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NEW ZEALAND STUDIES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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Contents

ARTICLES

Reflection and dialogue on postgraduate professional development for experienced language teachers
Clare Conway and Heather Denny 5

Managing affect in online supervision: The use of affective markers in written feedback
Hayo Reinders, Minyoung Cho and Marilyn Lewis 21

Exploring children's use of referencing in narrative writing in Guyana
Pamela Rose and Helen Basturkmen 35

Using technology to improve pronunciation
Emmaline Lear 45

REVIEWS

Researching language teacher cognition and practice:
International case studies
Barnard, R. & Burns, A.
Rosemary Wette 67

Task-based language teaching from the teachers' perspective:
Insights from New Zealand
East, M.
Margaret Bade 69

Corpora and language education
Flowerdew, L.
Patrick Coleman 72

An introduction to language: Australian and New Zealand edition (7th ed.)
Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., Hyams, N., Collins, P., Amberber, M. & Cox, F.
Jinrui Li 74

Language, society and power: An introduction (3rd ed.)
Mooney, A., Peccei, J. S., LaBelle, S., Henriksen, B. E., Eppler, E., Irwin, A., et al.
Jonathon Ryan 76

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS 78

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ARTICLES

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REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE IN POSTGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EXPERIENCED LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract

Recent discussion has focused on the benefits and constraints of using and teaching reflection for professional self-development (Farrell, 2007; Volk, 2010). Alongside this is an interest in the value of dialogue in teacher development (for example Edge, 2007). This paper describes the experience of advanced language teachers participating in a reflective practice project undertaken as a paper in a professional Master's qualification in a New Zealand tertiary institution. Using data from teacher participant reflective essays and an end of course evaluation, the paper describes teachers' growth in reflectivity and notes the role of dialogue in promoting professional development. The paper also explores the extent to which Stanley's framework (1998) was useful in measuring levels of reflectivity. The researchers found that teachers believed the course promoted their professional development in several ways, and that the activities participants found most helpful were ones that contained an element of dialogic interaction. Participants' level of reflectivity at the end of the course was high on Stanley's (1998) framework, but it was necessary to modify parts of the framework for use in this context.

Key words: *language teacher development; language teacher education; reflective practice; action research*

Introduction

Self-reflection as a Teacher Development Tool

There has been much discussion on the benefits of using teacher self-reflection for professional development in language teaching. Reflective practice is a process whereby teachers examine their own practice, reflecting, preferably with a trusted colleague, on areas of interest in their practice. They can identify weaknesses; plan and try out new directions; observe, record and reflect on the results; identify further areas for improvement or exploration; and start a new cycle of reflection. It is conscious, planned and systematic, as well as flexible, and the teacher normally chooses the area for reflection. It is thus empowering and accommodating of a wide range of teaching situations (Farrell, 2007). As part of a reflective practice exercise,

teachers can also be encouraged to engage with the literature in their area of interest, and take a more critical look at their own practice in the light of this literature. This can involve trying new approaches in the classroom, and testing the applicability of the research findings to their context. There is sound advice and guidance widely available for language teachers on how to engage in the reflective process (notably Farrell, 2007; Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

Dialogue, as part of reflection and collaboration, is seen as powerful for teacher development by a number of writers. Day (1993) was an early advocate. More recently, Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy and Stackman (2003) have encouraged teachers to do participatory research involving self-reflection with a 'critical friend', and Gray (2012) has shown the value of 'conversations' in association with observation. In addition, Farrell's (2007) list of six procedures that teachers can undertake to facilitate self-reflection includes three dialogic activities (p. 10). Dialogic activities are also widely advocated elsewhere in the traditional teacher development literature (for example, Burns, 1999; Edge, 2007; Gray, 2012; Head & Taylor, 1997; Stenhouse, 1975).

The benefits of such activities are many. Stenhouse (1975) and Day (1993) stress the importance of teachers being challenged. More recently Louie et al (2003) stress the value for teachers, in the context of 'self-study teacher research', of the opportunity for critical feedback, resulting in increased reflectivity as well as increased motivation and encouragement. Feryok's (2011) review article in the New Zealand context similarly highlights the capacity of an interlocutor to stimulate a re-evaluation of a narrative, leading to new insights. In a model called Co-operative Development (Edge, 2007) the roles of the listener include challenging as well as thematising, goal setting and trialling. Burns (1999), in the context of action research, stresses the importance for collaborating teachers of discussing common problems and deciding together how to solve them. Other benefits of dialogic activities listed in Farrell (2007) include reducing isolation and building collegial relationships, as well as promoting access to a greater range of ideas and experience for the discussion.

Dialogue is thus often used in reflective practice and professional development activities. However, the impact of developmental activities and individual teacher development in general on practice in the classroom is not well understood. Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007), in their best evidence synthesis (BES) addressing the links between teaching activities and student outcomes, note that there is:

> a second black box [i.e., an unknown area of cause and effect] situated between particular professional learning opportunities and their impact on teaching practice. Little is known about how teachers interpret the available understandings and utilise the particular skills offered … or the consequent impact of these on teaching practice and student outcomes (p. xxiii).

According to the BES, factors that have an impact on positive outcomes include: time for development and good use of time, external expertise, the engagement and enthusiasm of teachers, challenging prevailing discourses, a community of practice, consistency with current research, integration of theory and practice, an understanding of theory and the enquiry process, new understandings consistent with current practice, and encouragement of on-going enquiry (Timperley et al, 2007). All of these factors are evident in the approach adopted in the delivery of the Masters' level reflective practice project paper discussed in this article. During their cycles of reflective practice, students have time to critically engage with self-chosen aspects of their practice with the support of tutors on a one-to-one basis, while becoming more familiar with the current theory via a literature review task.

Measuring reflectivity

A number of writers consider levels of reflection in language teaching and how to measure them. Stanley's (1998) model presents a useful means of considering teachers' development of reflectivity, suggesting five phases and focusing on the process of reflection. Stanley's phases of increasing reflectivity that teachers might experience are:

1. *Engaging with reflection*: Engagement happens when teachers are curious enough to learn how to reflect on their teaching.
2. *Thinking reflectively*: Teachers begin to reflect, but the process is shallow, consisting of uncritical narrative and a mere consciousness of how they felt about classroom events.
3. *Using reflection*: Teachers fully understand the concept of reflection and begin to use it as a tool. They experiment with different ways of reflecting on their teaching, including when and with whom, and begin to work out what works best for them in their own context.
4. *Sustaining reflection*: Reflection inevitably throws up unpalatable findings. When teachers are able to move beyond these and continue the process of reflection, they have experienced this phase.
5. *Practising reflection*: Teachers are able to set up frameworks and systems to maintain reflection as an ongoing process.

To summarize, reflective practice is a critical teacher development tool, which is empowering because it supports the teacher's (in contrast to the theoretician's) ways of knowing and learning. It is enhanced by dialogue, and can help teachers apply research findings and adapt them to their classroom situation. It also enables teachers to build theory relevant to their own context from an exploration of their own classroom practices. Development of reflectivity can move from tentative beginnings to true independence in which it becomes part of a teacher's routine. Finally, it has features that are already proven to have had a positive effect on practice (Timperley et al., 2007).

Training/mentoring for reflective practice and action research

Reflective practice, however, although powerful in its development potential, is not easy for many teachers. Guidance in the form of encouragement, support and training is needed. The introduction of more formal procedures for teacher reflection in course-based training, such as reflective practice or action research, is seen as important. The findings from Denny (2005), Volk (2010) and Wyatt (2011) suggest that guidelines and mentoring is essential. In recent literature on course-based teacher education, Volk and Wyatt also stress the importance of the participants being able to focus on specific relevant contexts. Vine and Alve (2011) in the New Zealand context have found that, for the beginning teachers in a certificate level programme, observing lessons by experienced teachers and reflecting on them was more powerful than reflection on their own teaching experiences. Dialogic activities and observing videos of their own practice were effective for a group of in-service teachers in the context of an intensive course in Turkey (Gün, 2011). However, the numbers in Denny's (2005) study are small, and the research of Vine and Alve (2011), Volk (2010) and Wyatt (2011) has been conducted in the undergraduate pre-service context. Gün's (2011) research relates to more experienced teachers but not in the context of a higher-level formal qualification involving more extensive engagement with theory.

Our research thus sought to investigate what effect a formal reflective practice project might have on levels of reflectivity for experienced language teachers enrolled in a postgraduate programme. In addition, as the postgraduate paper was a new one, we wanted to investigate to the extent to which the reflective practice paper enabled teacher development in general.

Research Methodology and Context

The research questions addressed in this paper are:

1. To what extent did participants believe the paper enhanced their development as teachers in the chosen area of focus?
2. What course activities and processes in the paper did the teacher participants believe had most enhanced any development?
3. What phase of reflectivity on Stanley's (1998) framework had the teacher participants experienced by the end of the course?

The participants in the study were qualified language teachers studying in a Master's programme and completing a 12-week paper entitled Reflective Practice Project. Six of the seven teachers enrolled in the paper elected to take part in the research. Five of these participants taught English as an additional language (EAL) to students in a range of settings: high school, private language school, tertiary institution, and private tutoring. The sixth teacher taught a foreign language at university. There were two males and four females. Four teachers had English as their first language while

the other two were bilingual. The teachers had between 6 and 20 years of language teaching experience.

Teachers enrolled in the Master's paper completed a portfolio with three main components. Firstly, there was a literature review in the teachers' self-identified area of focus (such as teaching vocabulary, conversation, pragmatics) in which they articulated a theory of teaching. The second component was a submission of four essays critically reflecting on their practice in this area of interest. The third part was a final essay summarizing teachers' learning, and a plan for future professional development in their chosen area of focus. The essays in the second component were based on a number of reflective practice activities. Two of these activities were compulsory: observation, and the formal gathering and analysis of classroom-based data for reflection. The observation could be either a peer or tutor observation of the teacher's classroom practice, or observation of a colleague's teaching. The formal data-gathering tool and analysis method were negotiated with the tutor from a number of options. The choice of tools could include, for example, a student survey, a pre- and post-test, or a teacher reflective journal. Teachers selected two other reflective activities from a list of options: a second observation, audio or video recording of a segment of their teaching, narrative inquiry, a reflective journal, and a peer discussion on lesson plans, worksheets, or assessment tasks to resolve a specific area of difficulty.

Our research process utilised qualitative and quantitative data. The third component of the teacher participants' portfolio (the reflective summary essay of their learning) yielded thematic qualitative data to answer research questions 1-3. A paper evaluation, administered immediately after paper completion, was in two sections. The first section included questions on the value to participants of activities and teaching strategies (research questions 1 and 2), and the second involved further questions to assess their phase of reflectivity and attitudes to reflective practice (research question 3) (see Table 1).

Table 1: Data Collection

Method	Data for study	Types of data	Research question
1. Course portfolio	Reflective Summary Essay	Qualitative	1, 2, 3
2. Paper evaluation	Section 1	Qualitative & Quantitative	1, 2
	Section 2	Qualitative	3

Participants completed the summary essay and the evaluation. It was not possible to preserve anonymity for the reflective summary essay since it was part of the assignment programme for the course. However, analysis took place *after* the marking of assignments and notification of results. The data were collated and

analysed using descriptive statistics for the quantitative data, and by identification of the themes emerging in the qualitative data from the reflective summary essay and in the open response type items in the evaluation. Each researcher analysed half of the qualitative data for theme, and moderated the analysis of the other researcher for consistency. Where there was variance, we discussed and re-analysed the data. Reflective comments in the summary essay and in the open-ended responses in the evaluation were analysed for evidence of phases of reflectivity using Stanley's (1998) five-phase framework.

Because we believed phase 4 of the framework (Sustaining reflection) was a substantial lift in level, we found it necessary to divide Stanley's phase 4 into three subphases, defined below with examples from participant comments:

4a was maintaining contact with reflection in the face of negative results:

> I began to review the strategies I was using and started to consider techniques that would allow for improvements in these areas. (Ed, summary essay)

4b was asking more specific questions or brainstorming ideas in order to address negative results:

> If I gave the students more time to think, they could perhaps be led to find the information for themselves and the lesson would be more student centered. (Pam, summary essay)

4c was using a workable methodology to address the issues:

> I would devise and provide my observer with a checklist to obtain feedback on key points ... and afterwards we could ...[discuss] the observation. (Lynn, summary essay)

Participants' comments were coded for evidence of the phase of reflectivity experienced by each participant. Where two comments or one extended comment matched a phase of reflectivity, it was assumed that the participant had experienced this phase.

Results and Discussion

Influence of the paper on participants' development as teachers

Data analysis revealed insights into the nature of the participants' development as teachers, as well as into the role of the paper in fostering their progress. There were five key outcomes for teacher participants developing their teaching *within* and *outside* their chosen area of focus.

1. *Confirmation of teaching theory:* All six teachers commented that effective teaching strategies had been validated and so aspects of their teaching theory, formulated after in-depth reading, had been confirmed.
2. *Refinement of teaching approach:* Five teachers indicated they had adjusted their approach to teaching in their chosen area.
3. *Limitations in teaching skills and strategies*: These were acknowledged by three teachers.
4. *Increased subject knowledge*: This was noted by two teachers.
5. *Development outside focus area*: An interesting finding was that teachers also showed development *outside* their area of focus. For example, four teachers indicated new realisations about the nature of teaching and learning in general. Three teachers commented on increased knowledge about reflective practice.

These positive outcomes as a result of engaging in reflective practice are consistent with the claims for reflective practice of Farrell (2007), and Richards and Lockhart (1994), and the conditions under which they were achieved match those found to be effective in the promotion of teacher development by Timperley et al (2007). The nature of the teachers' development is illustrated below through three case studies representing the diversity of teachers, languages taught, student cohorts and teaching contexts.

Louis

Louis's first language (names have been changed for anonymity) was Chinese. He was fluent in English and he was teaching ESOL to a group of adult Pasifika migrants in a community programme. He chose to develop a theory of teaching collocations underpinned by the Lexical Approach. As part of his approach, he used storytelling as a vehicle for his students to notice collocations. The course *confirmed for him the value of the strategy of storytelling* (Outcome 1) as indicated in his following comments:

> I am more convinced that storytelling is an appropriate and effective method for my students…. [It] fits in with the Samoan students' way of learning… [and] is also constructive to a good classroom atmosphere.

As well, Louis reflected on how he could *refine his approach* to teaching collocations (Outcome 2) and made some very systematic, specific statements on the improvements he wanted to make.

> Firstly, I should keep a collocation as basic as possible when identifying them. Secondly, more example sentences should be given to the students to help them to form and test their hypotheses. Thirdly, I should select some shorter and less complex stories. Finally, I have learned from the observer's comments that it is appropriate to pay some attention to grammatical forms in teaching, even though this is a meaning-focused approach.

Later comments in his summary essay confirmed that Louis had carried out his first and third intentions, signifying he was developing and refining his teaching of collocations.

Louis also indicated the paper had prompted *development in his pedagogy outside his focus* (Outcome 5). For example, in reflecting on his lesson planning, he realised he needed to choose activities that were practicable in the classroom:

> [I need to] adjust my criteria for adopting and designing practising [sic] activities for my students by paying extra attention to the feasibility of activities, rather than only focusing on the goals of them.

Comments such as this from Louis and other teachers show that they were not just limiting their reflections to the area they elected to study; in addition, the paper was fostering a broader application of reflective practice. It seems that once teachers started to reflect in their chosen area, their reflections stayed 'turned on' and were of wider benefit in their teaching.

Mary

Mary was a Pasifika teacher whose first language was English. She was working in a high school with predominantly Pasifika students, and her focus was on teaching conversation in multi-level ESOL classrooms. Part of this focus was developing ways to meet the challenge of teaching students at different levels. Like Louis, participating in the paper allowed her to *confirm her theoretical knowledge through her practice in the classroom* (Outcome 1). Firstly, she found using trained peer tutors in the ESOL classroom was an effective strategy for working with less able students. Secondly, planning and introducing a variety of tasks was important for motivation in multilevel classes. A further aspect of Mary's development was the realisation that she lacked the advanced linguistic knowledge necessary to develop her learners' conversational skills. Subject knowledge, as recognised by Pachler, Evans and Lawes (2007) is "the basis of a teacher's professional experience" (p. 10). Mary became aware of her need to be knowledgeable and confident of the features of spoken discourse in order to raise her own students' awareness of these features.

Later reflections showed she *had increased her subject knowledge* (Outcome 4). She gained "a greater understanding of what needs to be taught explicitly such as the genre stages of an interview … and the appropriate responses required (chat and chunks)." Knowing what you don't know is an important step in development, which Mary recognised.

