly belongs to adults. Since children cannot prove to adults or remind them that they also have rights, it is a matter of conscience for adults to protect children and respect their rights. In other words, because children do not have knowledge, adults are to act according to their conscience and either misuse their innocence and vulnerability or not misuse it. For this reason ethics have a greater importance for children’s rights. That is not an easy issue. Especially if we consider that the problem of “fathers and sons” has always existed in all nations. J.Levine says that even though our own children are so dear to each one of us, in general, on the society level, attitude to children is usually negative and they are usually talked about with great complaints. (Levine, 2002)

Journalism ethics is the weak spot in Azerbaijan, as it is in all the post-Soviet countries. As it was mentioned above, journalism in the USSR acted as a propaganda machine instead of fulfilling its main function – to provide people with correct information about the events. And propaganda does not need to follow the basic ethical principles of accuracy, impartiality and objectivity. It requires other approaches and “qualities” like falsification, exaggeration and brainwashing. In societies where journalism serves readers, there are standards which create common belief between journalists and readers and these universal news standards are always unchangeable.

Ethical issues are directly related to humanity and human rights. In Western countries such issues related to ethics are investigated more deeply and from different controversial aspects, while in developing countries the importance of ethics in journalism has only recently become a more open topic of discussion.

However, audience concern with ethics is indeed an important reason for journalists to be ethical. But there is another reason, and it is just as important: Journalists should be ethical because they need self-respect and the sense of satisfaction that comes with doing what one thinks is right.

Journalists have to live with themselves as well as with other people. In order to have meaningful lives, they need a sense of personal propriety, of integrity and self-esteem. To accomplish this, they must be concerned with trying to do the
right thing, live up to their potential and develop themselves beyond the materialistic aspects of their lives. (Merrill, 1997, p. 31) Effective and meaningful ethical standards can never be imposed from an external source – they must be an outgrowth of those who practice them everyday. (Journalism Ethics: The Global Debate, 2003, p.13)

Teaching disciplines related to the protection of children’s rights in universities would be a great step towards the whole humanization of education. The students who study this course may not be in direct contact with children, but in the future when they become parents or media workers they could show respect to children’s rights and think about it more. Journalists can help make children’s rights one of the priority areas by means of the media organizations where they work. The students who finish the course may play an important role in the development of children’s journalism which presently is experiencing a crisis, but in the future can have exceptional importance in enlightening children, providing them with skills and worldview. This side of the matter is especially important, because it is no use to give information about their rights to the children who are uneducated and narrow-minded. It’s very important to help children know and discover themselves as social individuals.

If no knowledge of ourselves, no knowledge for ourselves was given by the education system, it did not make much difference whether we obtained a large portion of knowledge or just a small one. (Le Doeuff, 2000, p.100)

Journalism education in Azerbaijan

What is the role of journalism higher education in this critical process? How can journalism education in Azerbaijan contribute to the understanding of such universal, fact-based journalism standards as accuracy, impartiality and balance?

These questions are still on the agenda of Azerbaijani journalism and journalism education in the twenty-first year of our country's independence. The first step to solve the media's problems should start with the journalists, particularly with their education.

As a new generation of Azerbaijani journalists and academics with more than fifteen years of experience in the field, we strongly believe that the core issue in the Azerbaijani media and journalism education is the lack of understanding of journalism as it is practiced in a democracy. Understanding false perceptions of journalism and professional standards such as accuracy, impartiality and balance serve as the starting points for avoiding further mistakes and understanding of the whole concept of independent journalism.

Unfortunately, journalism education in Azerbaijan does little to help journalists understand and seek solutions to these problems. Though in the framework of educational reforms some curriculum changes have taken place, there are still many gaps. There are serious training problems with regard to journalism. These problems appear both in the selection of the proper subjects and in the teaching methodology. The vast majority of the subject matter is comprised of themes left over from the Soviet era. Journalism education is mainly based on theoretical lessons and there is not enough focus on practical skills and world experience in the teaching of journalism.

Rote memorization and other teaching methods, which are still dominant in our education system, don't encourage students to think independently, to state their personal opinions or to make good decisions. Teachers’ lack of attention to the psychological aspects of sociability has had a direct influence on the quality of education in Azerbaijan. There is just not enough connection between what is taught in the classroom and what is encountered in practice.

The main requirement for success in journalism is deriving benefit from the model of developed countries. The same can be said about the preparation of textbooks and teaching methods. The effectiveness of the “The Coverage of Children’s Rights in the Media” course
depends on how well it is organized on the level of present-day requirements. No doubt, this course should be taught on the basis of the contemporary world ethical principles of accuracy, impartiality and objectivity, and the students should be given the accurate information about the function of journalism. For a successful outcome, this course should be practical and engaging. Long lectures are to be avoided. Lessons must be interactive and students encouraged to be actively involved. Stressing ethical standards in journalism in the teaching of this course would be effective. Research of a number of newspapers in Azerbaijan with regard to children and children’s rights made it possible to get a general idea of the situation in this area. The results of this research may be useful for developing this course. The results may also help media workers do more effective work. Based on this, it looks reasonable to develop a proposal package for both education and media workers.