Valeria

A third teacher was Valeria, a native speaker of Spanish, fluent in English, teaching in a tertiary institution. Like Mary, her area of interest was the teaching of

conversation, in her case the teaching of Spanish through the use of authentic texts to beginner level. *A key aspect of her theory of teaching, was confirmed* (Outcome 1) - authentic texts could be used even at beginner level. However, she came to realise there was also a place for scripted dialogues, which can provide a sense of security to low level learners, and *she refined her theory of teaching* (Outcome 2) to include student exposure to both kinds of dialogues: authentic and carefully scripted. Like Mary, she also became *aware of limitations in the content of her teaching* (Outcome 3), realising she had "not been focusing enough on the features of oral language such as repetitions and false starts." Like Louis, Valeria *showed development outside her area of focus* (Outcome 5). She became aware of the value learners placed on pair and group conversations, and also realised the importance of clear instructions for keeping learners on task and that these instructions could usefully be given in L1.

This finding indicates that reflective practice allows even experienced teachers to be reminded of, or come to new awareness about, the value of basic aspects of pedagogy. In addition, like two other teachers, Valeria commented on her increased knowledge of reflective practice. In particular, the assignment writing helped her to be disciplined in her thinking and to develop reflective strategies: "[assignment writing] forced me to reflect on certain issues and to think about things more coherently and constructively". While outside the chosen area of focus, this kind of general development was an important goal of the paper (Outcome 5).

Case studies summary

Thus these three teachers indicated that completing the reflective practice project enhanced their development as teachers. Through the reflective cycle they not only confirmed or modified their theory of teaching in their chosen area of focus, but also developed in other areas such as subject knowledge, basic pedagogy and reflection.

Findings from the summary essays written by Louis, Mary, Valeria and the three other teachers were confirmed by the end of course paper evaluation. Because of the generalised nature of the paper evaluation responses, the themes did not always match those identified in the summary essays. However, the data provided useful support for the overall findings on the nature of the teachers' development, with all participants stating that the course had changed their teaching practice during the semester. They indicated the course had provided them with a process that had allowed them to become more aware of their own practice, change their teaching in-course, and develop skills to bring about future change.

The role of specific course activities in enhancing development

To examine in more detail the role of specific course activities in enhancing the teacher participants' development (our second research question), the summary reflective essay and the evaluation were analysed for reference to these activities.

Table 2 identifies the development activities that were chosen, and instances of learning which the teachers, according to their summaries, believed had resulted from each activity.

Table 2: Activities chosen by teacher participants

Activity	**Louis**	**Pam**	**Ed**	**Mary**	**Lynn**	**Valeria**	**Number reporting learning**
*1. Lit review**	√	√√	√√	√	√√	√√	*4*
*2. Tutor Observation**	√√	√√	√√ √√	√√	√	√√	*5*
3. Observation by peer				√√			*1*
4. Observation of colleague					√√	√√	*2*
5. Peer discussion: Worksheet	√√	√√	√√	√√			*4*
6. Peer discussion: Lesson plan	√√						
7. Reflective Journal		√		√√	√	√√	*2*
8. Audio tape		√					
9. Narrative enquiry					√√		*1*
10. Other data gathering: • *Surveys*	√√					√√	*2*
• *Student test results*			√√				*1*

**Compulsory activity*
√ = Teacher participant chose this activity
√√ = Teacher participant indicated they learned from this activity

This data show the three activities that the majority of teachers believed had generated learning were the literature review task (4 teachers), the observations (5 teachers) and the peer discussions (4 teachers). The teachers found the reading and literature review helpful in developing their ideas, and four of the six teachers made comments such as:

> With my beliefs established and backed up in the literature I had been reading, I decided to learn more about how the Lexical Approach could provide solutions to these problems [learner difficulty in producing language with native-like fluency] in my teaching. (Ed, summary essay)

Thus writing had fostered an understanding of theory and the integration of theory and practice (Timperley et al., 2007).

The activity that teacher participants most consistently referred to in their learning was observation of their teaching. While one tutor observation of their teaching was compulsory, four teachers also elected to use another observation as a source of data for reflection. Observation was always followed by discussion with the tutor-observer so this was a highly dialogic activity. Five of the six teachers indicated they planned to make adjustments to their teaching as a result of the feedback from the observations. Both these experienced postgraduate students and Gün's (2011) experienced undergraduates valued self- or tutor- observation of their teaching with dialogic activities, in contrast to Vine and Alve's (2011) pre-service students who learned more from observing others, suggesting that it is important to consider the level of experience when choosing the focus of observational activities for language teacher education.

Peer discussion was the other optional activity seen as more useful in promoting teacher development. This was also by definition dialogic. Four teachers chose to discuss their teaching with a colleague, and one teacher carried out two discussions. Discussions enabled teachers to see things that they could not perhaps have seen for themselves. For example, one teacher commented:

> I realized through discussions with a colleague that this … worksheet…[had] too much to cover in one lesson. (Mary, summary essay)

The popularity of the observation and discussion activities may be because of their dialogic nature, as noted by Gray (2012). Teachers had the opportunity to learn from others through being challenged and discussing issues, observing the classroom practice of other teachers, or receiving input on their own practice from an observer. In comparison, audio recording, the 'other data gathering activities' and the reflective journal, were all more isolated activities and were either not used by more than one or two students or were not regarded as a source of learning by the majority of those who used them. Narrative inquiry is also dialogic but was chosen by only one student (who found it effective). Perhaps its lack of popularity was partly due to the fact that it is an activity not yet widely understood by practising teachers.

These findings from the summary essay were supported by qualitative data from the first section of the anonymous end-of-course evaluation. In addition, quantitative data from the evaluation indicated that all participants rated writing assignments as *very useful* (top of the 3 point rating scale). Two teachers provided further comment on the value of writing assignments, noting that the writing shaped their thinking and learning and allowed them to strengthen/consolidate their ideas.

> Writing assignments gave me the opportunity to consolidate a lot of my ideas, and predictions about theories were confirmed ... My professional knowledge increased and my approaches in teaching became … clearer as a result of what I had learnt (participant 5, paper evaluation).

The one-on-one tutorials, another dialogic activity, were rated by all the teachers as either *very useful* (5 teachers) or *useful* (1), which supports the findings about the value of guidelines and mentoring of Denny (2005), Volk (2010) and Wyatt (2011). One teacher expressed appreciation of the individualized and private nature of the tutorials, saying they were:

> … very helpful and worthwhile as [they] … helped me to hone in on areas of need in a more informal setting rather than in a whole class setting. [They] also promoted individual accountability for your own work, and … you could also discuss difficulties in a more private setting which affected your progress. (Participant 5, paper evaluation)

Teachers also commented on their development as learners. They felt personally involved in the learning process, and supported by the tutors. Again this underlines the importance for them of having a dialogic "sounding board" rather than working in isolation. One teacher noted:

> Reflective practice can narrow the gap between tutors and students which definitely optimizes learning. (Participant 1, paper evaluation)

In summary, it is evident from the survey data that these experienced teachers felt the course assisted them in their development as teachers, and that dialogic activities, together with the writing, especially the literature review, contributed considerably to this development.

Phase of Reflectivity on Stanley's Framework at End of Course

To address our third research question on the teachers' phase of reflectivity experienced by the end of the course, a qualitative analysis was conducted on data from the end-of-course summary essay and from the second section of the paper evaluation.

Table 3 indicates the number of teacher comments (taken from the summary essays) showing evidence of each phase of reflectivity. It was difficult to measure phase one (engagement in reflection) since the teachers were compelled to undertake reflection as part of their course. Teachers were thus assumed to be at phase one by virtue of their enrolment in the course.

As can be seen from Table 3 (see below), all teachers had a number of entries up to and including phase 4b, whereas only four teachers had any evidence that they experienced phases 4c or 5. Of these, two had not securely reached phase 5, because they had only one brief entry at this level. Those who did (Louis and Valeria) had either two entries or a fully developed plan in one entry. Louis, who had chosen to focus on the teaching of collocation, had a series of student interviews planned in detail:

> In order to carefully analyze the students' improvement in speaking, I will do a series of interviews … These interviews will be tape-recorded and transcribed

> … [analysis of this data] will be able to reveal how collocation teaching is constructive to students' speaking. (Louis, summary essay)

He also had a system for maintaining peer discussion in his teaching practice. Valeria, who was focusing on the teaching of authentic spoken Spanish, planned to keep a reflective journal and regular peer observation.

> Next year, I am planning to write another reflective journal and to arrange an exchange of teaching observations with other colleagues. (Valeria, summary essay)

Table 3. Number of instances of evidence of phases of reflection on Stanley's (1998) framework.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4a	Phase 4b	Phase 4c	Phase 5
1.Louis	Enrolment	0	1	5	3		**1 extended**
2.Lynn	Enrolment	2	4	3	6	**1***	1 tentative
3.Valeria	Enrolment	1	3	2	1	0	**2**
4.Pam	Enrolment	1	1	4	3	**1**	1
5.Ed	Enrolment	0	4	4	**4**	0	0
6.Mary	Enrolment	0	3	10	**3**	0	0

Key: Phase 1 =Engaging with reflection; Phase 2 = Thinking reflectively; Phase 3 = Using reflection; Phase 4a = Sustaining reflection in spite of negative evidence; Phase 4b = Sustaining reflection by continuing to ask questions; Phase 5c = Sustaining reflection by using a workable methodology to answer questions; Phase 5 = practicing
Note: Bolded entries indicate highest phase participants deemed to have experienced on the framework

The other four teachers showed ample evidence of phase 4 reflection in that they all continued to engage with and practise reflection after encountering evidence of deficiencies in their practice.

It could therefore tentatively be concluded that the level of reflectivity experienced by the end of the course was high in all participants, at least at phase 4b. However evidence from the paper evaluation was needed to ascertain whether or not this could be attributable to the course.

Paper evaluation data furnished confirmation that participants believed that the course had not only given them enthusiasm for adopting and continuing reflective practice, but had also influenced the tools they used. Five out of six participants who completed the evaluation indicated that in on-going reflective exploration they intended to use similar tools to the ones they had trialled on the course. Effects of the

course on ability to engage in reflective practice included knowing how to investigate (participants 3 and 5) and realizing that reflection on practice can be as beneficial as reading and understanding theory (participant 1).

> Prior to this course of study, I wouldn't have known how to go about investigating a troublesome aspect of my teaching. The completion of [the course] means I can use teacher-initiated action research to bring about improvement. (Participant 3, paper evaluation)
>
> Yes, a huge influence. Previously, I thought professional development is only limited to learning more and more from the literature. However, self-reflection can more precisely satisfy our own needs. (Participant 1, paper evaluation)

There were two issues for us in interpreting Stanley's phases. In assessing the evidence for phase 1 (engaging) we realised that participants were required to engage with reflection as part of their master's course, so it was not clear whether teachers really intended to use reflective practice outside the context of the course. In addition we found that the assessment of phase 4 (sustaining) was difficult as Stanley's description was too broad. Our division of this phase into three subphases facilitated greater calibration.

Conclusion

To conclude, our data showed that there were positive findings for all three research questions. Firstly, the teacher participants believed the paper had enhanced their professional development in the chosen area of focus. It enabled them to carry out some in-depth reading, confirm or modify a theory of teaching developed from the reading for the literature review, come to new understandings of the limitations of their practice, and develop their pedagogical practice as well as increasing their subject knowledge. Secondly, the course activities that most enhanced this development appear to be those that involved interaction with either a tutor or colleagues. Activities that promoted dialogue (observations, one-on-one tutorials and peer discussions) seemed particularly beneficial in bringing about changes in teaching. In addition, the written components of the course (literature review and reflective essays) were confirmed as useful in shaping ideas and linking theory to practice. Finally, the course was also successful in promoting reflectivity. By the end of the course all participating teachers at least sometimes showed evidence in the qualitative submission data of reflectivity ranging up to phase 4b on Stanley's framework. Four reached beyond this (two securely to phase 5 and two sometimes to 4c and 5).

The researchers were particularly interested in further findings in three areas. The first was the teachers' perceptions that the course extended their awareness of their general teaching practices not only inside but also outside their area of focus. Second was the value of observation of their teaching combined with dialogic activities and

processes for experienced teachers. Thirdly, with the addition of subphases to encompass three aspects of sustainability in phase 4, Stanley's framework was effective as a measure of reflectivity in a formal assessment of experienced teachers in a postgraduate programme. This is in spite of the difficulties in the assessment of evidence for phase 1. A post-course survey, however, could be useful in assessing the engagement of participants in the absence of compulsion.

Carrying out a longitudinal case study based research project in this context would serve to confirm or disprove what we (and others) have found. It might also yield further data on the relationship between the levels of reflectivity reached on the course, and the ability and willingness of teachers to undertake further formal reflective practice (and even action research) further out from graduation. A larger study with a greater number of participants may also be needed to reinforce the trustworthiness of outcomes.

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MANAGING AFFECT IN ONLINE SUPERVISION: THE USE OF AFFECTIVE MARKERS IN WRITTEN FEEDBACK

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Abstract
Online supervision is a relatively recent form of student-teacher interaction, and therefore one for which the rules are still being determined. When, in addition, this new form of interaction takes place between supervisors and students from different cultural and language backgrounds there is considerable room for misunderstanding. In such an environment supervisors need to take into account affective aspects of this interaction. Previous research has confirmed the importance of the role of affect in PhD supervision (e.g., Randall & Thornton 2001) but has not widely investigated the ways in which supervisors take affect into account in practice, especially in their written feedback. In this study the online interaction between an external supervisor working only at a distance with four of his PhD students was recorded. The supervisor's feedback was analysed to determine the types and frequency of affective markers in the comments. The results showed that the supervisor used politeness strategies in just over half of his feedback, through such strategies as downtoners and grounders, and also by giving a rationale for his suggestions. In addition to suggestive feedback, interactive comments for rapport-building and compliments were observed.

Key words: *PhD supervision; online supervision; affect in supervision; written feedback; affect in written feedback*

Introduction

Affective considerations in learning and teaching are often mentioned as one of three traditional categories for learning objectives along with with knowledge and skills. Although learning objectives are not officially set for conversations between a PhD supervisor and a student, affect is nevertheless an important consideration. The dialogue between a PhD supervisor and a student is also a learning and teaching context and yet it is not a lesson, and objectives are not always officially set. Nevertheless, a supervisor may have some affective objectives. Petty (2004, p. 418) gives semi-humorous examples to illustrate strategies used by a health worker to achieve affective objectives. He classifies these into those he considers 'legitimate' (such as appeals to authority and requests for moderate change) and others that might be considered 'illegitimate' (such as confrontation and ridicule). While a comparison between a health worker and a PhD supervisor might seem far-fetched, there is a

parallel in that both are trying to guide actions and both include some one-to-one interaction. This study aims to investigate the way one supervisor manages affect in his online interaction with students. The focus is exclusively on a very early stage in the candidature, namely when the candidate works on the research proposal.

Literature Review

Affect and feedback

For teachers and supervisors, including the supervisor in the present study, an important question is the extent to which they are able to influence affective factors such as motivation, anxiety and empathy as these have been shown to have a great impact on the amount and quality of interaction between teachers and learners (Léger de Saint & Storch, 2009). Aoki (1999) addresses the role of affect in teaching, a role which seems to flow also into the supervision process. Amongst other suggestions, she mentions the development of a “psychologically secure environment” (p. 149), a goal that is not easy for the group we are investigating, where learners and supervisors communicate at a distance and where differences in ‘power’ can play an important role. According to Holmes (1995), power can be defined as “the ability of participants to influence one another’s circumstances …” (p. 17). We were interested to see how this might apply in distance supervision. Given that supervisors have, using this definition, considerable power over their students, unevenness in their relationships can affect their communication. Politeness or deference are considered tactics to guise this unevenness, suggesting that social gaps and status differences can be mitigated through the use of politeness strategies, particularly on the part of the dominant interlocutor. Therefore, the way supervisors interact with students can be an integral part of the supervisor-learner relationship, and potentially impact learners’ feelings and learning outcomes.

More specifically, there is the question of the place of affect in teacher feedback. Negative comments may well have an adverse effect on learners, especially if they are frequent and delivered without hedging. Hyland and Hyland (2006) review the ways in which teachers use mitigation and praise to soften feedback. Hyland (2003), in the context of feedback for second language writers, identifies four mitigation strategies which teachers use in their final comments. In paired comments the teacher combines criticism with praise or a suggestion. Hedged comments use “modal verbs, imprecise quantifiers and usuality devices” as in, “There is possibly too much information here”. Personal attribution involves the marker taking the role not of an expert but of an ordinary reader, as in “I’m sorry, but when reading this essay I couldn’t see....”. Finally the interrogative form includes an “element of doubt or uncertainty” (p. 191).