Offers and recommendations for education process and for the universities:

- To pay special attention to the teaching of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To especially stress ethical standards like accuracy, impartiality, and objectivity, while teaching “The Coverage of Children’s Rights in the Media” course.
- To develop and use special teaching methods based on what is happening in the West such as role plays, conducting opinion polls, surveys, etc.
- To invite guest lecturers - specialists both in children’s rights and journalism fields, psychologists, etc. - to the classes.
- To train students to search the media in order to find and analyze relevant materials, to increase knowledge about the preparation of analytical materials.
- To train them to present their research.
- To apply that knowledge by giving tasks of preparing materials for faculty/university newspapers.
- To create an online children’s newspaper and to lead intensive dialogues and information exchanges through this online paper. It would be helpful for acquiring cross-cultural experience if these websites maintain an active intercourse with similar international sites.
- To collaborate with the media outlets in order to promote effective relationships between teaching/learning staff and media workers.
- To train journalists in order to share this new and practical knowledge.
- To foster participation of female students in this course. Since female students are future mothers, it is very important to supply them with appropriate knowledge of this field.
- To pay special attention to gender issues and gender equality while developing the module.

Recommendations for media workers:

- To prepare packages of proposals for strengthening the efficiency of newspapers, magazines and TV programs for children.
- To stress to journalists the importance of covering Children’s Rights in media as a primary problem.
- To ensure that editorial offices and journalists become acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To draw attention to the lack of TV programs for children (especially during prime time). Recommendations must be prepared for media in this regard.
- To supply journalists with the necessary tools to accurately cover Children’s Rights in their reporting.
Conclusion

Children’s rights are certainly an integral part of human rights. Children are the most vulnerable section of a population and this is first of all, related to the fact that their experiences and the knowledge of their rights and freedoms are so limited. Treating human beings with respect from a very young age, recognizing their rights and protecting them can be a powerful step in turning humanism and democracy into a priority. Recognition of children’s rights can play a crucial role in comprehending the essential knowledge about human rights in whole.

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‘Give us a place to stand and a place to grow’:
educational reform initiatives in Ontario and Qatar

John McKeown,
Senior Lecturer, English Education, Mevlana University, Konya, Turkey
jmckeown@mevlana.edu.tr

Abstract

The author contrasts global educational reform in two very different settings through a review of current data, approaches to systemic change, and an examination of changing demographics and developing trends for teachers and learners globally. Based on the experience in education reform initiatives and on the supporting data, the necessary conditions for successful education reform are identified.

Well-established education reform developments are underway world-wide in a variety of models, frameworks or syllabi. While these models are applied in school settings serving selected student populations, this paper focuses on contemporary school reform efforts in state sector schools available to all students. As there is little evidence of a “one-size-fits-all” approach to reform implementation (Diboll & McKeown, 2011b; Mourshed, 2010), the focus for successful change is on teacher practice and issues related to practice.

There is a comparative discussion of education initiatives in Canada and Qatar. Qatar’s “Education for a New Era” reform project, 2002–2010, is contrasted with school improvement efforts in Ontario, Canada, 2003-2010, through an examination of approaches, commonalities, and comparative results. Contributing factors for commonalities in aspects of contemporary educational reform are explored.

The author concludes with the potentiality for successful educational reform based on a thorough understanding of a context for change, a strong focus on instructional practice to inform decisions, clear curriculum standards, and an awareness of situational variables including capacity building, and teacher identity.

Key words: education reform, teacher identity, instructional practice, positively subversive teachers, school improvement, education for a new era

Education Reform

For this study, education reform includes those efforts directed toward improving the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms in order to increase student outcomes. It should be noted that the focus is on specific, targeted educational reforms, distinguished by steady, incremental improvements over a 3-5 year time-frame, based on improving teachers’ instructional practices and on measurable outcomes particularly with data supplied through the Programme for Internal Student Assessment (PISA).

PISA seeks to measure how well students aged 15 world-wide in OCED countries are prepared to meet the challenges of today's knowledge societies. The assessment focuses on young people's ability to use their knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges, rather than the extent to which they have mastered a specific school curriculum. This orientation reflects a change in the goals and objectives of curricula themselves, which increasingly address what students can do with what they learn at school and not merely whether they can reproduce what they have learned (PISA, 2012).

As of PISA 2009, over one million students have been assessed. In addition to paper-and-pencil tests measuring reading, mathematical and scientific literacy, students complete questionnaires about themselves, while their principals completed questionnaires about their
schools. This has produced an unprecedented comparative knowledge base of school systems and their outcomes, and allows these outcomes to be monitored over time.

Well-established education reform developments are underway worldwide as seen in a number of established programs. There are several well-known examples: the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes (IBO, 2012); a curriculum framework as found in Fieldwork Education: International Primary Curriculum (IPC, 2012); or, as may be found in established syllabi such as the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE, 2012) from Cambridge University. These models are currently applied in school settings serving selected student populations. However, the author’s intention is to focus on contemporary school reform efforts available to all students in state-sector schools, by contrasting two different but highly similar approaches to educational reform; one in Qatar through the Supreme Education Council, and the other in Ontario, Canada.

In Qatar system-wide educational reform efforts, there is evidence of a shift from a ‘delivery’ model of teaching to a ‘reflective practitioner’ model (Diboll, 2010). Teachers are now empowered to provide materials necessary for learning (lesson planning, resources, teaching to outcomes), to maintain an open dialogue with students (meeting learner needs), and to scaffold student learning by facilitating possible connections that the student may not create independently. Parent choice and school autonomy are keystones of the identified education reform efforts.

Since 2000, Canada has become a world leader in sustained professionally-driven reform of its education system. According to world-wide standards (OECD, 2011: 65), its students perform well despite their socio-economic status, first language, whether they are native Canadians or recent immigrants (OECD, 2011: 67). Like Qatar, Canada has achieved success with centrally-driven pressure for higher results, combined with orchestrated capacity building and within a climate of trust and respect.

Contributing factors in contemporary educational reform

(i) An impetus for change – the momentum of a critical event

It has been shown that one or more of three circumstances produce the conditions that trigger reform: a socio-economic crisis; a high profile critical report of system performance; or a change in leadership (Mourshed, et. al., 2010: 3). In Qatar, the leadership of the Consort to the Emir, Her Royal Highness Sheika Mossa, jumpstarted the nation’s education reform movement (Young & McKeown, 2007). In Ontario, the province-wide teacher strikes of 1997 through 1998 were a turning point in the move toward coherent educational reform. The Ontario electorate voted in a new Liberal government in 2001 who made the bold decision to focus on education as the cornerstone of their political agenda (OECD, 2011: 72).

(ii) Knowledge-based society and lifelong learning

It has been established that education is the driving force behind economic growth, and human and cultural development (Galal, 2008: 17). It is through education that populations become aware of their rights and obligations as citizens and participate pro-actively in their communities.

However, globalization and the emergence of a knowledge economy have given education a new purpose as a powerful force for the creation and adaptation of knowledge. In fact, education itself has become a key resource of economic growth. Consequently, a person without knowledge can be subject to marginalization (Bakhtiari, 2006: 3). However, the corollary is also true: the higher the level of education and training of a country’s population, the more chances a nation has of seizing opportunities and minimizing the social cost of
technological change, and making the transition towards a more open economy (Galal, 2008: 27).

Further, if a country’s “knowledge” is to grow, then an individual’s knowledge base must also continuously change and expand. Lifelong learning is a key to continuous development of human resources (Galal, 2008: 86) and has the potential to meet the changing needs of the workplace.

Lifelong learning can be described in a number of ways:

(i) a formal education that provides all individuals with opportunities to acquire a fundamental level of instruction;

(ii) multiple opportunities for individuals to continually renew their knowledge, skills, and competencies; and,

(iii) an institutional system to quickly and smoothly respond to changing educational demands of the educational environment (Kagia, et.al., 2003).

As a result of this shift in educational perspective, Ontario adopted lifelong learning to re-orient their education system to equip people with the skills and expertise to compete globally (Galal, 2008: 95). Given these developments, inequality with regard to knowledge, constitutes one of the biggest challenges to reform efforts world-wide and is the social-justice calling of this generation, evidenced by the social uprisings of the “Arab Awakening”, and populist movements in the U.S.A.

(iii) Changes in teacher identity

In educational reform, the transformation of teaching and learning is the intended goal: learning becomes more consequential, practical, and memorable (Bruner, 1996), and, consequently, more enjoyable. A didactic tradition of information transmission cannot effectively engage the learner and actually can be a de-motivating factor (Diboll, 2010). The central change is that of the role of the teacher, now situated as ‘co-learner’. With this shift in identity, the knowledge ‘deliverer’ becomes a creator of knowledge, change agent, and a facilitator, creating an environment for a more successful transmission of information (Diboll & McKeown, 2011b; OECD, 2005). It is clear that education reform in terms of school improvement no longer refers only to activities confined to mainstream educational systems, and that many opportunities now exist for educators to contribute to the process of fundamental change, to accelerate it, and make it fairer.

In both Qatar and Ontario educational reform, one of the central challenges was to find ways to sustain teacher quality thereby ensuring all teachers were engaging in effective ongoing professional learning, whatever their years of experience. In educational reform literature, a notable movement toward the practicalization of theory at the classroom level through ongoing continuing professional development, or “pro-personal development” (Earley & Bubb, 2007; Diboll & McKeown, 2011c), is occuring. Critical friendship (Curry, 2006; Diboll & McKeown, 2011a;), and the development of dynamic professional learning communities (McKeown, 2005; Silova, 2011;), are combining to make learning relevant for students across a broad range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds. Change occurs, however, one step at a time.

According to OECD (2005), it is becoming clear that the demands on schools and teachers are increasingly more complex. Due to changing demographics and global concerns, education reform is underway whether educators acknowledge it or not or actively participate or not. Although teachers recognize the increased expectation to take on broader roles, including aspects of individual learner development, the management of learning processes, the development of the school as community, and creating connections with the local community and the wider world, they are not sure what to do practically (OECD, 2005: 4).
Global social transformation: transformative imperatives and the *vox populi*

The importance of public accountability is well-established in the literature (Ahran, 2011) and is associated with open societies, greater transparency, and opportunities for contestability (Galal, 2008: 200). More open societies provide a wider range of mechanisms for citizens than do less open societies. Educational reform is the route to access the potentiality of students to participate more fully in the changing their society. As seen in recent events, education has become a central concern of youthful populations of many nations including Chile and Saudi Arabia as they move forward with varying degrees of success in educational initiatives (Cameron, 2011; Smith, 2011).

As witnessed in 2011 and 2012 throughout the Middle East, students recognize the potentiality of education in a broader sense and demand equality, and a change in their learning environment. In Qatar, the government has been quite proactive in this regard and civil society is now playing a more active role in education. Newspapers, media programs, and the Internet, regularly feature education debates (e.g., *BBC Doha Debates*), sometimes with biting analysis of government efforts (Galal, 2008: 203).

At this juncture in history, there seem to be two avenues open: either leverage the democratization of knowledge and the power of participatory, authentic, and multi-modal learning in the service of students, or continue with current practice and careen down a path to irrelevancy and insurrection. Fortunately, both Qatar and Ontario chose a path of equally encouraging learning all along a wide spectrum of ability levels and inclusionary educational cultural convergence (ECCO) practices (Kurt & McKeown, 2012).