Randall and Thornton (2001) address both the affective and factual aspects of feedback (although they refer mainly to teacher-teacher feedback during teacher

support of colleagues). They believe that creating an appropriate atmosphere is fundamental if advice is to be "internalised ... and ... put into practice" (p. 87). They also note that addressing the listener's/reader's feelings is an important part of an advice session. Randall and Thornton believe that the attention to feelings is fundamental to the other aspect of feedback, which is "directing and leading" (p. 107). For them, the area of "providing negative feedback in a non-punitive atmosphere" (p. 113) is not easy. Their examples relate to giving feedback on classroom practice. When advice is given via the computer, attention to feelings is less easy to address.

A number of studies have investigated the use of directives as language with directive illocutionary force. For example, Thonus (1999) investigated the use of directives in tutor-tutee interactions in a writing centre. She found that tutors treated NNS differently than NS. For example, they used fewer mitigation strategies and generally were more direct with NNS, perhaps to ensure clarity or to meet the NNS students' expectations. Such studies give insight into the linguistic markers teachers use to minimise the potential negative impact of their feedback. However, this kind of study is not common: "Evaluation and its realisations in language have tended to be neglected by linguists" (Aijmer, 2005, p. 83). It is this line of research we want to extend further by looking at the specific context of PhD supervision.

Affect and feedback in PhD supervision

During the doctoral journey, students work closely with their supervisors, and managing this relationship is considered a crucial skill for successful PhD candidates (Kumar & Stracke, 2007, p. 461). The amount and quality of feedback in PhD supervision has been shown to be a crucial element in the collaboration between student and supervisor (Delamont, Atkinson, & Parry, 1997; Taylor & Beasly, 2005). However, as noted earlier, the ways in which this is done has not been widely investigated. Earlier, Knowles (1999) noted that, "It is surprising that such an important and routine exchange of information has received so little information, and yet it may be the main gauge by which both parties measure whether the supervision as a whole is successful or not" (p. 113). An area that has received particularly little attention is that of the way feedback is given by the supervisor to the student and how the supervisee manages the feedback. This is important as feedback is not only essential to the supervision process but also a potential source of misunderstanding and demotivation. For example, as Li and Seale (2007) noted, harsh or excessive criticism may cause face-losing conditions for supervisees, a feeling of embarrassment or a loss of confidence, and even non-completion of PhD study. Yet, constructive feedback is necessary, and so feedback, especially of the negative type, needs to be delivered with care.

As Greenhalgh (1992) points out, "In principle, a supervisor's response to a draft not only delivers a message at the semantic level but also plays out the social relationship between reader and writer, teacher and student" (p. 402). What underlies this social

relationship is an unevenness in power, which can be characterized as "the master" and "the learner" relationship (Kumar & Stracke, 2007, p. 462). In this social relationship the role of criticism is both crucial and delicate;. “Criticism is ... more likely to be well received (and constructively used) if it is clearly made in the context of respect and interest” (Connell, 1985, p. 41). The importance of respect in the relationship between supervisor and student is evident in descriptions of supervisor-student interaction as “critical conversations”, which emphasise both its crucial role (to encourage critical reflection) as well as the equality of the partners (Knowles, 1999, p. 114).

A qualitative study by Kumar and Stracke (2007) analyszed the specific functions of written feedback offered by a supervisor on one student’s PhD thesis. They identified three general functions of feedback, which are referential, directive and expressive. The referential function of feedback includes editorial or organisational issues, which were relatively rare in their study. The directive form includes suggestions, questions, and instructions, which enable the supervisee to strengthen the content. Finally, the expressive function consists of praise, criticisms and the supervisor's opinions. Of these functions, the expressive feedback experienced by the student was reported to be the most beneficial. The supervisee obtained confidence through praise by the supervisor, and even the supervisor's criticism was perceived as constructive by the supervisee, as it eventually led the student to self-regulate his own learning. The results not only show the occurrence of these different functions of the feedback, but empirically suggest the importance of affect in supervisor-supervisee written communication.

The limitation of written feedback becomes crucial when supervising occurs at a distance. One recent study by Erichsen, Bolliger, and Halupa (2012) surveyed doctoral students' perceptions of, and satisfaction with, distance supervision, either online or hybrid systems (a mixture of online and face-to-face supervision). The general satisfaction was higher for hybrid supervision, compared to distance or online supervision. It was reported that the relative dissatisfaction could be partly attributed to the limitations in face-to-face contact, showing the complex relationship in distance supervising. This reflects the challenges of relatively recent, but increasingly common forms of online supervision, where interlocutors cannot rely on non-verbal signals and negative comments may appear particularly harsh. Further, considering that a great deal of student-supervisor interaction is between participants from different cultures, it is easy to see how the delivery of feedback can be challenging.

In summary, there is a large body of research into the role of affect in learning and teaching, and specifically in feedback. Less is known, however, about the role of affect in PhD supervision. The few existing studies on written comments or feedback to supervisees are based on self-report data such as interviews and survey questionnaires, and it has been pointed out that more direct observational data is needed to better understand actual supervising practices (e.g., Delamont et al., 2000;

Li & Seale, 2007). The use of politeness strategies or other ways affect is embedded in feedback has been widely investigated in different disciplines including pragmatics in linguistics and language education. However, the ways such pragmatic or social strategies are used in online supervision has been, to our best knowledge, very limited indeed. Bowe and Martin (2007) summarise a number of areas in which cultures achieve the need to be polite (or to avoid offence, as Thornbury (2005) expresses it). One of these is the choice between directness and indirectness, as well as all the nuances that lie between them. Although the work of Bowe and Martin draws on spoken exchanges, some of their categories point to aspects of email communication which could be examined. In this study, we look at the ways in which the "critical conversation" between supervisor and student is maintained and in particular how the supervisor attempts to mitigate the potentially negative impact of his feedback on the student's work by investigating the use of politeness markers (Brown & Levinson, 1987), or the linguistic means by which interlocutors attempt to minimise the impact of potentially face-threatening acts. We will now describe our study.

The study

This study examines a text whose topical and semantic coherence arises from the academic context in which it is embedded (Sornig & Haumann, 2000), namely the submission of a research proposal by a student to a supervisor and the latter's response. In this article we do not focus on the content of the interaction, but instead on the methods employed by the supervisor to manage the affective aspect of providing feedback.

Arnold and Brown (1999), while acknowledging the difficulty of defining affect, use as the basis for their own discussion "aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour" (p. 1). However, they emphasise that "the affective side of learning is not in opposition to the cognitive side" (p. 1). By this broad definition, any examination of the language of feedback would have to use subjective measures to determine which utterances appealed more to the affective and which to the cognitive aspects of a student's learning. This means that an investigation of the affective aspect of feedback in supervision would have to look at the ways in which the supervisor's feedback takes into account the student's feelings.

One way to do this is to draw on the extensive body of research done on speech acts, and specifically investigations of the ways in which speakers attempt to maintain positive and negative face. Brown and Levinson (1987), in their seminal work on politeness, define positive face as "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (p. 61) and negative face as "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction, i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (p. 61). They argue that speakers want to avoid the impact of any

act that potentially threatens either the positive or negative face of the interlocutor (an FTA, or face-threatening act).

In this study we used these distinctions as the basis for our evaluative framework to investigate the feedback comments given from supervisor to students, and in particular the affective markers - linguistic strategies used to take into account the affective impact of one's utterances on the interlocutor - used by the supervisor.

Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions:
RQ1. How much of the written feedback in PhD supervision uses affective markers?
RQ2. What is the range and frequency of the affective markers?
RQ3. What are some of the contexts in which the affective markers were used?

Participants and context

The data were derived from the interaction between a supervisor (one of the authors of this paper) and four of his students. The students were all in their first year of their doctoral programmes and in the process of completing their research proposals. They were between 25 and 35 years old, three females and one male. All were advanced L2 speakers of English (the language of the interaction). At the time of the study they were enrolled in four different universities in four different countries.

The supervision took place online through a combination of synchronous communication (using Skype and sometimes instant messaging) and asynchronous communication (using email and through comments inside the documents the students submitted for feedback). The supervisor and students did not meet face-to-face, apart from two brief social meetings with two of the students at conferences.

In order to lessen the possibility of privileged knowledge about intentions informing the data analysis, the supervisor was not involved in it.

Data collection and analysis

It was decided to analyse written feedback given during three feedback cycles. By cycles we mean all the suggestions made on one substantially different version of the proposal document. This included subsequent questions and answers between the student and the supervisor as well as minor additions and changes.

Collecting the feedback cycles took approximately three months. The data took the form of emails, written comments in electronic documents, and text chat transcripts. Skype conversations were summarised by the researchers to provide background information about the interaction, but were not analysed for feedback. The research thus draws on *written* feedback only.

As our unit of analysis we took the written comments made by the supervisor on the students' draft research proposals. We first analysed these comments to identify affective markers, which were defined in this study as any utterance that includes features that function to reduce potential face threats for the interlocutor. To this end we used the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CSARP) Coding Manual, which includes a range of politeness schemes and categories for requests and apologies (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989).

According to Blum-Kulka et al., affective markers can be categorised as either internal or external redressive moves; internal redressive statements adopt linguistic elements within the utterance to mitigate the intrusive force of suggestions, whereas in an external redressive utterance, mitigating statements are presented outside of the suggesting utterance. Some internal redressive categories presented in the manual, such as appealers, cajolers, and subjunctive forms, were removed from the analysis, as these were not found in the data (being more typical of oral interaction). Furthermore, two forms that were salient in this study were added: 'using modals' and 'projecting the interlocutor'.

Our coding scheme is included below. Internal redressive statements categorised included:
(1) Subjectivisers: Linguistic devices such as *I think* and *in my opinion*, emphasising that the opinion is only on the part of the speaker, mitigating assertive force of the message (e.g., "*I believe* it is somewhat related to second one").
(2) Past tense modals: Past tense modals such as *could* and *might* may downgrade the assertive power of the statement (e.g., "As I mentioned, you *could* ask them to look at their recordings").
(3) Politeness markers: Markers such as *please* soften utterances.
(4) Downtoners: Intended suggestions to the listener using sentential or propositional modifiers such as *perhaps* (e.g., "*Perhaps* you could add some more from a portfolio perspective").
(5) Projecting the interlocutor: Suggestions proposed from the interlocutor's perspective, thus reducing illocutionary power (e.g., "*You* may want to rephrase this…").
(6) Phrasal modals: Reducing the effects of reinforcement resulting from suggestions (e.g., "You'd better move this up to the literature section").

External addressive moves included:
(1) Grounders: Any reasons, explanations or justifications given for suggestions (e.g., "Think about how you are going to classify the difficulties – *otherwise you won't be able to compare them*.").
(2) External politeness markers: Suggestions that request cooperation from the interlocutor (e.g., "No thoughts here? *How about* the complexity of autonomy").
(3) Preparators: Any moves in which the speaker asks about the potential possibility of carrying out the suggestion, or asks for the interlocutor's permission to make a

suggestion in order to prepare the interlocutor for the ensuing suggestion without giving away the content of the speech act (e.g., "*This may seem like nit picking but it is an important distinction* and you'll need to make it clear").
(4) Downgrading commitments: Modifiers that the speaker employs to minimise the degree of his/her commitment to a suggestion, but placed sentence-externally (e.g., "Although I don't disagree with the below *it seems to me* that a crucial element is the teacher's view of learning").
(5) Imposition minimisers: Elements through which the speaker tries to reduce the imposition placed on the interlocutor by his/her suggestion (e.g., "*If you want to avoid this* rather specific term which has a particular meaning you could say 'what strategies do in dealing with their academic writing difficulties?").

To determine what place affect played in each exchange, two of the researchers not involved in the supervision initially examined the data separately to determine which words or phrases appealed more to the affective than the cognitive side of the interaction. When both parties agreed, these items were immediately included in the data for analysis. When there was disagreement, a third party (a colleague) was asked to give an opinion and, where necessary, the two researchers discussed this person's verdict before deciding whether or not to include the item.

The data was first categorised into comments with affective markers and comments without such markers (e.g., bald on record moves). Next, comments with affective markers were further analysed for the type of marker used. In cases where different types of markers were simultaneously adopted in one sentence, each instance was counted separately. The range and frequency of each of the markers was then calculated, both for the feedback given to each student, and for all feedback combined.

Results

Broadly, feedback was categorised into two groups: a) agreeing with students' opinions, as in compliments such as "well done" and "good introduction"; and b) showing disagreement with the students' work and suggesting other options. Most comments showing disagreements or suggestions incorporated various strategies to mitigate their potential affective impact. Our analysis focuses only on b).

The first research question examines the types and proportion of affective markers used in the feedback given to students on their PhD proposal documents. Figure 1 shows the percentage of comments with redressive moves (feedback utterances with affective markers) and bald on record (feedback utterances without such markers) given to each participant (names are pseudonyms) of the study.

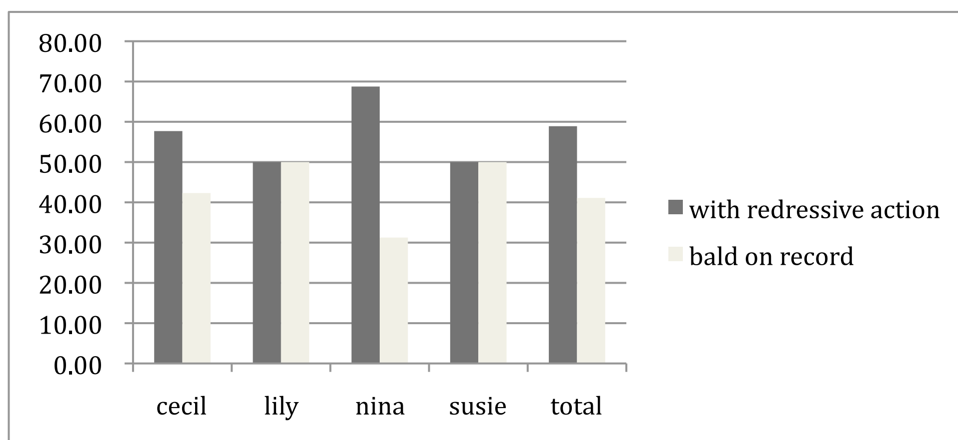

Figure 1: Percentage of feedback with and without redressive form

Figure 1 reveals that for two students, feedback was given more in redressive form than bald on record, but for the other two there was no difference. Taking all feedback episodes from the four students together, the percentage of redressive moves taken by the supervisor was 59% and 41% bald on record, indicating that in general the supervisor tended to address feedback somewhat more frequently with the use of affective markers than without, in order to reduce potential face threats.

The second research question asked about the range and frequency of the affective markers. Table 1 (see below) summarises the results from our analysis.

In terms of the range of redressive moves used, both utterance-internal and utterance-external redressive strategies were adopted. The internal strategies include subjectivisers, past tenses, politeness markers, downtoners, projecting the interlocutor, and modals. The external strategies include grounders, external politeness markers, preparators, downgrading committments, and imposition minimisers.

With regards to the frequency of the redressive types, there were 110 instances of internal redressive moves and only 48 tokens of external redressive moves, indicating that the supervisor adopted more internal, or linguistic elements within suggestive utterances, than external elements such as grounders and external politeness markers.

As for the internal affective markers, subjectivisers such as “I think” and “I believe” were the most frequent, followed by downtoners (e.g., “perhaps”, “maybe”), tense (e.g., “might be”), and polite markers (e.g., “please”). The supervisor addressed suggestions with clear indication of his own opinion using expressions like “to me” or “in my opinion”, so that students would not be likely to feel too strongly about the suggestion. Sometimes he put himself into the student’s position (e.g., “I’d really leave out the word ‘web 2.0’ from your title, if I were you”).

Table 1: Frequency and Distribution of Strategies Adopted in Redressive Moves (by percentages)

		Cecil %	Lily %	Nina %	Susie %	Total %
Internal	Subjectiviser	52	35	33	18	36
	Tense	14	10	9	47	16
	Politeness marker	3	10	21	24	14
	Downtoner	24	19	18	12	19
	Projecting interlocutors	0	10	6	0	5
	Modal	7	16	12	0	10
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
External	Grounder	60	67	73	50	67
	External politeness	10	0	0	50	4
	Preparatory	10	10	7	0	8
	Downgrading commitment	10	0	7	0	4
	Imposition minimiser	10	24	13	0	17
	Total	100	100	100	100	100

There were new categories found in the data, one of which focuses on the student and their wishes, for example by saying “you may want to include this”, “you may like to” or “you may wish to”, instead of saying “I want you to do X”. Additionally, colloquial expressions using modals (e.g., “you’d better”) also appeared.

The frequency or distribution of redressive moves given to individual students was not consistent. For example, although subjectivisers were most frequently addressed to three students, that was not the case for the fourth, for whom politeness markers were most frequently given to mitigate the impact of the feedback. What this suggests is that there might be some variation in the type of redressive feedback that the supervisor chooses to use depending on the individuals and the different stages in their proposal development.

As for external redressive moves, grounders were the most frequently used (67%). This means that the supervisor tended to give reasons or justifications for his comments. For example, a direct suggestion was given first, followed by the reasons or expected outcomes of that suggestion, as in, “This is not clear. *You need to* include a description of what kind of treatment both groups get. *That way* the reader can decide if any effects you might find are attributed to your treatment or not”.