‘Positively subversive’ teachers

Despite all good intentions, there remain within schools in teacher practice, and in administrative practice, inertia that often inhibits change. Teachers who persevere with reform initiatives despite contrary conditions, are identified for the purposes of this paper as ‘positively subversive’ teachers. ‘Subversive’ highlights the fact that these teachers take ownership of change initiatives, empowered to make improve practice, despite the obstacles they may encounter.

‘Positive’ refers to those teachers participating in educational reform efforts and who recognize the benefits of change to both learner and teacher, and who are willing to improve the learning experience by focusing on the learner’s needs, often against organizational mandates. What these teachers discover in the process is increased job satisfaction, a renewed pleasure in teaching, increased student outcomes, and better overall relations with their students. This sort of satisfaction of the both the teacher and learner is clearly evident in PISA 2009 results (OECD, 2010a; OECD, 2010b; OECD, 2010d).

‘Positively subversive’ teachers, by engaging in reflection, interdependent analysis of student and teacher performance, mutual planning for instruction, peer observation or co-teaching, develop modes of collegiality (particularly cross-curricular), and can make significant changes to their practice which in turn improve student performance. One could conclude with Biggs and Tang (2007) that where there is teacher empowerment and learner emancipation from institutional restraint and a departure from the role of teacher as the ‘deliverer’ of knowledge, teachers become ‘positively subversive’. These educators often are the ‘candle buring in the dark’ whilst change moves slowly forward, or inertia creeps in.

Change in Qatar: “Education for a New Era”

In 2001-2002, Qatari leaders examined the K–12 education system to find reform options to meet the country’s changing needs. There were strengths identified in the existing system:
many teachers were enthusiastic and wanted to deliver a solid education; some of them exhibited a real desire for change and greater autonomy; and, parents appeared likely to accept new schooling options.

But weaknesses in the system were extensive. There was no vision of quality education or structures needed to support it. The curriculum in the government schools was outmoded and emphasized rote memorization. The Ministry’s public education system had achieved its initial purpose of providing free education to all Qatari children and abundant civil service jobs (Zellman, 2009: 23). Overall, the education was of low quality, as proven by the proliferation of private tutoring and the high rate of grade retention.

Additionally, the system lacked performance indicators, and the performance information available to teachers and administrators meant little to them because they had no authority to make changes in the schools. Investment in education was small as compared to the high per capita income. Teachers received low pay and little professional development, many school buildings were in poor condition, and classrooms were overcrowded (Zellman, 2009: 96).

Most of the system’s weaknesses were well-known in the country and previous attempts at rejuvenation had been unsuccessful because they lacked a coherent vision and a clear implementation strategy. The most fundamental need was clear curriculum standards, that is, assessments and professional development aligned with standards. To promote continuous improvement, the initiative called for various educational data to be collected, analyzed, and shared with the public.

The Qatari leadership decided to proceed with an option that would provide new school models: the Independent School (IS) which included all the basic educational elements and was based on four principles of autonomy, accountability, variety, and choice. The adoption of these particular principles is notable in a region where such principles are both rare and poorly understood (Zellman, 2009: 85).

With reform underway in 2002, this new structure ran in parallel with the existing Ministry of Education. In this way, parents could exercise choice whether to send their children to the new IS’s or keep them in Ministry or private schools (McKeown & Young, 2007). In the 2009–2010 school year, all remaining state sector schools were transitioned into Independent Schools and today 77 former Ministry of Education schools now operate as “semi-independent” schools (SEC, 2010: 6) bringing the total number of IS’s to 180.

**Change in Ontario schools**

Ontario took into account previous attempts that had been undertaken in educational reform, for example in the U.K. where school systems had been distracted and drawn into controversies that were not aligned to improving student learning. The Ontario government took a decision to focus on a few number of goals to serve as a coherent effort: increasing literacy and numeracy in elementary schools (from 55% to 75%) and increasing the high school graduation rate (from 68% to 85%) (OECD, 2011: 73).

To achieve these results, the Ontario Ministry of Education created an implementation strategy. To implement literacy and numeracy initiatives, they created a 100-person secretariat responsible for building the capacity and expertise to do the work. This secretariat, much like work of the Supreme Educationa Council in Qatar, was separate from the Ministry of Education, and thus able to start afresh without the usual bureaucratic obstacles. The Ontario Ministry of Education also required that teams be created in each district and each school in order to lead the work on literacy and numeracy. By so doing, they paired external expertise with sustained time and leadership to sustain the initiative. Similarly, Qatar embedded curriculum four-member expert curricular teams in IS’s to support teachers in changing practice with a hands-on approach. Like Qatar, the central idea was to avoid mandating from the top-down.
As for high school retention, the Ontario Ministry of Education created a “Student Success” initiative support by a new program the “High Skills Major”. This aimed to take high school students who were not engaged by the traditional academic curriculum and give them a different menu of courses that allowed students to take courses with practical skills leading to potential employment (OECD, 2011: 75).

With the supporting role of the Ontario Ministry of Education and from the district level, the real action happened in schools where teachers worked in communities to think about practical problems and learned from one another. While the mission came from the above, there was clear recognition that it was at the school level where change occurred.

As with Qatar, the problem was more about a lack of knowledge than a lack of will and the key to motivation was the chance to be part of successful and improved schools. This meant that the ideas were less about accountability and incentives and more about shared purpose. Through consistent application of centrally-driven intention for higher results, combined with extensive capacity building, in a climate of mutual trust and respect, Ontario was able to achieve very significant progress over a similar time frame.