Additionally, imposition minimisers were adopted frequently, as in, “If you want to avoid this rather specific term which has a particular meaning, you could say …” and “This may seem like nit-picking, but it is an important distinction and you’ll need to make it clear which you are referring to”. From these, the supervisor tried not to be

too strong in his position, offering choices to students or defending their face in making strong suggestions.

The third research question considered the contexts where different types of affective markers were used. In general, there were two different types of feedback: one related to the content of the writing such as idea development and research design, while the other concerned formal aspects of writing such as grammar, citation, and references. An interesting result is that the supervisor tended to use more direct forms of suggestions in making comments on formal aspects of writing. For example, comments which were bald on record were related to wording, re-ordering structure, or references as in, "Avoid this type of emotional language unless it is a direct quote", "This should go into the 'academic writing' section above", and "Be careful with your grammar". On the other hand, comments concerning content/ideas tended to be addressed more indirectly, using subjectivisers (e.g., "I believe", "in my opinion"), by providing reasons for comments (i.e., a grounder), or through indirect suggestions (e.g., "It's always good to make a diagram with all the information to make sure it all makes sense"), in this way protecting face from potentially intrusive or imperative suggestions. Still, some comments on wording or grammar were addressed with redressive moves ranging from internal devices like "please" in "please use the paragraph and heading styles" to external apologies, as in "Sorry for correcting the odd language mistake – As an editor I can't help it!".

There were other friendly comments using emoticons, or through responding, acknowledging or reinforcing the students' work. This type of affect intends not to prevent a potential face-threatening act, but to establish a friendly mood among interlocutors and to encourage students (e.g., "Good introduction", "This is a great rationale for your own study", or "This part seems very helpful as it will give you specific behaviours to look for in the teachers"). This type of comment accounted for less than 10% of all feedback types. However, sometimes the supervisor gave a positive response to students' work and then made suggestions for improvement as in "You are moving in the right direction but are mixing up different types of studies. We need to be clear on what you are going to do. Here are your options".

Also, although rare, there were instances that can be considered as a threat or warning. For example, statements such as, "The quality of these instruments will make or break your study" suggest the strength of the supervisor's opinion, persuading learners even more strongly.

Discussion and implications

This study investigated how a PhD supervisor used affective and politeness strategies when giving written online feedback on students' doctoral proposals, an area neglected so far (Ajmer 2005). So what do the results tell us? Firstly, they give an interesting picture of the affective aspect of supervision. They show how a supervisor

in a master-learner relationship (Kumar & Stracke, 2007) naturally goes about taking the students' feelings into account in the interaction. In the case of this particular supervisor all four strategies suggested by Hyland (2003) were observed, regardless of whether the purpose of the feedback was referential, directive or expressive (Kumar & Stracke, 2007). The most common pattern was to employ redressive moves (59% of the time), showing a considerable affective concern. It is also interesting to observe that most of the redressive actions were made through the use of subjectivisers (e.g., "I think") and grounders (e.g., giving reasons). The use of these two strategies seems reasonable in the case of PhD supervision where supervisors offer their opinions but where the students themselves bear the main responsibility for developing their work. Regarding the use of grounders, it is likely that suggestions accompanied by a rationale are more persuasive and less affectively charged, thus reducing potential face threats to students. Further, out of a total of 158 redressive actions, the majority (110) were internal, linguistic redressive moves. That means that the supervisor in this study preferred to use politeness strategies to soften feedback with the use of linguistic devices such as modals or subjectivisers, rather than to reduce the face-threatening situations by contextualising the message with other causal or preparatory statements. Future studies could investigate how internal versus external redressive moves are interpreted by supervisees and this could help supervisors make more deliberate choices. For example, considerable research has demonstrated that indirect speech acts are more difficult for second language learners to understand (see Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, for a review). Thus, supervisors of, in particular, non-native speakers are presented with a dilemma: maintain politeness and risk lowering comprehensibility or increase comprehensibility and risk offending the students (Thonus 1999). Both of these tensions contribute to how the supervisor and student co-construct their roles during the session.

Another finding, perhaps not surprising, was the use of more polite strategies in providing content-related feedback, compared to language mistakes such as spelling, references, citations, and grammar issues. It is expected that any suggestions or comments with no absolute answers tend to take a more indirect and careful approach with the use of affective markers, whereas mere mistakes or mechanical errors are likely to take a more direct approach.

However, as the data showed, the feedback differed between the four students. With one student in particular, the supervisor used more bald on record moves. It would be interesting for future studies to investigate, for example by using stimulated recall protocols, or by collaborative interpretation of recorded data, the reasons for using particular affective strategies with particular students. It is also important to distinguish between the different types of feedback given for different types of issues; in the results above it was clear that bald on record moves were more common for 'simple' language mistakes. Potentially more face-threatening feedback on research ideas drew more on redressive moves.

All this different information slowly builds up a picture of the interaction and the feedback given by the supervisor. This picture has the pedagogical benefit of providing the supervisor with a window into his or her own ways of interacting with the students and to clearly identify the types and amount of feedback given. In this respect our study can be classed as action research: it may influence the supervisor in future interactions. With this knowledge, supervisors can detect patterns in their interaction: Do they treat certain students differently? Do they give more or less feedback than they thought? Do they use affective markers more or less than they thought? This information can be particularly helpful for supervisors working in the highly personal and sensitive context of PhD supervision to become more aware of their own approaches, and to then attune these better to their students. We hope that our study has contributed in a small way to an increased understanding of the extremely individual and personal environment of supervision.

Conclusion and limitations

It is important to highlight some limitations in this study. Firstly, and most obviously, only one supervisor was involved. Clearly, it is difficult, even impossible, to generalise from the results as it is likely that each supervisor has his or her own style and uses affective markers in different ways. Having said this, and having experimented with and developed the data collection tools, we do feel that they could be applied with other and larger numbers of supervisors and we would encourage others to make use of our instruments.

A second limitation is that we did not investigate the students' perspective and did not ask them how they experienced the affective elements in the interaction. Supervisees experience different types of feedback in different ways (cf. Kumar & Stracke, 2007). It was our deliberate choice to limit ourselves to the teacher, but we agree with Reid (1999) that the effect of feedback depends on the way it is received and that in order to fully understand the affective impact of the various strategies used by the supervisor, the student voice would need to be included.

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EXPLORING CHILDREN'S USE OF REFERENCING IN NARRATIVE WRITING IN GUYANA

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Abstract

In Guyana narrative writing is an important component of the language curriculum in schools where Creolese-speaking children are taught Standard English and assessed on their ability to write narrative discourse. However, many children are challenged with writing narratives. This article reports on a study that explored how fifteen 12-year-old children used referencing to introduce and track participants in narratives that were assessed by their teachers as part of their classroom practice in a junior secondary school in Guyana. The study aimed to identify whether the identities of participants introduced in narratives were clear, and if any aspects of referencing appeared to differentiate between the texts of more successful and less successful writers. Findings indicated that the children often introduced participants with presuming reference (rather than presenting reference), and they tracked participants using a wide range of grammatical but narrow range of lexical means. The identity of participants was clear in most cases, but less successful writers appeared to use more homophoric (outside text) reference. The ability to use reference to entities within the text may be indicative of a more developed discourse competence.

Key words: *referencing, narrative writing, discourse competence*

Introduction

Narrative writing is an important component of the language curriculum in secondary schools in Guyana, South America. In Guyana, many children speak Creolese, but in school they are taught and assessed on their ability to write Standard English. One type of writing often practiced and assessed in the school setting is the written narrative. Children's narratives have been subjected to considerable research interest (Bae, 2001;Guthrie, 2008; Montanari, 2004), partly because the narrative is a genre that combines a number of different language functions and so provides a useful index of discourse competence (Kang, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2007). However, research into the narratives produced by Creolese speaking children has been limited (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003; Winch & Gingell, 1994).

There is anecdotal evidence that teachers in Guyana typically find that some children in their classes produce relatively clear, easy to follow narratives, and yet other

children struggle in this regard. The study reported on in this article focused on one aspect of children's discourse competence, namely, the ability to use appropriate reference. Reference is understood to be an important means for making writing cohesive and clear to a reader (Emmott, 1997; Nicolopoulou, 2008). The present study explored how seventh-grade children in a rural junior secondary school in Guyana used reference to introduce and track participants in their narratives. Specifically, the study aimed to identify how the children used reference and if any aspects of reference appeared to differentiate the texts of the more successful and less successful writers.

The linguistic context of language classrooms in Guyana

Children learning to write Standard English in classrooms in Guyana operate as bilinguals in a restricted sense of straddling domains of standard and non-standard language (Craig, 1978). Non-standard refers to an English-based Guyanese Creolese (GCE) – a more spoken medium of communication that is located on a Creole speech continuum in which a basilect, a mesolect and an acrolect are featured (De Camp, 1971). The standard is the official language, which is used widely for formal communication. Boundaries between the three dialects on the Creole speech continuum are indistinct. Differences are often identified based on the frequency of specific linguistic items, for example, occurrences of the aspectual verbs *a* and *doz* in the following sentences*:* "'Shi a aalweez noo' (basilect) and 'Shi doz aalweez noo' (mesolect) – 'She always knows' (in that she is well informed about several matters)' (Gibson, 1986, p. 572). In English Language classrooms, often teachers do not use Standard English or the acrolect for instructions, and while they might allow students to use non-standard English orally, they insist on the use of Standard English in written work (Pollard, 1983).

It is generally believed in the Caribbean that the native Creolese dialect exerts an influence on children's writing and results in a poor quality of writing in Standard English (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003; Mc Courtie 1999; Winch & Gingell, 1994). However, only a few studies have attempted to determine the interference of dialect in children's writing, mainly in linguistic situations in which both French-based and English-based creoles exist alongside Standard English (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003; Winch & Gingell, 1994). For example, Winch and Gingell (1994) investigated the writing of primary school children (aged 9–11) in St. Lucia and reported that children's writing was more affected by factors such as confusion between speaking and writing rather than dialect interference. A further study (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003) investigated the impact of Creole dialect forms on the writing of 9- to 11-year-old pupils in a primary school in Dominica found that the children had problems "handling the complexities of written structure, especially where this tends to differ from speech patterns" (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003, p. 237). In sum, these studies (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003; Winch & Gingell, 1994) have shown that dialect interference is not the primary cause of the poor quality of written Standard English produced by

children, and thus there is need to focus on other aspects of children's written discourse competence.

Systemic functional linguistics theory of language

The systemic functional linguistic theory of language (SFL) helps us to understand why texts make the meanings they do. SFL views language from within social contexts, specifically how it functions as "text and as [a] system" with meaning-making resources (Halliday & Mattheissen, 2004, p. 23) when speakers and writers use language to enact relationships, represent experience and organise discourse into meaningful text for listeners and readers (Martin & Rose, 2007). SFL provides a means for understanding how cohesive, clear and meaningful texts are created (Martin & Rose, 2007). Martin (2001) suggests that cohesive and clearly written texts result from the complex interaction of language factors.

One way in which cohesive and clear texts are produced is by using lexical and grammatical resources in ways that allow sequences of sentences to be interpreted as connected discourse (Halliday & Hassan, 1976) and the/a?? reader's knowledge and expectations to be addressed (Martin & Rose, 2007). Halliday and Hassan (1976) identify five domains of cohesive relationships: (1) reference, (2) substitution, (3) ellipsis, (4) conjunction, and (5) lexical ties. However, because the narrative genre, more than any other genre, relies on the skillful use of reference for comprehension (Bae, 2001; Emmott, 1997; Martin & Rose, 2007), this study focused on the analysis of referencing.

According to Martin and Rose (2007), referential cohesion is achieved when endophoric references, that is, personal references such as pronouns (he, she, etc.) and nouns (tree, mango, etc.), comparative references (bigger, smaller, etc.), and demonstrative references (this, that, etc.), connect elements within a text. For example, in the sentence, "Tommy came to Mr. Brown's house, and he asked him for two mangoes", the words *he* and *him* are meaningful to the reader because from within the text, the reader can identify to whom these referents refer. In contrast, a lack of referential cohesion results when a writer assumes contextual knowledge on the part of the reader, and makes reference to elements that the reader has to interpret from background knowledge rather than from elements located within the text (co-reference). For example, in the sentence, "He came out of the car", the words *he* and *the car* might not be meaningful to the reader unless the reader is given clues in the text to identify these elements specifically or the reader understands the external context from which these referents emerge. It is possible that writers who are unable to produce relatively clear, easy to follow narratives may be struggling with reference. For example, Bae's (2001) study of narratives written by fifth graders enrolled in a Korean/English Two-Way Immersion Program and English-only classes found that the most common type of cohesion problem in the children's narratives were based on reference.

Research on children's written discourse

Children's ability to use linguistic resources of reference to introduce and keep track of narrative participants' or characters' identities in narratives has been widely investigated (Bae, 2001; Cox, Shanahan, & Sulzby, 1990; Guthrie, 2008; Montanari, 2004; Wigglesworth, 1997; Wong & Johnston, 2004).

Various factors have been identified as causing variability in children's use of cohesive devices. These factors include differences in cognitive abilities, such as the availability of linguistic resources (Montanari, 2004), and reading abilities (Cox, Shanahan, & Sulzby, 1990; Cragg & Nation, 2006). For example, Shanahan and Sulzby (1990) analysed narratives and expository reports of third- and fifth-grade students to determine appropriate and inappropriate use of cohesive devices and cohesive harmony. They found that the texts of good writers reflected more complex use of cohesion. Task context is another factor suggested for variability in children's use of cohesive devices. Bartlett (1984) investigated the skill of English-speaking fifth- and sixth-grade writers, who had average- and below-average abilities, in producing coherent, anaphoric reference in written narratives in an easy-task context and a difficult-task context. The research found more reference problems in the texts of the below-average writers. Good writers were able to write clear texts in the difficult-task condition where reference precision was required. However, poor writers created more referential ambiguities in this task context.

Other factors that are related to variability in children's use of cohesive devices include those related to developmental acquisition (Bae, 2001; Wong & Johnston, 2004) and children's inability to analyse and meet the expectations of their readers (Cohen & Rhiel, 1989; Weigle, 2005). A study of 3- to 12-year-old Cantonese children's ability to make clear reference in connected discourse found that the children were able to reference most adequately when maintaining characters in their narratives and less adequately when introducing and reintroducing (Wong & Johnston, 2004). They concluded that tracking people and things with personal pronouns is the least difficult means of reference and is the first means that is usually acquired. Researchers also suggest that more competent writers are able to analyse their audience and use this knowledge to make rhetorical and organisational choices among others, while less competent writers, in contrast, focus more on the topic of their writing rather than on the audience (Cohen & Rhiel, 1989; Weigle, 2005). In a study of seventh grade students' writing quality, Cohen and Rhiel (1989) found that the students wrote clearer and more organised descriptions of their lives when they sent letters to their pen pals than they did when they submitted personal descriptions on similar topics to their teachers for term assessments because the students had assumed a certain degree of common knowledge between themselves and their teachers. A further factor causing variability in children's use of cohesive devices relates to the effect of children's first language on the second. If children are unable

to transform structures of their first language to the second, they may have difficulties with producing cohesive and clear writing (Guthrie, 2008).

The literature also suggests that a major challenge for children writing in diverse linguistic contexts might include making shifts from their home-based discourse strategies (which in some cases is characterised by speech conventions and assumptions of shared background knowledge) to written language strategies needed for clearly written discourse (Collins & Michaels, 1986; Myhill, 2009). The use of speech conventions is likely to hinder the ability to create cohesive and clear texts for unseen readers. Myhill's (2009) study of linguistic constructions in narrative and argument writing of secondary school-aged students (12- to 15-years-old) indicated that the influences of oral speech characteristics were stronger in weaker writing than in good writing. According to Myhill, novice writers usually draw on "talk knowledge" (p. 41), and thus their written work often reflects conventions of speech. Thus, children's ability to write clearly often relates to their inability to transform oral structures into written structures. The present study aimed to contribute to the understanding of children's narrative writing in Guyana (a Creolese-speaking context characterised by oral language conventions). The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What kinds of reference do seventh grade children use in their written narratives?
2. How well do the children use reference to introduce and track the participants (people and things) in their narratives?

The study

Participants and procedures

The data for the study was drawn from fifteen seventh-grade children with an average age of 12.5 years. Seven students were males and eight were females. These children were at the end of grade seven in their junior secondary school in Guyana. Students in this setting are often required to write narratives in their English language classes and have their narratives assessed.

Researchers were given permission by the Ministry of Education in Guyana to have access to writing samples from the children's annual 2½ hour long English language (English 'A') examination. In the examination, children made one selection from four narrative tasks in their examination paper (see Appendix 1). The teachers who taught the seventh-grade children had created the tasks as a part of their school's standard annual examination routine, and they marked the narratives using their normal 0 – 25 grading criteria (see Appendix 1). The classroom teachers selected the writing samples on the basis of the marks they had given the scripts. They selected fifteen scripts and divided them into three categories (top, middle and bottom). The scripts the teachers selected for the top band had been given between 10.5 and 14.5 points, between 8.5 and 10 for the middle band, and between 0 and 8 for the bottom band.

These grades reflected the teachers' perceptions of the quality of the students' writing, that is, the teachers' ideas of more successful and less successful writing in their classes. The researchers gave pseudonyms to the samples and typed them, retaining the children's punctuation, spelling, words and grammar.

Framework of analysis

Insights into the nature of linguistic problems that can cause children's written narratives to be unclear, specifically how children's use of reference can lead to limitations in producing cohesive and clear texts, were gained from Martin and Rose's (2007) theoretical framework of reference. Martin and Rose's theoretical constructs bridge grammar and genre from the perspective of meaning in the text, and therefore provide a useful description of how the linguistic resources of grammar function to create meaning in the narrative genre. The framework distinguishes 'introducing' and 'tracking' (p.173) – grammatical and lexical resources that can be used to identify participants (people and things) in narratives. The framework also distinguishes resources that writers use to introduce people and things, 'presenting reference' (for example, *a box*), and resources that writers use to track people and things, 'presuming reference' (for example, *the box*). Further, the framework includes places from which readers could 'recover' the identities of people and things (for example, within the text (*a plastic bag – it*) or outside of the text (*the Truth Commission*) (p.173)). When the writer uses presuming reference, the reader needs to 'recover' the identity of people and things from either inside or outside the text (p.173). Recovery of the identities of people and things in reference was not included in previous research (Bartlett, 1984; Wigglesworth, 1997). Including recovery contexts to distinguish resources that writers use to introduce and track people and things was useful for examining the appropriate use of cohesive devices – a crucial feature of clearly written discourse. A child who can appropriately use reference in written narratives demonstrates his or her ability to communicate clearly for a reader.

Analysis 1: Introducing, tracking and recovery resources

The term 'introducing' refers to how a child first mentions people and things in the narrative with presenting references – indefinite articles and indefinite pronouns – in instances when the writer is supposed to assume that the referent is not 'known' to the reader, or with presuming references – definite articles, nouns, personal pronouns, possessive pronouns and comparatives – in instances when the writer is supposed to assume that the referent is 'known' to the reader (Martin & Rose, 2007). To analyse how people and things were introduced, we coded each instance when a person or thing was introduced into the narrative for the first time. (See Appendix 2.)

Coding for introducing people and things followed Wigglesworth (1997). Wigglesworth's broad coding of all noun phrases as nominals was restricted to persons identified by names (proper nouns) in the writing tasks and other persons similarly introduced into the narratives, who did not require the use of a specific

reference form in first mention. This restriction allowed for a distinction to be made between people and things requiring the use of a specific reference form in first mention and those that did not require one. For example, persons such as *Mr Brown* and *Tommy* who were mentioned in the writing task were treated as nominals, while other things such as *window* and *classroom* were coded as introduced with presenting or presuming reference forms. The use of zero articles can indicate both presenting and presuming reference in a context where the referent is uniquely identifiable, for example, zebras; however, in this study, the use of recovery contexts allowed for instances of zero article use to be established as presuming reference. Destinations (expressions such as *go home* and *go to school*) were not coded because they identified general places rather than specific people and things.

The term 'tracking' refers to how a child identifies people and things with presuming references (linguistic resources) after the first mention (presentation) in the narrative. In these instances, the writer assumes that the referent is 'known' to the reader (Martin & Rose, 2007). To identify each instance when a person or thing was tracked, we coded children's use of reference (grammatical and lexical resources) to track these people and things after they had been presented (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). (See Appendix 2.)

To identify the places from which the identities of people and things could be recovered, we assigned relevant codes to each new person or thing that was presented in the text. (See Appendix 2.)

Analysis 2: Unclear participant identities
We coded instances when the identities of people and things in the narrative text were not clear to an adult reader (Cox, Shanahan, & Sulzby, 1990; Karmiloff & Karmiloff-Smith, 2001). The reliability of the coding for unclear referencing of people and things was established by calculating an inter-rater agreement on a sample of three randomly selected narratives (top, middle and bottom) that were rated by the primary researcher and a colleague. Inter-rater agreement was 87%.

Findings

The findings are organized by the research questions.

How did children introduce and track people and things?

Introducing
We observed six uses of indefinite articles and eight uses of indefinite pronouns as presenting references. The majority of uses of indefinite pronouns as presenting reference (75%) were observed in scripts in the top writing band. (See Table 1.)

Example 1 shows the beginning of a script in the top writing band. The *mango tree* is first mentioned with an indefinite article (presenting reference):

Example 1

One day Tommy want by Mr. Brown and saw ***a mango tree*** *and the mango was ripe And he was by Mr. Brown for the hold day. At the night Tommy want back to Mr. Brown and Mr. Brown had a dogs.*

Most uses of presuming reference in first mentions of people and things were seen in the scripts of writing in the bottom band. (See Table 2.) Nearly half of the definite articles (49%) used to first mention people and things were observed in scripts in the bottom writing bands. In Example 2, in the beginning of a script in the bottom writing band, a classroom and a teacher are introduced with definite articles (presuming reference):

Example 2

I was in ***the*** *class Room and* ***the*** *teacher was writing and my frind was telling me bout move he made in a pattry I was taying atenchion to my frind and not paying atenchion to the teacher she saw me was tooking to him so she go and report to the headmaster*

Table 1: Use of Indefinite Articles and Indefinite Pronouns as Presenting Reference by Writing Bands

Writing bands	Indefinite articles (N = 6)	Indefinite pronouns (N = 8)	Total (N = 14)
Top (4 scripts)	1 (17%)	6 (75%)	7
Middle (4 scripts)	2 (33%)	1 (12.5%)	3
Bottom (7 scripts)	3 (50%)	1 (12.5%)	4

Table 2: Use of Grammatical Resources as Presuming Reference Forms by Writing Bands

Presuming reference forms					
Writing bands	Personal pronouns (N = 3)	Possessive pronouns (N = 36)	Definite articles (N = 47)	Comparatives (N = 2)	Total (N = 88)
Top (4 scripts)	1 (33%)	11 (31%)	14 (30%)	1 (50%)	27
Middle (4 scripts)	0 (0%)	12 (33%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	22
Bottom (7 scripts)	2 (67%)	13 (36%)	23 (49%)	1 (50%)	39

Tracking

Across all bands, things and people were mostly tracked grammatically rather than lexically. (See Table 3). There was more tracking in the writing in the top band. The use of tracking is illustrated in Example 3 in which both *Tommy* and *Mr. Brown* are tracked with personal pronouns in bold in the first line of the script:

Example 3

*One afternoon Tommy came to Mr. Brown house. And **he** ask **him** for 2 of **his** mango. so Mr. brown said, my cosiun asked me for all of it to make achar to send to America.*
so Tommy said in his mind I will come tonight and steal some of his mangoes because I really need some to eat with salt and pepper.

Table 3: Use of Grammatical and Lexical Tracking Resources by Writing Bands

Writing bands	Grammatical (N = 377)	Lexical (N = 73)	Total (N = 450)
Top (4 scripts)	157 (42%)	30 (41%)	187
Middle (4 scripts)	102 (27%)	18 (25%)	120
Bottom (7 scripts)	118 (31%)	25 (34%)	143

Recoveries
More anaphoric recoveries were made in the top and middle writing bands. The majority (75%) of homophoric recoveries (outside the text) were made in the bottom band, a difference that suggests significance. (See Table 4.) In Example 4, the use of homophoric recovery is illustrated in the first line of a narrative from a script in the bottom writing band:

Example 4
*One day Mr. Brown gone to **post office** No one was at home. Tommy were pass by and saw Mr. Brown mango trees and he want the mangoes And don't want to ask for the mangoes. He went to Mr. Brown back yard and climing up the tree and atart picking the mangoe.*
Tommy enjoy pick and eating the mangoes.

Table 4: Types of Recoveries Used by Writing Bands

Writing bands	Outside the text (Homophoric) (N = 24)	Inside the text (Anaphoric) (N = 39)	Indirectly inside the text		Total
			Bridging (N = 21)	Esophoric (N = 3)	(N = 87)
Top (4 scripts)	4 (17%)	14 (36%)	10 (48%)	0 (0%)	28
Middle (4 scripts)	2 (8%)	12 (31%)	7 (33%)	1 (33%)	22
Bottom (7 scripts)	18 (75%)	13 (33%)	4 (19%)	2 (67%)	37

How well did the children use reference to introduce and track people and things?

There was difficulty understanding the identities of people and things in the children's writing only 11 times. Number and case disagreements caused the identity of people and things in the scripts in the top writing band to be unclear (3 examples), and the use of presuming references as first mention caused writing to be unclear in the bottom writing band (5 examples). (See Table 5.) Example 5 shows the use of presuming reference (the pronoun ***us*)** in a script from the bottom writing band:

Example 5
*De day **us** and tom de run in and we all went in the feall and play in game*

and den we go come back in the school yart

Table 5: Unclear Reference Problems by Writing Bands

	Problems		
Writing bands	Number & case disagreements (N = 3)	Presuming reference (N = 8)	Total (N = 11)
Top (4 scripts)	3 (100%)	1 (12.5%)	4
Middle (4 scripts)	0	2 (25%)	2
Bottom (7 scripts)	0	5 (62.5%)	5

Discussion

This study investigated reference, one linguistic resource for making writing clear and cohesive. The study was based on naturally occurring samples of children's writing in a school context in Guyana. The study examined writing samples to identify how the children used reference and to explore limitations related to it.

The identities of the people and things that the children introduced and tracked were clear in most cases. The study thus indicated that the children were generally able to use reference to introduce and track people and things in their texts in ways that made it possible for the readers (the raters) to identify these people and things and thus follow the narratives. This is a positive finding. It should be noted that the readers were school teachers experienced in reading texts written by children at this age and may to some extent have 'read in' connections and meanings because their marking criteria appeared not to have considered reference, the appropriate use of cohesive devices (Martin & Rose, 2007). For example, for many cohesive features such as the use of presuming reference in instances when presenting reference should be used, the middle band had smaller percentages than the top band, yet higher marks were awarded to the top band. This situation suggests that more emphasis was placed on other criteria that were not reference based.

The study also found that the children tracked people and things mainly with grammatical resources (personal pronouns). This finding is consistent with Bartlett's (1984) study on aspects of children's use of reference in narratives written in an easy-context situation. It would seem that tracking people and things with personal pronouns is the least difficult means of reference and is the first means that is usually acquired (Wong & Johnston, 2004). The study found that the children's use of lexical means to track people and things was limited, a finding that is consistent with Montanari's (2004) study of narrative competence in Spanish-English bilingual children. In addition, the study found that although the less successful writers relied more on the use of grammatical reference and less on the use of lexical reference to track people and things, they avoided reference confusion based on grammatical errors. More successful writers created reference confusion, which were based on grammatical errors. Possible explanations for this finding include the more successful

writers creating more complex texts in which grammatical errors could lead to reference confusion, and the less successful writers creating much simpler texts and thus reducing the possibilities for grammatical errors creating confusing reference.

The use of presuming reference to first mention people and things was seen mostly in the bottom band (the texts of the less successful writers), a finding consistent with Bartlett's (1984) study on aspects of referential ambiguity in anaphoric reference. Children may acquire presuming reference before presenting reference, and more successful writers may have reached a more developed stage of written discourse competence. Children may also use presuming reference because they find it cognitively easier to transfer speech processes of their home language to their written discourse (Collins & Michaels, 1986; Myhill, 2009), particularly in light of findings from research which suggest that the boundaries between the conventions of speaking and writing and Creolese-dialect interference are often blurred (Abd-Kadir et al., 2003; Winch & Gingell, 1994). Finding presuming reference problems in the texts of less successful writers in a Creolese-speaking context suggests that cohesion and coherence issues might be related to reference problems created by the oral medium of the Creolese-dialect. Guthrie (2008) found that variability in children's use of cohesive devices in written narratives was associated with the effect of children's first language on the second, that is, differences between how cohesion is expressed in Spanish and English. Thus, if children are unable to transition from the oral mode of their Creolese dialect to the written mode of the Standard English dialect, they may have difficulties with producing cohesive and clear writing for their readers.

Further, more homophoric recoveries (reference to knowledge outside the text) were made mostly in the texts in the bottom band (the less successful writers). More anaphoric recoveries (in which the identities of people and things could be recovered directly inside the texts) were made in texts in the middle and top bands. Three explanations can be suggested. One may be that the less successful writers were less aware of differences in their oral home-based conversational discourse strategies and discourse strategies required for written work (Collins & Michaels, 1986; Myhill, 2009). Second, the less successful writers were less aware of differences between the mesolectal variety that they speak and the acrolectal variety (Gibson, 1986) that they are expected to write. Third, it seems possible that because the teachers wrote the prompts to which the children had to respond, the children thought that their teachers were aware of their characters and situations (Cohen & Riel, 1989).

Conclusion

Findings from this small-scale exploratory study may indicate ways reference might differ in more and less successful children's writing in Guyana. However, as the study was based on a small number of children and texts, these findings should be seen as suggestive only. More studies are needed to understand how the use of reference affects children's ability to produce texts that are cohesive and clear.

The findings of this study may help teachers in Creolese-speaking contexts to approach their children's written narratives from perspectives which are not confined to grammatical error analysis. A teacher can understand that although a child may be able to use personal pronouns correctly as grammatical forms, he or she might not yet be able to use them as a resource to make the identities of people and things clear to readers and create topic continuity across narratives (Givon, 1993). The discourse function could thus be highlighted by the teacher.

In addition, the findings of the study suggest a need for connecting speaking and writing conventions in the classroom. Because children have to learn to shift from their home-based conversational discourse strategies to the written language strategies needed to communicate to an unknown audience (Collins & Michaels, 1986; Myhill, 2009), in Creolese-speaking contexts children might benefit from teaching approaches that combine oral and written activities to support critical thinking. For example, teachers can use sentences from children's written narratives that had people and things with unclear identities for activities that involve clarification requests. These sentences can be written on strips, and children can be tasked with memorising these sentences and then working in pairs to relate the same to a partner who is encouraged to request clarifications. For example, the child who tells a partner, "Tommy up on the mango tree", could be asked to provide more details on both Tommy and the mango tree. Children can then be encouraged to write both the clarification requests and the details provided. Discussions of these tasks can follow to make children sensitive to the needs of readers. In discussions, questions can focus on the kinds of information requested, reasons for the requests, and differences between speaking to a listener and writing for a reader. Excerpts of the narrative from which the sentences with unclear identities for people and things were taken can be given to the children, and they can be tasked with rewriting these excerpts to accommodate the details received from the clarification requests. Having children perform this task could help them to recognise how the new details create better reference and help those parts of the narrative to become clearer.

Taken together, the findings of this small-scale study provide insights into aspects of reference that Creolese-speaking children can successfully negotiate and those with which they encounter problems in classrooms in which they are learning multiple genres and dialects. The findings also suggest a number of strategies that teachers can use to raise awareness of how linguistic resources and genre conventions can be combined to create powerful reference, and how children can develop their abilities to move from oral to literate language when communicating meaning.

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Appendix 1: Writing task and teachers' marking criteria

Writing task (for 25 marks)

Write a story in about 150 – 200 words on one of the following:

a. An unbelievable event
b. The day I caught the chicken hawk
c. The day the headmaster sent for my parents
d. The day when Mr. Brown caught Tommy stealing his mango

Teachers' marking criteria

(1) content and relevance, e.g. storyline, characterization and relevance
(2) organization of material, e.g. event sequence, description, development, logical exposition
(3) effective use of language, e.g. lively use to create atmosphere, setting, interesting dialogue

Appendix 2: Coding

1. Introducing: How people and things are first mentioned in the narrative			
Presenting	Introduced as not known to the reader	One afternoon Tommy came … and then when he look through the window he saw *someone*	The person in the house is first mentioned as though he or she is not known to the reader.
Presuming	Introduced as known to the reader	she was teaching in *the classroom*	The classroom is first mentioned as though the reader knew which classroom the writer was referring to.
2. Tracking: How people and things can be traced after they have been introduced			
Grammatical		I was busy playing with my friend and *we* went in the field and playing game and den *we* go come back in the schoolyart	The writer and his friend can be traced with the pronoun, *we*
Lexical		He want to take the *mango*. So he go to the tree and see the *fruit*	The mango can be traced with the lexical item, *fruit* .
3. Recovery: From where the identities of people or things can be recovered			
Anaphoric	From directly inside the text (prior text)	One afternoon *Tommy* came … and then when *he* look through the window *he* saw someone	The identity of *he* can be recovered from *Tommy* in prior text.
Bridging	From indirectly inside the text	One afternoon Tommy came to Mr. Brown house...... and then when he look through *the window* he saw someone	The identity of *the window* can be recovered through making an association with house.
Esophoric	From indirectly inside the text	...he hight at the *back* of the flower tree…	The identity of *back* can be recovered from within the phrase of the flower tree.
Homophoric	From outside the text	my cousin asked me for all of it to make *achar* to send to America	The identity of *achar* can be recovered from knowledge outside the text.