Commonalities of School Improvement

From the ‘big picture’ of educational reform, improving student performance comes down to improving the learning experience of students in classrooms. According to *A Decade of Schooling for Tomorrow Report* (2008:6), there are commonalities in education reform essential to adapt to changing global circumstances, to the changing nature of work and in the workplace, and to meet future employment needs.

Most top-down initiatives are unable to effect lasting changes in practice for a number of reasons:

(i) reforms focus on issues not primarily related to instructional practice;
(ii) assumptions that teachers would know pedagogical tasks that they actually had not be suitably trained to do;
(iii) too many conflicting reforms asked teachers to do too many things simultaneously; and,
(iv) teachers and schools did not adequately understand or support the reform strategy. (Barber & Mourshed, 2009)

In reviewing the examples of Qatari and Ontario successful reform efforts, commonalities emerge in what is needed to create, sustain and promote education reform:

- strong, informed, dynamic, school leadership;
- strategies directly focused on improving instruction; alignment to standards and stated learner outcomes between goals, interventions, available resources, and time; sharing of substantive evidence of progress;
- a focus on data to inform change improving instruction (i.e., regular use of data to diagnose problems, conduct strategic planning, develop activities, and provide feedback);
- careful and detailed attention to implementation along with opportunities for teachers to practice new ideas and learn from their colleagues (i.e., professional development as collaborative practice becomes the main mechanism both for improving teaching practice and making teachers accountable to each other; and
- a single integrated strategy and similar expectations for both teachers and students (Mourshed, 2010; OECD, 2010c; OECD, 2011).
(a) School leadership for change

Successful school leaders first concentrate on a limited number of changes to achieve success in an important area, to motivate staff for further change, and to reduce resistance by those who oppose change. The principal sets clear expectations for students and faculty, sending a message that everyone needs to change the daily school operations and instructional practice. These principals are determined to raise student achievement, and spend time studying the school and its needs.

In Qatar, the SEC provides specialized training for its principal/operators through established programs addressing the various cohorts that focus on intensive training in turnaround. They become more conversant with aspects of change at the classroom level. In this process, the school leader takes on the role of an instructional leader, and is much more visible in classrooms. Unfortunately, many principals in the field know about the theory of educational reform but are short on implementation.

Ontario has paid special attention to leadership development, especially for school principals. In 2008, the government initiated the Ontario Leadership Strategy that spells out the skills, knowledge and attributes of effective leaders. Among the elements of the strategy are a strong mentoring programme that has now reached over 4,500 principals and vice-principals, and a new province-wide appraisal programme for school leaders (OECD, 2011: 76).

(b) Maintain a consistent focus on meeting curriculum standards

In successful reform efforts, data is monitored continually, looking for ways to improve instruction. Teachers need to understand curriculum standards, the specific curriculum units or lessons that address them, and the methods for effectively teaching those lessons. School personnel can analyze data on factors that contribute to or impede student learning, such as attendance, discipline, expenditures, course selection, course enrollment, and course failure rates.

However, many teachers are not professionally prepared to effectively use data. In Qatar, sharing of results in open-air meetings allowed school leaders to hold staff accountable for results. Drawing on results from an analysis of student data, principals and staff are more able to determine specific areas of weakness in instruction, establish priority areas for instructional focus, and make changes in those areas to strengthen teaching and improve student learning.

Mandated assessment and analysis is part of the Qatari reform (SEC, 2010: 11-13), where administrators guide teachers to complete a task analysis and isolate an area that needs to be addressed in their instruction. Their portfolios, and observations, provide evidence that these tasks have been completed satisfactorily.

The Ontario response to weak performance has consistently been intervention and support, not blame and punishment. One of its major successes in the early years was to reduce dramatically the number of low-performing schools, not by threatening to close them, but by flooding the schools with technical assistance and support (OECD, 2011: 72). The underlying assumption of Ontario’s leaders seems to be that teachers are professionals who are trying to do the right thing, and that performance problems are much more likely to be a product of lack of knowledge rather than lack of motivation. Consequently, teachers seem to take more responsibility for performance.

(c) Improving instruction

There is substantial research indicating that the quality of teachers and their teaching are the most important factors in determining student outcomes (Marzano, 2001; 2007). Changes in teacher practice do have a significant effect on learner outcomes and in the quality of education provided for the learner. The author’s experience is unflinching on the direct impact of high quality teacher instruction on student achievement.
It is the individual teacher who can make a direct sustained impact on students in a class. For example, in Qatar, each cohort of IS had four on-site subject curricular consultants supporting teachers to change practice including lesson plans, materials, forms of formative assessment. Those teachers who responded to this level of support had the most significant gains.

Ontario’s reforms rested heavily on the confidence the government had in the quality of the province’s teaching force. The decision by the literacy and numeracy Secretariat to put seed money into the field to encourage local experimentation and innovation, sent a strong signal that teacher-generated solutions to weaknesses in reading and mathematics performance were likely to be more successful than solutions imposed from above. The fact that teaching has long been a respected profession in Canada, and continues to draw its candidates from the top third of secondary school graduates, meant that the government had a solid basis for believing that its trust would pay off.

**(d) Professional and collegial development**

Research on the characteristics of effective professional development indicates that teachers need to be active agents in analysis of their own practice in the light of professional standards, and their own students’ progress in the light of standards for student learning (Currie, 2008; Diboll & McKeown, 2011; OECD 2005). Effective professional development is based on analyses of achievement and instruction, and differentiated for teacher needs and the subject areas targeted for instructional improvement.

Although it may seem patently obvious, teachers need appropriate content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and the corresponding instructional strategies for teaching the knowledge and skills to students (Bodilly, 2011; Barber, 2009). Sharing practice helps to establish a community of ‘shared practice’ (McKeown, 2009) and has been shown to assist in the development of individual teacher practice.