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USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE PRONUNCIATION

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Abstract
This paper reports mixed method results from a small group of Japanese learners who used the action-learning framework of reflective journals to improve pronunciation. In particular, this study identified common language learning strategies used by Japanese EIL students to improve pronunciation and investigated how technology impacted on the language learning strategy choices that students make. Generally, technology generated positive attitudinal responses and potential learning opportunities were identified as a result of using technology and a computer-assisted pronunciation teaching (CAPT) program SpeaK!. As a result, students became more aware of their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses. This study, therefore, not only informs curriculum designers about this reflective approach to improve pronunciation, but also contributes to a growing body of research on what the students think and how they prefer to learn (Nunan, 1995).

Key words: *pronunciation, reflective journals, technology, CALL, CAPT*

Background

In response to the global demand for good English skills, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) introduced new courses of study standards, also aimed at improving the quality of English education in Japan. To meet the national standards of education in Japan and develop communication competency, teachers need to "foster a positive attitude toward communication through the English language" with due attention to intelligibility of speech (MEXT, 2009, p. 4). However, there are a number of challenges facing implementation of this standard. Teachers continue to implement a hidden exam-orientated curriculum using a largely grammar-based approach (Taguchi & Naganuma, 2006). This pedagogical focus on grammar means that Japanese learners studying English as an International Language (EIL) in Japan continue to have problems communicating orally, and with the intelligibility of their speech. Some teachers also focus just on developing segmental features or they avoid teaching pronunciation altogether (Yates, 2002).

Typically, teaching English pronunciation in Japan, if taught at all in the past, was restricted to minimal pair exercises and drilling of certain problematic sounds (Smith, 2005), which did little to improve significantly the communication ability of speakers. This method tended to address problems with the L1 associated with the difficulty

with sounding the phonemes /l/ and /r/. However, many other difficulties in pronunciation exist because of the differences that stem from the English and Japanese language systems. These pronunciation problems include not only segmental features, but also prosodic features such as stress, intonation, and pausing. Consequently, the success of MEXT curricular reform remains under debate as most Japanese students acquire good reading and writing skills and achieve only limited or, in a best-case scenario, fair ability in speaking or communicative competence after graduating from high school (Yano, 2008). This may contribute to the malaise and the reluctance to speak when students reach university (Peacock, 1999) despite years of learning English. However, in today's modern classroom, technology may serve to bridge these gaps in production and address some of the key concerns associated with developing pronunciation.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

CALL includes a wide range of technological applications and approaches to teaching and learning languages such as the proliferation of tools used in a virtual learning environment and web-based tools: search engines, e-groups, translators, online reference works, instant messengers, VOIP tools, blogs and wikis, learning and content management systems, social networking spaces such as Facebook, and mobile devices. These tools provide space online, inside or outside the classroom, where students can be individually-cognitive, socially-interactive and interdependent in the freedom and choice provided by the technology (Murphy & Hurd, 2011). CALL provides effective synchronous and asynchronous learning environments so that students can practise in an interactive manner using multi-media content, either with the supervision of teachers or at their own pace in self-learning, to notice, pay attention to, and become aware of their own language development (Vinther, 2012); also, to organise and reflect on learning, monitor progress, identify gaps, and solve problems (Murphy & Hurd, 2011).

However, despite the potential learning opportunities provided by CALL, Bennett, Maton, and Kervin (2008) argue that "technology plays a different role in students' home and school lives" (p. 781) and students do not want to use technology for educational purposes. These online skills may not be transferable in the way that many educators assume. However, CALL is now an accepted and important part of Japanese university language curricula (Lockley & Promnitz-Hayashi, 2012). Social networking and use of mobile technology is evidence that the 'digital native' debate extends to the Japanese learners not only as social tools but also for educational purposes. For example, results from Lockley and Promnitz-Hayashi's study show that 8.5% of students actually like to use their mobile phones as an educational resource; 9.4% like to use podcasts; 42.5% prefer to use chat services, including Skype and email; and over 50% listen to online music and videos. The more active, communicative applications, like blogs, social networking, chat/Skype/email, were more popular among lower proficiency students. These results suggest an overall

positive attitude to computers and ICT technology among these students. It seems that students in Japan are using the internet not only as a source of authentic or entertaining material, but also to reproduce their English in either a spoken or written form. The warning from Lockley and Promnitz-Hayashi not to "expect that students can 'transfer' ICT skills from extensive social media use and mobile phones to the more formal academic sphere" (p. 11) will also be further explored in the current study.

Computer-assisted pronunciation teaching (CAPT)

This study not only refers to the general effectiveness of CALL, but also to a specific Japanese computer-assisted pronunciation teaching (CAPT) program, *SpeaK!,* used to motivate students to improve their English pronunciation. In addition to the reported benefits of CALL in general, computers are ideally suited to assist pronunciation development. According to Levis (2007), "computers can provide individualized instruction, frequent practice through listening discrimination and focused repetition exercises, and automatic visual support that demonstrates to learners how closely their own pronunciation approximates model utterances" (p. 184). CAPT may positively effect students' motivation to improve their pronunciation. Levis particularly attributes this to the meaningful and validated feedback learners receive to recognise, diagnose, and correct and improve speech. While CAPT is still in its infancy, such feedback is possible with the deployment of computerised speech systems based on waveform digitisation and playback, automated speech recognition (ASR) software, text to speech software, and applications for speech analysis, recognition, and synthesis. For computers to promote, measure and assess intelligibility and proficiency of speech, CAPT software needs to emulate real speakers, in phonological accuracy, complexity of utterance and adaptation to context.

The use of technology for the visualisation of prosodic features is considered especially valuable feedback. While the scope of Hardison's (2005) research inquiry was to investigate individual scripted sentences, this study incidentally showed that non-specialists easily interpreted visual display and concluded that auditory-visual feedback is significantly better for L2 speakers than auditory-only. CAPT programs providing visual feedback such as pitch contours are also effective tools for training L2 learners to produce more native-like prosody (Spaai & Hermes, 1993). CAPT programs also encourage development of intelligibility and provide feedback on segmental accuracy, prosodic, and lexical features (Egan, 1999).

Error diagnosis is one feature of CAPT that motivates the learner. While Levis (2007) argues that CAPT programs do not always accurately diagnose pronunciation errors and are known to provide learners with inadequate, inaccurate feedback, recent research has shown that, although still in its infancy, automated speech recognition (ASR) software has developed. According to Chen (2011), a commercial web-based Taiwanese program, My English Tutor (MyET), is particularly strong in offering

error diagnosis. MyET can analyse students' pronunciation, pitch, timing and emphasis and even pinpoint individual problematic sounds. Chen investigated the impact of MyET on 40 college EFL students. The post-test scores showed that the ASR program helped students improve contrastive stress patterns. In addition, most students who used MyET commented positively on the program; students enjoyed speaking and getting immediate feedback. Chen also reported that this CALL program created a less stressful learning environment for EFL students who do not dare to speak in public. With such emerging speech technologies, pronunciation becomes related to communication (Egan, 1999).

Guided reflective journals

One way to promote learning in large classes is through the ongoing use of reflective journals (Lear, 2012). Most methodological and research literature in foreign language teaching advocates the use of journal writing to explore beliefs and practices, promote learner autonomy, and increase metacognitive awareness in listening, reading, and pronunciation (Goh, 1997; Jing, 2006; Vitanova & Miller, 2002). 'Diary', 'log', and 'journal' are terms used in research to explore affective influences, language learning strategies, and students' own observations about teaching and learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2002). This learning strategy may have implications for EIL in that students are required not only to incorporate goal setting (Dörnyei, 2001), but also to engage higher cognitive functions such as problem solving, decision-making, hypothesising, comparing and contrasting, generalising synthesising and evaluating in their second language learning (Mills, 2008).

Language learning strategies

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined learning strategies as a complex cognitive skill that constitutes "the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of new information" (p. 1). Effective learners use metacognitive strategies, including organising, evaluating, and planning, in their learning. Further, cognitive strategies such as analysing, reasoning, transferring information, taking notes, and summarising are also considered necessary for successful learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Affective and social strategies are also used to control emotion, cooperate, seek assistance, endure, and maintain motivation (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 2008). O'Malley and Chamot suggest that effective L2 learners are conscious of the strategies that they employ and why they use them. Effective learners also select language learning strategies that work well and that meet the requirements of the language task.

Research Question

This study was guided by two key research questions: (1) What are the common language learning strategies used by Japanese EIL students to improve pronunciation? (2) How does technology impact on the language learning strategies choices that students make?

Methodology

This was an inquiry-based approach using an action learning framework in which students were first made aware of their pronunciation problems via a self-analysis and later error analysis and encouraged to search for ways and activities that would improve their speech intelligibility over the duration of one semester. They were expected to reflect on the strategies they applied and discovered through their reflective journals and the interviews, change them if required, and at the end of the semester reflect on the effects of their efforts.

Participants

This study focused on one heterogeneous group of 14 students studying English at one university in Japan. The participants consisted of 10 native Japanese speakers, two native Thai speakers, one native Singaporean speaker and one Chinese speaker. The participants had all studied English as a compulsory component of their university course for a minimum of 2 years, 90 minutes per week. All the students in this class were streamed into the intermediate proficiency level in English as determined by an English language proficiency examination when they entered university. The class was taught in a Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) classroom. All students in the class were required to complete four reflective journals as part of their assessment totalling 20% of the final grade. Each journal was weighted 5%. This study has ethical approval and only results from those who consented to participate were used for this purpose of this research.

Instruments

Reflective journals
The guided reflective journals were collected four times over the duration of one semester and provided qualitative data for this study. Because reflective journals were an unfamiliar methodology for these Japanese students, the journals were separated into four discrete formative tasks, using an action learning framework and including key questions to guide the learning process (see Figure 1). The students were required to submit the journals over the duration of the semester, using key questions to guide the reflective process (e.g., Lear, 2012). The rigorous framework allowed students the opportunity to set realistic pronunciation goals, identify strategies to achieve these goals independently, reflect on their learning progress over the duration of the semester, and receive ongoing and guided support and feedback throughout the reflective process. Reflective Journal 1 (a) included a phonemic

awareness raising task, which asked students to read an extract from their class text (Peaty, 2001) and record, listen to and reflect on their speech (pre-test), and (b) asked the students to identify their pronunciation goals. Reflective Journal 2 asked students to (a) identify autonomous language learning activities to help them achieve their pronunciation goals, and (b) monitor, reflect, and record their progress over the semester. Reflective Journal 3 asked students to reflect on their progress and (a) review and revise their pronunciation goals, and (b) review and revise the language learning activities used to improve pronunciation and achieve their goals. Reflective Journal 4 (a) included repeated phonemic awareness raising activity, which replicated the pre-test activity and asked students to read the same extract from their class text, record, listen to and reflect on their speech (post-test), (b) asked the students to reflect on and evaluate their progress, (c) asked the students to reflect on and evaluate the activities used to develop pronunciation, and (d) asked the students to identify pronunciation goals for the future (Lear, 2012). This design was used so that the students could develop the linguistic and metacognitive awareness needed to reflect on the learning process (Goh, 1997; Jing, 2006). The heterogeneous students in this study were required to reflect on their pronunciation development using the L2, English. In particular, tasks from journals 2, 3, and 4 that identify, monitor and reflect on language learning strategies will be reported on in this study.

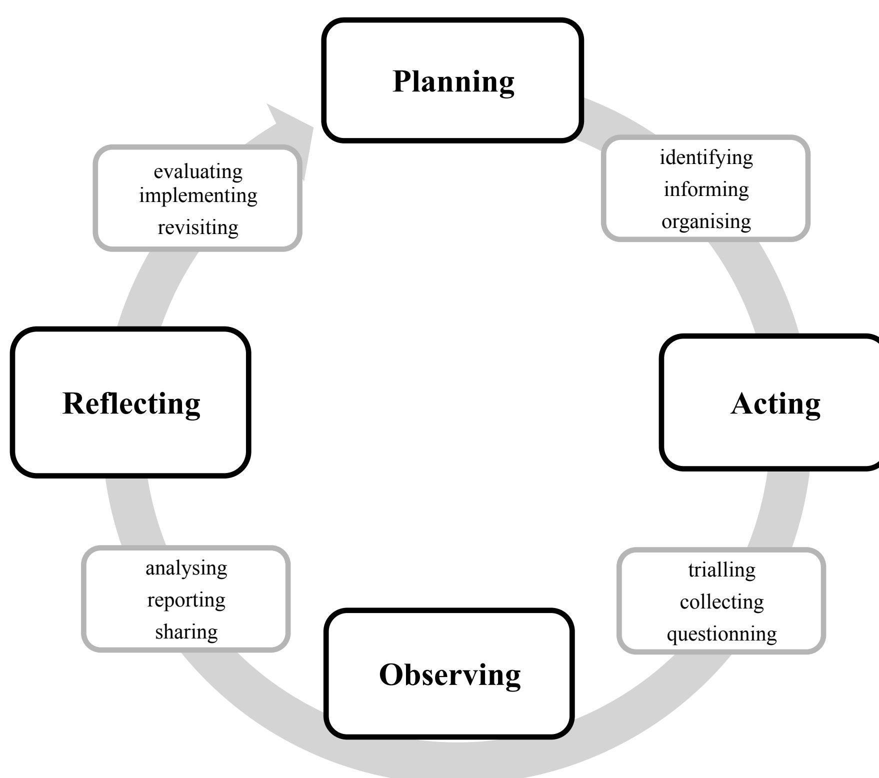

Figure 1: Action research model in education used for guided reflective journals (Lear, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews

The formal interviews, structured by a guiding list of both open and closed questions, were conducted face to face in English at the end of the semester to further explore students' experiences of learning pronunciation, their learning styles, and learning preferences. Based on prior research, providing the questions in advance may reduce the cognitive load for non-native subjects if they need to formulate complex responses (Nunan, 2007). Therefore, a copy of the interview questions was emailed to all the students so that they could consider the key issues pertaining to the focus of this study and discuss their individual experiences in English. This may form a limitation of the study; however, for a research-based EIL study this means that the resultant responses may be more valid (Nunan, 2007). In total, the interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes each and included 12 key items that extended the information from the guided reflective journals.

Data Analysis

For this study, sequential mixed approach of analysis was used to combine both qualitative and quantitative data arising from the reflective journals and the interviews. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic content analysis. In other words, the presence, meanings, and relationships of concepts were identified and coded (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Language learning strategies were classified according to O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) guidelines; other concepts arose inductively. Pattern regularities and irregularities were identified and organised into interrelated themes corresponding to language learning strategies, technology and CAPT. Illustrative responses are provided to show the range of language learning strategies used to improve pronunciation and communication skills as a result of using guided reflective journals.

For the quantitative analysis, closed item responses from reflective journals and the interviews regarding learning strategies were statistically analysed using SPSS 19 paired sample t-tests.

Results

The results for this study are presented using the two themes of language learning strategies and technology.

Language learning strategies

Quantitative results gained using paired sample t-tests showed the mean number of language learning strategies used by the students at the start of the semester was 1.2 compared to 4.7 at the end of the semester. The results comparing the number and types of strategies used at the beginning of the semester compared to at the end of the semester is significant for these students (p=.003) (see Table 1).

Table 1: Comparing Language Learning Strategy Use over the Semester

Mean		*t*-value	df	*p*-value
Start	End			
1.2	4.7	-3.8	11	.003

Data analysis of the reflective journals and interviews showed that the participants in this study used both metacognitive and cognitive language learning strategies to improve their pronunciation at the beginning of the semester. This included a range of specific language learning strategies and activities, including 96 instances of metacognitive activities and 6 instances of cognitive activities (see Table 2). Table 2 also indicates that at the beginning of the semester there were 5 instances that showed students did nothing to improve their pronunciation. Based on the activities that the students completed to improve their pronunciation, corresponding data from the reflective journals and interviews showed that the learning strategies employed at the beginning of the semester were largely social or solitary. The specific metacognitive learning strategies included planning, directing attention, selective attention self-management, self-monitoring and self-evaluation. The specific cognitive strategies include repetition and resourcing. Of these, half the language learning strategies were technology-based.

At the end of the semester, data from the reflective journals showed that the students employed the same metacognitive language learning strategies and activities but less often. For example, at the end of the semester, the students continued to plan, direct attention, and use selective attention, self-management, self-monitoring and self-evaluation strategies but decreased the number of activities that utilised these strategies. In effect, while listening remained constant, the students watched news, movies, TV and DVDs less often, prepared less for TOIC and TOEFL, used their Ipod, mobile and the CALL classroom less and read less (see Table 2). However, Table 2 shows that the students increased face-to-face communication with friends and native speakers. The students also used a greater range and number of cognitive language learning strategies to improve pronunciation. In fact, the students used more than six times as many cognitive strategies at the end of the semester. In addition to repetition and resourcing used at the beginning of the semester, the students used note-taking, deduction and induction, substitution, elaboration, transfer and inferencing language learning strategies. This could be seen in the increased employment of activities used by the end of the semester. For example, the students used activities such as dictation, imitation, shadowing, class presenting, memorising, repetitive acts and the dictionary to improve their pronunciation (see Table 2). Attempts were also made to include social affective strategies in the form of questioning, cooperation, self-talk and self-reinforcement when attending classes and club activities. These strategies, too, were specifically used to improve pronunciation goals over the duration of the semester.

Table 2: Language Learning Strategy Used to Improve Pronunciation

Category	Specific learning strategy	Activity	Reported strategy use	
			Start semester	**End semester**
Metacognitive	Planning Directing attention Selective attention Self-management Self-monitoring Self-evaluation	Listen to music, podcasts, news, interviews, BBC, short stories, speeches, movies, radio, own voice	30	30
		Watch BBC, movies, cable TV, DVD, news	20	10
		Sing, Karaoke	9	
		Communicate with friends, native speakers (face to face)	9	13
		Study, prepare for TOEIC, TOEFL	9	4
		Use iPod, mobile phone, CALL classroom, CAPT	6	5
		Read books, sentences	17	8
		Total	**96**	**70**
Cognitive	Repetition Resourcing Note-taking Deduction/Induction Substitution Elaboration Transfer Inferencing	Dictation		4
		Imitation	1	6
		Shadow (in class), CDs		10
		Practise presentations scripts		3
		Repeating songs	5	9
		Use a dictionary, IPA		2
		Total	**6**	**34**
Social/ Affective	Questioning Cooperation Self-talk Self-reinforcement	Attend class		2
		Attend club activity		2
		Total	**0**	**4**
		Do nothing	5	
		Total	**5**	**0**

Technology

Technology influenced student choices about how to improve their pronunciation. The activities identified by the students were classified according to whether they were reported to use metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies (see Table 2). In general, technology was used for metacognitive language learning strategies. This included activities such as listening to podcasts, and iPods, and news, interviews, speeches, and radio all conducted on the computer, as well as watching movies, cable TV, and DVDs. Although the students did not record how often or

how long they spent engaged with these activities, through the process of reflection the students directly linked the use of these language learning strategies to their goals for learning English. The post-test results show that the students marginally decreased their use of technology over the duration of the semester, to include a broader range and number of cognitive and social/affective based activities, which were directed at improving their pronunciation.

Three of the students in this study commented specifically in their reflective journals about the benefits of using the computer to watch movies, listen to the BBC or CNN news. This metacognitive strategy, in combination with other cognitive activities like shadowing and imitation, motivated the students to practice speaking English and "*listen to a native speaker naturally pronounce English*". One student, in particular, commented on the benefit of this blended approach:

> *Watching movies is also a lot of help. I tried to imitate how the characters talk and pronounce and I think it helped me in some ways.*

One student in particular showed the awareness and use of technological devices to improve pronunciation. This participant used her mobile phone when travelling on the train and buses in order to improve her listening skills. This shows that the student was aware of her most urgent needs and attempted to address it in her own way:

> *The most difficult thing for me is to listening what people say in English. So, I see the movies in English in this [mobile phone]. I have many movies... I try listening to English comfortably.*

Data from the reflective journals and the interviews also showed that seven students in this study used CAPT to improve their pronunciation. The automated speech recognition (ASR) software *SpeaK!* was installed on the majority of computers within the CALL classrooms and all students had access to the computers outside class time. Students were encouraged to use *SpeaK!* to facilitate learning and develop their pronunciation goals. In class, the students were given an additional one hour during the semester at which time they were given training and introduced to the main features of the program and encouraged to use *SpeaK!* as an autonomous learning tool to improve the intelligibility of their pronunciation and to practise their presentation speeches. Students identified the ASR program in their reflective journal as worthwhile, and specifically included CAPT as part of their intended language-learning strategies. The use of this technological tool received positive responses from the participants and all the students who used CAPT commented that the software program was a motivational resource. In particular, one student stated that the colour code in error diagnosis identified her errors clearly and made her aware of the frequency of her errors.

> *I think the software 'SpeaK!' very surprised very interest me because it show me by colour red or green... technically, I can see my skills - red, green, gold.*

Another student attributed her pronunciation development mainly to the software *SpeaK!*. This particular student could readily comprehend the error diagnosis displayed through the simple charts. In her reflective journal, this student explained that, "*The software SpeaK!! helped me. Because I can realise clearly the bad points and good points of my pronunciation by different colour*". *SpeaK!* was not always successful, however, in communicating errors clearly. In her reflective journal, one student expressed determination to improve her pronunciation despite apparent confusion about specific errors identified by the ASR program.

> *For some reason, I'm not pronouncing 'malaria' properly (or so it seems, according to the SpeaK! program). Also, I'm not entirely sure what the word stress for 'cholera' should be; whether it's better to stress the 'cho' or the 'le'.*

Overall, feedback from the *SpeaK!* program was valuable and all those who used it commented on the benefits. It was also interesting to note that feedback, in any form, was considered an essential part of learning:

> *...to improve my pronunciation or accent maybe I non Japanese speaker don't know what the weak point or good point of myself or ourselves pronunciation. So, other speaker, other English speaker point this is a good point, this is a weak point. Then, we can realise.*

Discussion

Language learning strategies

This study was based on reflective journals and interviews. These self-reporting methods identified common language learning strategies that Japanese EIL students used to improve pronunciation. Although self-reporting may not be wholly accurate, it remains the only way to identify learners' mental processes (Chamot, 2004). At the beginning of the semester, largely metacognitive language learning strategies were used. By the end of the semester, the students were able to show that they explored cognitive and social/affective language learning strategies, including a range of activities other than those used at the start of the study to achieve their pronunciation goals. This present study offers some evidence that agrees with Oxford (2008) that students use language learning strategies appropriate to their needs. It may have been that these students originally selected learning activities that were quite well ingrained; these may not have been the most beneficial for language learning nor to address specific goals or phonological concerns of the participant, and the students made adjustments by the end of the semester. The action learning framework may have given students the freedom to make such choices, rather than being forced to sequentially try different strategies.

This study indicates that a combination of metacognitive, cognitive and social affective language learning tasks may be needed to improve pronunciation independently. For example, Table 2 shows that listening was the most popular

activity employed by the students throughout the semester. Without the opportunity to speak with a native speaker directly, these students seemed to have preferred largely auditory-based activities to help them improve their pronunciation. Chamot (2004) recommends that students learning a second language in an academic context at least use a combination cognitive learning strategies and affective strategies to develop self-efficacy for reading, listening, writing, and speaking tasks. However, further research is needed on the context of learning to investigate the influence of other factors, including motivation, language learning goals, and knowledge and sensitivity of educational and cultural values, to further determine the language learning strategy choices of Japanese students used to improve pronunciation.

Technology

The students in this study set goals in order to improve their pronunciation. To achieve those goals, the students used technology as a source of authentic English Technology, however, did not make a strong impact on the students. While students used technology to improve their pronunciation, only half did so for such educative purposes. Those that used technology used it in accompaniment with multi-media devices. This blended approach benefited learners by encouraging independent practice, learning and production of discourse length texts to improve prosodic features (Tanner & Landon, 2009). For example, one student used her mobile phone to improve listening and pronunciation. The mobile phone is a potentially powerful language learning tool that "contributes to connectivity, mobility and convenience, together with interactivity" (Sussex, 2012, p. 221). While the results from this small study cannot be generalised, this study does not agree with Bennet et al. (2008) who argue that students prefer technology for personal or social use and that these skills may not be transferable to the educational domain. It appears from this study that technology provide an interactive source for self-paced learning where students can independently reflect on, monitor and develop language constructively. However, at the end of the semester, the use of technology decreased. It appears that students experimented with more cognitive and social/affective learning strategies to improve their pronunciation. It seems that students preferred language learning strategies that gave them the opportunity to practice their speaking skills.

In particular, *SpeaK!,* the software program made available to the students at this university, was a CAPT program used to improve pronunciation. *SpeaK!* provided students with the opportunity to record their voice and compare their recorded speech to the computer sample. The students were not only able to request a graphical representation of the pitch contours in wave form but also receive a visualisation of erroneous features graphically presented in coloured bar charts. These charts allowed learners to visually measure and record their pronunciation progress directly in relation to segmental and prosodic accuracy. It seems that this ASR program played a role in assisting the students to cognitivise the strong and weak points of their pronunciation. It provided a non-human source of feedback from which the students

could draw information about their pronunciation in written and graphical form in order to make specific improvements. This study is therefore similar to Chen (2011) in that it also showed that during this process of cognition, learners discovered what they can and cannot do as a result of the visual feedback. As one strategy for language acquisition, cognition of pronunciation not only helps students notice and become aware of different sounds and features and repair their own segmental and prosodic errors, but it also "trains our speech organs in new ways in order to produce learned sounds in a foreign language" (Kelly, 2000). Learners need to raise their consciousness, develop awareness, and learn to monitor their own pronunciation (Couper, 2003). This phonological awareness also has an impact on intelligibility, as pronunciation constitutes important features of natural speech (Field, 2005; Fraser, 2006). Therefore, the technology of *SpeaK!* was not only used to improve pronuncation, but it also encouraged students to think about communication in general, before moving on to other paralinguistic features of speech and critical listening.

Conclusion

Although this is a very small-scale study, it has some potentially useful results for those interested in teaching pronunciation. The students in this study learned to use a greater range of language learning strategies, which may provide them with a broader basis on which to improve pronunciation. While metacognitive language learning strategies were used through listening tasks primarily to improve pronunciation, the action learning framework of the reflective journals seemed to encourage broader application and number of strategies in order to achieve communicative goals over the duration of the semester. This study also shows that technology, although not used widely everywhere, is used in the education domain in Japan. It not only generated positive attitudinal responses, but also appeared to make potential learning opportunities more noticeable. CAPT also provided the opportunity for self-paced interactions using a synchronous and asynchronous learning environment in which errors were identified and specific feedback was provided. *SpeaK!* allowed students to notice, pay attention to, and become aware of their own language errors. While there is a growing field of research on ASR software, there is little research about the impact of this software tool *SpeaK!* on the development of pronunciation. A more focused and structured study is needed to ascertain the impact of similar programs on student learning and development of phonological features.

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REVIEWS

Barnard, R. & Burns, A. (Eds.). (2012). ***Researching language teacher cognition and practice: International case studies.*** **Bristol: Multilingual Matters. ISBN: 978 1 84769 789 9 (pbk.). 190 pp.**

This applied linguistics text provides information and advice about researching aspects of language teacher cognition practice in an innovative format: it pairs eight case studies of qualitative research projects by new researchers (each using a different data collection method) with commentary from an established researcher as a source of guidance and support with regard to methodological choices. The new researchers are current or recently graduated doctoral students, and the experts include J. D. Brown, Simon Borg, Martin Bygate, Donald Freeman, Susan Gass, and Alan Maley. The two chapters that book-end the volume are contributed by the editors.

One of the aims of the book, as stated in the Introduction, is to provide novice researchers with examples showing the irregular or "untidy" details of actual projects as a complement to theory-based, generalised advice provided by research methods texts (and which, due to space constraints, are also usually omitted from journal articles and book chapters). The general focus of the book is teacher cognition – a well-established field in general education, but one with much more recent history in applied linguistics that dates back only twenty years to publications by Anne Burns (1992), Jack Richards (1996), Devon Woods (1996) and, more recently, Simon Borg (2006).

The opening chapter provides a discussion of aspects of teacher cognition including beliefs, assumptions, and (practical and disciplinary) professional knowledge. This is followed by a chapter from Simon Borg analysing methodological approaches in recently published studies; however his decision to limit this to only publications from 2011 seems an overly narrow choice. Borg offers useful information about the expanding dimensions of the construct "cognition", and useful advice for researchers, including the need to provide details of data analysis as well as data collection, and a thorough evaluation of the methodology employed in the study.

The body of the book comprises eight case study chapters, each describing a method of data collection in the context of one particular study. Methods include questionnaires, narrative frames, focus groups, interviews, observations, think aloud, stimulated recall and oral reflective journals. One example is the second chapter, which focuses on the use on narrative frames to explore teachers' readiness to adopt TBLT in Vietnam. The research was conducted by Nguyen Gia Viet, and commentary is provided by Martin Bygate. The study is outlined, and the process by which frames were assigned for completion after each workshop session are clearly described. Samples frames are included. Viet's 11 page account finishes with an evaluation of and reflections on his choice of methodology. As with the other chapters, this account is followed by a seven-page commentary discussing issues of

relevance to the particular study and the type of methodology selected. These include the design of the frames, which needs to be in harmony with the study's research questions, and the requirement for frames to facilitate the collection of insights (not constrain them), the truth value of this method, and issues of confidentiality and anonymity. The chapter ends with a set of reflective questions that would provide a good basis for discussion in classes or research groups. Other chapters follow the same format.

The final chapter summarises key points made in the commentaries. These include the need for flexibility, for congruence between instruments and the research questions guiding the study, the need to fully understand and use key terms in the study accurately, emic and etic researcher positions, mixed methods, data triangulation and grounded analysis. While it is important for all researchers to be aware of the limitations of their methodological choices, I feel this volume is rather heavy on critique, and might well give novice researchers the impression that qualitative research is inherently weaker on validity and reliability issues than quantitative research. Given the barriers that qualitative approaches have had to overcome to gain respectability in applied linguistics, this is regrettable, or maybe it just means that the authors need to compile a companion volume on the perils and pitfalls of quantitative research! Apart from that concern, I thoroughly recommend this book to graduate student researchers and their supervisors. It is interesting to read, highly informative with regard to practical as well as theoretical issues, and (always a bonus) situated in the local Australia/New Zealand/Asia-Pacific context.

Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education*. London: Continuum.

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East, M. (2012). *Task-based language teaching from the teachers' perspective*: *Insights from New Zealand.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins. ISBN: 978 90 272 0722 7 (pbk.). 259 pp.

Although Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a pedagogical approach to language teaching and learning which has been around since the eighties, few investigations have been published about how practitioners 'know, believe and think' (Borg, 2003, p.81) with regard to TBLT, and how these beliefs might influence practice. This third volume, *Task-Based Language Teaching from the Teachers' Perspective* is therefore a valuable addition to the Bygate, Norris and van den Branden series *Task-Based Language Teaching: Issues, Research and Practice*. While the previous two volumes address in depth theoretical-empirical understandings of task-based language learning, the present volume represents teachers' efforts to understand new ideas from task-based principles. Martin East, a language teacher educator at the University of Auckland, chose a particularly significant moment for his study: a revised national curriculum for New Zealand with a significant impact on foreign language (FL) teaching, learning and assessment, and the introduction of a new learning area (strand) called *Learning Languages.* TBLT, a new concept for many teachers, was to be indirectly encouraged as the approach to be taken in the New Zealand FL classroom.

East's volume gives us a snap-shot of twenty-seven teachers' stories – including eight language advisors – as they tried to make the new learning area work for their students. Data were gathered from one-to-one interviews over a six-month period of curriculum implementation in FL classrooms where Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish were taught. The teachers represented a cross-section of schools including co-educational, state and integrated, and classes were primary and secondary aged students from Years 1-13. A full description of the study is given in an Appendix to the book. The stories that resulted from the data over the period were then interwoven by East into eight stand-alone chapters, each unfolding a background to the introduction of the new strand in the curriculum – particularly detailed in chapters 2 and 3 – that illustrate the complex nature of interpreting TBLT in the light of implementing it in the New Zealand classroom. The chapters become at times overly detailed and complex, but this may well be necessary to contextualise how the teachers understand the way they are meant to implement this new curriculum. East manages to capture the frustrations and struggles as well as triumphs in the teachers' voices, and readers from both the primary and secondary sector will identify closely.