**Discussion**

**(i) Progress of the Qatari reform**

Reform accomplishments can be remarkable. As a consequence of reform in Qatar, the majority of Qatar’s children attend school in learner-centered classrooms with improved facilities, where better-prepared and better-trained teachers guide them in accordance with internationally benchmarked standards. In addition, Qatar now has the ability to examine education processes empirically, measure outcomes objectively and implement improvements as needed. Following are some indicators of the progress made to date.

Qatar now possesses curriculum standards of international standard in Arabic, mathematics, science, and English for all 12 grades. The mathematics and science standards are published in Arabic and English to make them accessible to the largest group of educators. Of particular note are the new standards for the study of Arabic, which stress practical language skills using a variety of linguistic materials and are a model for use throughout the Arab-speaking World (Brewer, 2007: 548).

The Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment (QCEA) used to measure student performance in four subjects, Arabic, English, mathematics, and science, and in which internationally benchmarked curriculum standards have been developed, shows positive development. The test was administered to 36,000 IS students in 2008–2009 and results showed that those students in the reform for the longest period performed better than students who had been in independent schools for a shorter period of time (SEC, 2010: 13). Accumulated experience of students in the independent schools over time has resulted in better performance.
Qatar first participated in PISA in 2006 and this participation represented a baseline from which to track progress in reading, mathematics and scientific literacy among 15 year olds over time. In 2006, average scores at key points along the proficiency distribution in Qatar were uniformly low at the 10th and 25th percentiles, and considerably lower than comparable scores of their OECD peers in all three domains: reading, mathematics, and science (OECD, 2010b; OECD, 2010d).

The main focus of PISA in 2006 was science, and in 2003, math. The PISA 2009 focus was reading with updated performance assessments in mathematics and science. Despite Qatar’s place as sixth lowest scoring participating country in 2009, there were promising trends seen in the comparison of 2006 and 2009 PISA results. The score change in science performance increased by 30 points, the highest single increase in scores of PISA 2009 (OECD, 2010a; OECD 2010d; SEC, 2010: 14 -15). However, the proportion of students who did not attain proficiency Level 2 in science fell sharply from 79% to 65%. (OECD, 2010: 44)

The Evaluation Institute of the Supreme Education Council (SEC) launched the Qatar Office of Registration, Licensing and Accreditation (QORLA) of Independent School Teachers and School Leaders to enhance and support teachers when they enter the field and throughout their career, leading to accreditation as a teacher. The program also helps school administrators and staff to attain the skills necessary to run and coordinate an IS. By the end 2010, all independent schools from Cohorts 1 to 4 (2004-2007) are part of QORLA (SEC, 2010: 19-23).

(ii) Ontario developments

Ontario’s post-secondary rates are now among the highest in the OECD community (OECD, 2010b) a clear reflection of the growing public realization that education beyond high school will be increasingly essential in a knowledge-based society. In Ontario today, more than 20 000 students are now enrolled in 740 High Skill Major programs in 430 schools (OECD, 2011: 75).

PISA data shows what achievements are possible in education. For example, PISA shows that Canadian 15-year-olds, on average, are over one school year ahead of 15-year-olds in the United States in mathematics and more than half a school year ahead in reading and science. They also show that socio-economically disadvantaged Canadians are much less at risk of poor educational performance than their counterparts in the United States (OECD, 2011). In PISA 2009, Canada ranked sixth overall in achievements and have been, along with the other top performing OECD countries, models for approaches to more sustained educational development, inclusionary practice, and teacher share practice.

CONCLUSION

In this investigation of school reform in Qatar and in Ontario, remarkably similar evidence, highly consistent with the literature (Hogue, 1994; Shirley, 1997; Warren, 2001) on what is needed to sustain ongoing educational reform efforts, become evident:

- strong, informed, dynamic, school leadership conducting regular routine instructional supervision;
- focus on data to inform change improving instruction (i.e., regular use of data to diagnose problems, conduct strategic planning, develop activities, and provide feedback);
- improving instruction: alignment to standards and stated learner outcomes between goals, interventions, available resources, and time frame; sharing of substantive evidence of progress;
• teacher’s development, i.e., professional development as collaborative practice becomes the main mechanism both for improving teaching practice and making teachers accountable to each other; and
• focus on student outcomes.

The benefits of the education reform efforts on teacher practice reach far beyond simply enriching the learning experience of the learner or increasing job satisfaction for teachers. Evidence has shown that there are financial rewards for implementing education change at the teacher level, and political benefits for the existing power base.

In conclusion, the potentiality for success in educational reform given context, intention, results, and situational variables is dependent not so much on the will exercised but on the strategic use of tools available for use.

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Abstract

What has become apparent is that the ESL (English as a Second Language) and SSL (Spanish as a Second Language) methods must be updated to include technology in an innovative manner. Second language acquisition needs to be revisited and updated so that the methodologies can aid in the achievement of the target language coupled with cultural understanding. The methodology that has been implemented in language acquisition has maintained the focus on the theory of Stephen Krashen. It should be revisited and revised to accommodate the new generation of second language learners. With the advent of the global market there is an ever increasing necessity of proficiency of the target language. With the advances in technology the online component is increasing the need to modify the methods that were aimed for the traditional classroom. Taking the European Union’s Common European Framework Reference for Language as the springboard for acquisition and proficiency will provide other innovative methodology. The presenters will demonstrate how to revise the prior methods and contribute other formats that can be implemented for proficiency and assessment.

ESL and SSL Methodologies Revised for a Technological Forum

Upon embarking on the journey and challenges of teaching another language, be it English, Spanish, or any other, the concepts of methodologies are continually re-enforced on future educators without a thought of the appropriateness for the situations they will be encountering. During the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth centuries there was a quest to find methods to impart the systematic structure of acquiring a language. Most the methodologies were based on a classical formulation in which there was a correlation between theory and practice. What is important to distinguish is the idea of methods and approaches. Method derived from Latin, methodus, meaning “way of teaching” and Greek, methodus, defining the word as “a scientific inquiry, pursuit or following after”; hence its concept is of a fixed teaching system consisting of prescribed techniques and practices. This systematic manner of educating conforms to the time period in which it was initiated; therefore, many will fall short in regards to the learners of the technological age. The term ‘approach’ was coined in the mid fifteenth century to mean “handling a problem”, is that what second language educators are doing? Is it not a critical analysis of imparting the concepts in the second language alongside the cultural variants that are present in the target language? When we speak of approaches today it is concerned with the educational philosophies which can be interpreted and applied in a plethora of manners in the classroom. Once again what must be addressed is the advent of technology which forcefully steers the approaches onto another platform that could not be imagined even five years ago. That is the challenge, as educators we must revisit the methods/approaches of the past and update them to meet the requirements of the second language learners.

Looking at the historical journey in second language acquisition there are those methods/approaches that must be updated to engage the learners using modalities that are
available today. While it is true that some are quintessential for the foundation of acquisition there are formulas that will involve students actively participating in their education. One of the items that must be clarified is the variations on acquisition of the target language. The difference between English as a Foreign Language and Spanish as a Second Language is . . . absolutely none because they are being taught in circumstances that are identical in the learner’s own country. Usually the instruction is for a limited period of time whose purpose not always is proficiency in the language. But, English as a Second Language or Spanish as a Foreign Language imposes on the learner a much higher level of understanding since it is a matter of survival in their new environment – be it for a short period (study abroad) or as a permanent move to the host country. This was not foreseen where the technological advances that the world has undertaken in the last few years and will increasingly continue. Within the teacher educational programs there are courses that deal with methodologies, practice, and technologies as separate entities, what needs to be addressed is the integration of all of them so as to better prepare the teacher candidates in their future endeavors.

How can we address this matter? By looking at each of the methods and approaches and adding a new spin on them with the aid of technology and addressing the proficiency levels of the skills that can holistically give the learner a view of their progress in the process of acquiring another language. The skills as are indicated in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment have been “designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabi and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency” (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp). Within the content of the Framework there are levels of proficiency that are indicated as A1, and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2. Each one with a set of skills that need to be met before going onto the next level. In addition there are also three ‘plus’ levels (A2+, B1+, B2+) that have been added. What this system of achievement does is indicate what knowledge and skills have been attained to communicate and act effectively. In addition, the cultural context is imbedded into the proficiency levels. This is a model that incorporates the Community Language Learning (CLL) and the Total immersion technique due to the fact of the ERASUM MUNDUS (Higher Education) and Comenius Programme (pre-school to secondary education). Both programs “aim to help young people and educational staff better understand the range of European cultures, languages and values. They also help young people acquire the basic life skills and competences necessary for personal development, future employment and active citizenship” (http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc84_en.htm).

The methods and approaches that are taught in the teacher education course of methodology are: Grammar-Translation Method (1890’s – 1930’s); Cognitive Approach (1940’s – 1050’s); Audio-Lingual Method (1950’s – 1960’s); The Direct Methods (1970’s); The Natural/Communicative Approach (1960’s – 2000’s); Total Physical Response ([TPR] 1960’s – 2000’s); The Silent Way (1960’s – 2000’s); Suggestopedia (1960’s- 2000’s); Community Language Learning [CLL] (1960’s – 2000’s) and Total Immersion Technique (1980’s – 2000’s). Each one can be revisited and adapted to accommodate the technological aspects that have emerged since these were first introduced into the classrooms. What an educator must remember is that the fundamentals must be taught in conjunction so that the learner can achieve the skills necessary to communicate and be culturally aware. Each of the methods / approaches need to be updated.

1. Grammar–Translation Method: This was originally used in the teaching of the classical languages, Latin and Greek. Students would be using dictionaries to ascertain the meaning of the text, extensive grammar rules, and drills to practice the syntax were the main focus. There would be no verbal interaction and use of the language was only in written form.
This is being done even today in some classrooms, hence the learner can somewhat write but cannot verbally communicate or comprehend when spoken to.

Updated version: teach the fundamentals - parts of speech and use of a thesaurus – allowing the learners to formulate their own sentences instead of translating. All too often the learners do not have a strong grammatical background hence via learning another language they learn their native language grammar alongside the target language. Computerized translators are abundant but the learner must learn to decipher on his/her own if that is what he/she truly wants to express. It is a tool to aid him/her but understanding the language patterns is fundamental.

2. **Cognitive Approach:** refers to the mental activity including thinking, remembering, learning and using language. It refers to the four skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - with a focus on the oral communication.

Here technology will assist in the oral communication by using “audacity” to provide feedback to the students [http://enhancingteaching.com/2011/06/20/audio-feedback/](http://enhancingteaching.com/2011/06/20/audio-feedback/). Another is the use of Skype to communicate with other classrooms or pen pals or have students create video presentations using Screencast-O-Matic ([http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/](http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/)) which is a web-based screen-capture tool in which they must use the four skills.