The book begins with the series editors' preface to Volume 3, followed by the author's preface and table of contents. The eight chapters can be read independently of each other, and the topics are covered in detail. There is a short postscript at the back of the book, followed by notes (footnotes for each of the chapters and preface), an extensive references section, four appendices and an index. The chapters each follow a similar pattern: background, practitioner perspectives and conclusions, and

several of the chapters are accompanied by tables and graphs. East has a helpful habit of summarising what he has said in previous chapters and reminding us how the teachers' voices fit in to the background. Chapters 2-7 follow the pattern of stating each chapter's main theme (e.g. Chapter 6 is TBLT and cultural knowledge), and under this heading, listing "Background" (which can provide a section on theory ranging from more than fifteen pages for Chapters 2 and 3 to eight pages for chapter 4), "Practitioner perspectives" and "Conclusions" and are approximately 30 pages in length. Chapter 8 is the concluding chapter and here the challenges that emerge from the evidence of the data and possible solutions are given. Implications of the findings and specific recommendations to support TBLT are also provided. Chapter 1 provides the reader with the background to the challenges for TBLT innovation and gives the reader an overview of previous studies into TBLT innovation from the teachers' and advisors' perspective.

New Zealand teachers will find valuable information in each chapter; Chapter 2 is useful in explaining how TBLT might be realised in the aims of *Learning Languages*; Chapter 3 is an especially close look at Ellis' *Instructed second language acquisition: A literature review* (Ellis, 2005a) and would be especially helpful to advisors, as it critiques ways that have been used in New Zealand to support curriculum innovation such as the Ministry of Education funded Teacher Professional Development Languages (TPDL) programme; Chapter 4 (TBLT and communication) is where East considers the claim "that TBLT is a means of realising the expectations of the core *communication* strand of *Learning Languages*" (p. 77) and is where one can read about misunderstandings and reservations that teachers may hold about TBLT; and Chapter 5 (TBLT and language knowledge) is especially helpful for looking at the supporting *language knowledge* strand of *Learning Languages* in the light of Ellis's (2005a) Principles 3 and 4. In Chapter 7 the relationship between TBLT and assessment is discussed, as is the conflict between high-stakes assessment systems. East cites several of the practitioners' comments from the study in their dealings with learner-learner feedback, for example, and the construction of more meaningful and relevant assessments.

The study has its limitations, and the author acknowledges the most obvious one: the relatively small sample, the relevance of the interviews (the teachers were "trialing" the new approach at the early curriculum renewal stage and so readers only get a sense of what teachers *might* expect to experience about TBLT), and the reliability of the interview process. Also, I would have preferred each chapter to have had its own reference list, especially since the author states that each chapter can be read separately. However, these limitations should inspire other teacher educators to replicate or embark on larger-scale TBLT case studies. The study particularly raises some interesting questions about TBLT – whether it can enhance communicative proficiency and "motivate and enthuse learners of an FL" (p. 219).

Task-based language teaching from the Teachers' Perspective does not set out to convince us that TBLT is going to be the answer to an effective FL. Rather it is a timely source book of teacher stories aimed to further our understanding of TBLT from the perspective of teachers working in school-based FL and language contexts to further demonstrate what is and what is not working, and to provide valuable discussion of the kinds of teacher education and support that might help make TBLT innovations run more smoothly in practice. The book is likely to be one that many will consult and will find a wide readership, including university undergraduate and graduate students – those studying language teaching and related fields, especially trainees, policy makers, support teachers or advisors (curriculum leaders), practitioners interested in doing action research in the classroom, or readers who are simply researchers wanting to find out more on TBLT in other contexts.

MARGARET BADE, Unitec

Flowerdew, L. (2012). *Corpora and language education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. ISNB 978-1-4039-9893-4 (pbk.) 347 pp.

This book is a part of the Palgrave Macmillan series of *Research and Practice in Applied Linguistics*. It is designed for both students and researchers in the field of Applied Linguistics as well as TESOL and Language Education. The main premise of the book is that good professional practice and good research are both based and informed by one another. The layout is more like a textbook as it is easy to follow and clearly signposted. There are useful quotes and examples which form the basis of each chapter. Chapters begin with bullet-point statements which allow the reader to identify the focus or each chapter. All chapters have brief annotated reading lists. This is in addition to an extensive list of references at the end accompanied by key sources which allow the reader to identify books, journals, websites and email lists. There is even a useful glossary.

Part I deigns with a focus on key concepts and approaches, and provides three chapters divided into subsections. The definitions and applications of corpus linguistics given by Flowerdew provide an informative introduction to both newcomers to the field and those still skeptical of its importance. Corpus linguistics has certainly made significant strides in recent years with its interdisciplinary moves into text linguistics, forensic linguistics and literary stylistics. Quoting Sampson and McCarthy (2004) that now ‘is a good time to become a corpus linguist’, Flowerdew, perceptively notes the following chapters show that this is not always true. The second chapter, besides outlining the historical perspective of corpus linguistics, attempts to reconcile the Chomskyan and corpus linguistics debate. Especially insightful were McEnery and Wilson (2001) who reported on an interview in which Chomsky insisted that the verb *perform* cannot be used with mass word objects. In fact, it can as is shown in the example, *perform* magic. This small example demonstrates the importance of a corpus as native speaker intuition cannot always be trusted. Part 1 finishes with an overview of the five main schools of corpus-based approaches to linguistic analysis, which are: Neo-Firthian approach, probabilistic approach to grammar, systemic-functional grammar approach, multidimensional approach and the sociolinguistic approach. The strengths and weaknesses of each are debated and compared.

Part II has only two chapters, and focuses on discourse analysis contrasted with corpus analysis. In recent years corpus linguistics has come to play a more central role in discourse analysis. The other chapter deals with corpus linguistics and its complex relationship with sociolinguistics. Flowerdew quite rightly notes the limitations are in part caused by the variety of approaches inherent in sociolinguistics, as it does not have a unified theory. The limitations of corpus linguistic analysis seem to be the inability to capture social action as the data tends to treat text as only a snapshot. Despite these limitations, Flowerdew identifies a trend of more sociolinguistically sensitive approaches flowing into corpus-based analyses.

Part III comprises three large chapters. The first focuses on the application of corpus linguistics in key research areas such as forensic linguistics, corpus stylistics, translation and testing. Each area is evaluated and also provides a discussion as to how corpus analysis can be incorporated into that particular research area. Future pathways for research are also mapped out. Forensic linguistics, for instance, is an area that deals with the application of scientific knowledge used in the context of civil and criminal law. The language of police interviews, and lawyers and witnesses in cross examination are some of these applications. Flowerdew argues the corpus approach in this field has provided useful evidence in acquittals, though it is not considered as reliable as DNA evidence.

Chapter 7 is particularly important, as it involves the application of corpus linguistics in a pedagogical setting. Flowerdew notes the need for learners to receive training in order to be able to read concordance output. An example Flowerdew gives is the English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) text *Exploring Academic English: a Workbook for Student Essay Writing* (1998) by Thurstun and Candlin. Only a few such texts have been published to date. Flowerdew acknowledges that writing activities such as these are often time consuming; but that it is nevertheless a shame that such integration of corpus-based approaches are not exploited as they should be. Chapter 8 has ten research cases which demonstrate the various corpus-based approaches in action. Each case begins with aims, corpora and methodology, results and analysis, commentary and further research. Descriptions of a range of small and large-scale projects provide the reader with some concrete examples. These could easily be used in a course to evaluate the various approaches and comment on their outcomes.

Flowerdew has written an excellent text which sets the ever expanding field of corpus linguistics in context. Particularly useful are the case studies, which provide best practice when using various corpora. I found her analysis first-rate as she has not simply accepted anything at face value, and has noted difficulties that occur when applying theory to practice. Her use of countless examples helps the reader to process and grasp the often challenging concepts more easily.

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Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., Hyams, N., Collins, P., Amberber, M, & Cox, F. (2012). ***An introduction to language: Australian and New Zealand edition (7th ed.).*** **South Melbourne, Vic.: Cengage Learning Australia. ppxxi+512. ISBN: 017021298X**

The recently published the seventh edition of *An introduction to language* is clear evidence of its popularity among readers across time. The book presents a historical development of different aspects of language in relation to their origins, historical developments, and current concerns. Compared with the already very comprehensive 6th edition, this edition is enriched in three aspects: reviews of recent studies have updated the content; there are more exercises to cater for readers' needs and learning activities; and the format is more logical, elegant and economical (it is fifty pages shorter than the previous edition). The book is reader-friendly in three aspects. Firstly, it is well organised and developed. Each section and each part is interconnected to others, but also a complete unit by itself. Each unit includes introduction, summary of the chapter, further reading, and exercises. The exercises at the end of each chapter reflect the pedagogy of the book. These exercises, which can be used selectively by teachers for students at different stages of learning, encourage readers to reflect and to apply the knowledge. In addition, there is also a glossary and an index at the end of the book.

Readers other than teachers or students can open the book at any time and enjoy reading any chapter as an independent unit, depending on their particular interests. For example, I started reading this book from page 23, a section on *Language and Thought* in the first chapter in Part 1, which is one of my favourite topics. This section firstly introduces the contentious Sapir-Whorf hypothesis with examples from various languages. These examples draw connections between the topic in focus and the readers' background languages. It raises awareness of how human beings are linguistically related to each other but differ in their use of languages. It also opens opportunities to reflection and discussion. Then the authors guide the readers, by a series of questions, from the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to specific linguistic features and grammatical genders that reflect ways of thinking as well as the rhetorical use of language by politicians and marketers to influence public opinions. This short section ends with identifying spaces for further research. Only authors with a profound knowledge in all aspects of language can so succinctly inform and inspire readers (be they are teachers, students, researchers) in about only four pages.

Secondly, the book is a comprehensive introduction to all aspects of language which affect communication. It not only provides grammatical information but also explores many related areas of study such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, language acquisition, and language processing. It comprises four parts and twelve chapters. The two chapters in Part 1 introduce the nature of human language in relation to brain, thought, and the extent to which it differs from animal languages. The five chapters in Part 2 carefully explain grammatical aspects of language: morphology,

syntax, semantics, phonetics, and phonology. Part 3 has two chapters: One chapter is about the psychology of language with special focus on language acquisition; the other chapter is about language processing in human mind as well as in computers. Part 4 includes four chapters which address various social aspects of language such as dialects, languages in contact, language and education, language in use, language change, and writing. Many of the contents of the book are recycled. For example, the grammatical aspects of language introduced in Part 2 are readdressed from the aspects of language acquisition in Part 3, and language changes in Part 4.

Thirdly, the book is very engaging. The tone is dialogic. Any jargon or complex concept is highlighted and illustrated clearly in simple and logical statements supported by interesting examples. The examples are linguistic treasures taken from a wide variety of genres such as novels (e.g., Alice's Adventures in Wonderland); drama (e.g. Shakespeare's plays); magazines (e. g., *The New Yorker*); poems (e.g., *The Lama*) and proverbs from different cultures. Overall the book is a must for those who want to know, to study, and/or to enjoy language. It is an ideal course book for teachers and students of linguistics or applied linguistics; it is a good resource book for those who are interested in cross-disciplinary studies such as psycholinguistics, language processing, communication, and so on; it can also be a resource book for anyone who wants to learn more about language.

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Mooney, A., Peccei, J. S., LaBelle, S., Henriksen, B. E., Eppler, E., Irwin, A., et al. (2011). ***Language, society and power: An introduction*** **(3rd ed.). Oxford: Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-0-415-57659-8 (pbk.) 252 pp.**

As its title suggests, this textbook focuses on aspects of language use in relation to social variables and societal power. It is essentially an introduction to sociolinguistics, with a particular focus on issues relevant to the expression and shaping of ideology. It assumes no prior knowledge of linguistic concepts and, as a course book, would be most suitable for a first year linguistics course. More generally, its highly engaging content matter and style are likely to appeal to a wider audience, including language teachers and undergraduates in areas such as media or communications studies. The book is supported by a companion reader compiled by the authors (*The language, society & power reader*), containing two or three key readings relating to each chapter.

A feature of the book is that its eleven chapters are written by nine different subject specialists. Although this results in some stylistic differences, each author adopts a familiar tone (e.g. readers are addressed as *you*) and the writing is generally highly accessible. The overall work attains a fair degree of cohesiveness through the structuring of chapters and connections drawn between topics. Pages are uncluttered and easy to navigate, with new terms bolded and recorded in a helpful glossary. Each chapter includes practice activities, and concludes with suggestions for further reading.

The first two chapters establish the general approach of the book. Chapter 1 outlines some general principles relating to language and then briefly introduces issues of power, including the concepts of ideology and the manufacture of consent. Chapter 2 focuses on the relationship between language, thought and representation, including discussions of Saussure, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, speaker perspective and political correctness. The following two chapters perhaps best exemplify the distinctive angle of this work in contrast to other introductions to sociolinguistics. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the political dimensions of language use, focusing particularly on rhetorical techniques used in persuasion and propaganda and introducing the concepts of presupposition and implicature. Such issues are given ample illustration, and then related to new media and the politics of everyday conversation. Chapter 4 focuses on language and the media, discussing how ideology is reflected in language use and also discussing the limited range of accents and registers found in media broadcasts. Later sections focus on public participation in new media and language use in emails and texting.

The remaining chapters cover material conventionally found in introductions to sociolinguistics. Chapters 5 to 8 each focus on a different construct associated with social variation in language use: gender, ethnicity, age, and social class. The chapter on gender discusses differences in men's and women's talk in terms of verbosity, turn

taking and hedges, possible explanations for these differences, and ways in which sexism is encoded in the English language system. One criticism is that gender is defined in narrow, dualist terms; given cross-cultural and cross-linguistic variation, this appears somewhat misplaced in a book concerned with society and power (cf. the Samoan fa'afafine). The chapter on social class is one of the strongest through its clear illustration of key issues in extended discussions of seminal studies by Labov (1966), Trudgill (1974) and Eckert (1999). It is followed by chapters on identity and language standardisation.

The final chapter, 'Projects', is new to this third edition and provides an excellent brief introduction to conducting sociolinguistic research at the undergraduate level. Following a short discussion of data collection, transcription, and analysis, the authors present 18 well-chosen ideas for research projects, ranging from reasonably modest assignments (e.g., compiling a few entries for a mini-dictionary of colloquialisms) to more time-consuming projects involving transcription and analysis of spoken language. In each case, these projects build on topics from previous chapters and would probably be suitable as a basis for undergraduate course work. The chapter concludes with a list of Internet resources and a basic transcription key.

Perhaps inevitably given the space constraints, the authors omit some works that I had expected to see given the scope of the book (e.g., G. Lakoff's work on language and politics) and make occasional unsupported assertions that I would query (e.g. that verbs always denote a process, p. 40; that adjective order reflects the relative importance of an entity's characteristics rather than grammaticalisation, pp. 140-141). Overall, however, the content of the book is excellent and my main quibble is the surprising number of typographical errors (particularly in Chapter 8), with some key items missing from the index (e.g., no listing for Chomsky, who appears in Chapters 1 and 2), and occasional oddities such as the use of a margin note to provide an (unnecessary) definition on page 21 but nowhere else.

As a textbook, I do wonder to what extent *Language, society and power* would be a natural fit with most existing introductory linguistics courses when compared to several of the other excellent alternatives. Relatively little attention is given to some of the staples of sociolinguistics such as bilingualism and code-switching, politeness, and language planning and maintenance, while significantly more is made both of language and politics and of language and media. However, for the type of niche course that it appears to target, this book would be an excellent option. Overall, I have no hesitation in recommending *Language, society and power* as an effective, engaging and accessible introduction to sociolinguistics and the political dimensions of language use.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

NZSAL is a refereed journal that is published twice a year. It welcomes manuscripts from those actively involved in Applied Linguistics/Applied Language Studies including second and foreign language educators, researchers, teacher educators, language planners, policy makers and other language practitioners. The journal is a forum for reporting and critical discussion of language research and practice across a wide range of languages and international contexts. A broad range of research types is represented (qualitative and quantitative, established and innovative), including cross-disciplinary approaches.

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- a brief autobiographical sketch of the authors(s) (50-80 words)
- any references removed for the review process

1.3 Copies should be submitted as a Word attachment to the Editor, Dr Anne Feryok.

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1.4 All relevant submissions will be reviewed by members of the Editorial Board or other referees.

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> It is stated by McCloud and Henry (1993, p. 238) that "students never …" This, however, has not been the case (Baker & Thomas, 2001; Frank, 1996; Smithers,1985).

Where the work of the authors of the article is cited, to avoid identification during the review process the reference within the text should be '(Author, [date])', but there should be no entry in the list of references. Provide these references on the title page.

2.5 Use APA style for references. The list of references at the end of the article should be arranged alphabetically by authors' names. References should be given in the following form (including hanging indents and no lines between entries):

References
Books
Lillis, T. M. (2001). *Student writing: Access, regulation, desire.* London: Routledge.
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For other sources use APA (American Psychological Association) conventions.

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NZSAL invites short reports on any aspect of theory and practice in Applied Linguistics. Manuscripts could also present preliminary research findings or focus on some aspect of a larger study. Short reports should be no longer than 2500 words, exclusive of references, figures and tables, and appendices; please be reasonable. Short reports do not include an abstract or key words. Submissions to this section

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