3. **Audio-Lingual Method:** Repetition, substitution, transformation, and translation were the manner that the learner was acquiring the language. This method was developed in the United States during World War II as a direct result of the need of rapid language learning for military purposes. The problem is that rote memorization of specific dialogues were not transferable to other situations. If the learner is not presented with the exact circumstances he/she would not be able to interact/communicate with a native speaker.

With this method the manner in which to update it and have more meaningful interaction is via You Tube clips of authentic situations that the student can identify with his/her own life. Use of games both within the classroom or those created virtually then placed on the platform used by the school or institution will further enhance the experience. The same technology that could be used to update the cognitive approach can also be used here for feedback.

4. **The Direct Method:** no translation is allowed, meaning is getting the gist of what is going on in a particular situation and there is more teacher/student interaction. Grammar is not formally taught; it is believed that by seeing and hearing the sentence structure the learner will figure out the patterns. Here accuracy in pronunciation and oral expression it vital.

With this manner of acquiring the target language the frustration level for some students will be high, due to the fact that they are used to technology and need the structure of the fundamentals of the language to make sense of the patterns. The suggestions that were made for the audio-lingual method and cognitive approach would hold true for this method. Some selected schools in China and the United States have launched virtual exchange programs where students interact with students of their same age group and bridge the gap of getting the gist to understanding how to utilize the language and cultural awareness items that cannot be taught via books. (Education Week)

5. **The Natural/Communicative Approach:** is viewed as scaffolding of three stages: aural comprehension, early speech production, and speech activities, all are viewed as the natural processes that children learn through their native language. This will be the same approach in acquiring the target language. Only the target language is used in the classroom and error correction is not done.

Rosetta Stone is a computer language program, would be the comparable technical version. The program uses visualization activities, repetition, dialogues, and picture files to allow the learner to master the skills needed in order to advance their scope of knowledge in the target language. The program has two versions to represent the Spain and Latin American
Spanish; whereas in English there is only one version which is neutral. It is student centered and grammar is introduced but not enough to advance the learner to achieve higher proficiency levels. There are cultural items introduced and games to re-enforce what was taught. Another technique that the instructor can incorporate is using a variety of web based materials, either created by the instructor or from a textbook, and the platform that the institution is using for online interaction. Use of the I-Pod or I-Pad would be advantageous. One site that can be used for pod casting is (http://enhancingteaching.com/2012/01/10/podcasting-some-useful-resources/). Educators can also create their own webpage with an avatar as a representative of themselves and send it to students. This will require that the learner take more responsibility for his/her own learning when not in the classroom. In a distance learning situation it will be an added course material that will assist them with assignments.

6. Total Physical Response (TPR): James Asher created this method which is based upon both language and body movements in response to instructions / commands. There is an understanding of what is being said but the production of original speech is delayed. This is a short lived method in acquiring the target language due to it is rote memorization to instructions with limited grammatical instruction and no cultural information presented.

Here “Voice Thread” (http://voicethread.com/about/features/) could be used, since it is a collaborative, multimedia power point. The instructor can have activities and have students present from basic projects – that would include instructions/commands – to higher level skills in accordance to the proficiency level. With the use of multimedia the language becomes more tangible to the learner, hence increasing their four skills at the same time. Another program that can be utilized is “Animoto” (http://animoto.com/) which turns photos, videos, and music into an original video presentation. The instructor can create one then have the students in pairs do one on a specific topic that is being studied. These two programs bring the language alive as effectively as TPR, with the advantage that it would not only be for beginners but also advanced learners.

7. The Silent Way: focusing on drawing the student to try his/her oral abilities without being corrected. The educator is a facilitator when needed since the learner has background knowledge from his/her native language. Manipulatives are used to assist in the acquisition but there is a heavy reliance on the ability of the student.

8. Suggestopedia: is based on relaxation and the power of suggestion whilst learning the target language. There is a notion that positive suggestion will encourage the learner to be receptive and, in turn, stimulate learning. Use of background music is used to lessen the stress level in the classroom. The teacher acts out / mimes and the learners repeat. Little emphasis on grammar or cultural aspects is given to the learners.

9. Community Language Learning: is a method that encourages holistic learning, personal growth, as an individual accomplishment. This can be considered a combination of the Silent Way and Suggestopedia approach. It is considered that the structure of the acquisition is determined by the student’s interest and desire to communicate within the community of the target language.

When looking at three previous approaches, the use of technology would greatly enhance and further the proficiency, lower the stress level of the students, and increase their desire to communicate with those members of the language chosen. Utilizing all of the above mentioned technological techniques will accomplish the task. Students can use “Verbling” (www.verbling.com) for the Community Language Learning. This web-based platform pairs up, for free, native speakers in order to practice conversation. There are timed prompts and topics to start the conversation. It allows for a three way conversation that simulates a real life experience via video conferencing. Along the same lines would be “Italki” (www.italki.com) which has the same concept as “Verbling”.

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10. **Total immersion technique:** is when the student is directly and immediately immersed in the target language from the first day of class. In the case of English as a Second Language (ESL) this is exactly what the students are up against. In the Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) this mimics perfectly what the ESL learner must experience. Use of technology is an additional assistance for the learners. Using technology for presentations and projects will further their ability to advance their acquisition and will engage them in both the target language and culture.

As can be seen the creativity and amplitude of forums that can be used to assist in the acquisition of either English or Spanish abounds. The key to the models and approaches that were lower tech is to update them with a more interactive modality. As educators it is imperative that these avenues be introduced into the learning process, not fearing that they will replace the instructor. There is a greater dimension which can expand the horizons of the learners and make the journey an enjoyable one, where skills are measured, and proficiency is the goal coupled with cultural appreciation.

**References**


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