

Sex

Male=36 Female=205

Teaching Posts held

C.M.=120 A.M.=16

G.M.=76 S.G.M.=27

Levels

Primary=102 Secondary=141

Range of Teaching Experience

1 to 27 years

Academic Qualifications

University Degree holders: 106

Diploma holders: 62

Matriculants: 38

HKCEE: 37

Collectively, these numbers are satisfying because they demonstrate that the respondents are distributed within the generally recognized groupings of teachers in Hong Kong in each of the profile categories.

Results of General Interest

In this section of the paper we would like to briefly report results which offer insight into the respondents' feelings about their ability in English and their ability to teach the language. We will begin by looking at the responses to the following pair of questions:

Table 1A

What are your feelings about using English . . .		
	Comfortable	Uncomfortable
with foreigners	53.6% (123)	5.8% (14)
with other Chinese	20.5% (50)	28.0% (68)

We found these results interesting in several respects. First there is the fact that so many teachers feel comfortable using English with foreigners (53.6%), while only a handful (5.8%) reported feeling uncomfortable. We found this breakdown reassuring and encouraging. The somewhat substantial change in the teachers' feelings concerning the use of English with other Chinese is also worth noting, both for the significantly lower percentage of teachers who feel comfortable under such circumstances (only 20.5%) and the higher percentage who feel uncomfortable (28.0%). This latter set of responses is worth future exploration in terms of its implications regarding Chinese teachers teaching English to Chinese students.

Moving on now to the respondents' self-perception of their ability in English in the four skills areas, we would like to point out several interesting

results. First, the breakdown of the respondents' rating of their English language skills:

Table 1 B

Self-perception of English Ability				
	READING	WRITING	LISTENING	SPEAKING
Very good	13.2% (32)	3.3% (8)	9.9% (24)	5.0% (12)
Good	39.5% (96)	22.3% (54)	33.1% (80)	30.4% (73)
Acceptable	37.9% (92)	57.9% (140)	43.8% (106)	51.7% (124)
Poor	8.2% (20)	14.5% (35)	6.2% (15)	10.8% (26)
Very poor	1.2% (3)	1.7% (4)	2.1% (5)	1.7% (4)

In terms of the teachers' overall ranking of their English language proficiency, we note the following results after combining 'good' and 'very good' responses: reading was ranked first, listening second, speaking third, and writing fourth. We find two points especially interesting here. First is the fact that the receptive skills are ranked ahead of the productive skills. Second is the fact that the teachers rank their ability to write in English as low as they do. This response seems to fly in the face of conventional wisdom, which maintains teachers have far more confidence in their writing ability than in their speaking ability.

It is also worth noting that, when 'poor' and 'very poor' are grouped, rather small numbers of teachers included themselves in these categories in any of the skills areas. Also, teachers saw themselves as slightly weaker in the productive skills than in the receptive skills, a response consistent with the results cited earlier.

We would also like to point out the large numbers of teachers who saw themselves as having an acceptable level of ability in all four skills.

The respondents were also asked to rate their ability to teach the four language skills, and here, again, we see some interesting results.

Table 1 C

Q50. If you teach English, how do you rank your overall ability to teach the following skills? (1 represents "strongest" and 4 represents "weakest")				
	READING	WRITING	LISTENING	SPEAKING
1 = strongest	39.3% (92)	19.2% (45)	23.9% (56)	26.9% (63)
2	24.4% (57)	26.1% (61)	29.5% (69)	23.5% (55)
3	26.5% (62)	19.7% (46)	23.1% (54)	25.2% (59)
4 = weakest	9.8% (23)	35.0% (82)	23.5% (55)	24.4% (57)

When '1' and '2' responses are combined, we see, once again, that teachers feel more confident with respect to receptive skills, i.e. their ability to teach reading and listening skills, though their confidence in teaching the productive skills is not significantly lower. It is important to note, however, their continued lack of confidence concerning writing, particularly the fact that just over a third of the teachers gave the teaching of this skill the lowest ranking, '4'. This is not surprising in view of their rankings in table 1 B, but it is still worth bearing in mind.

An interesting follow-up to Table 1 C occurs in Table 1 D.

Table 1 D

What is your perception of the relative usefulness of the following components of English language learning/teaching?	
Teachers' ranking	Students' ranking
1. reading comprehension	1. oral activities
2. listening comprehension	2. listening activities
3. compositions	{ 3. grammar
4. grammar	
5. pronunciation	4. pronunciation
6. readers	5. class readers
	6. reading comprehension/ vocabulary (Law, 1989)

We note here, again, the teachers' preference for receptive skills. The high ranking (third) for composition is interesting in light of the teachers' doubts about their own ability to write in English and to teach writing skills. The high ranking for grammar is also noteworthy given the local emphasis on the communicative approach to language teaching. (It should be noted, incidentally, that the teachers were asked to rank the importance of a total of 13 different components in language teaching; for convenience' sake, we have reported only the six highest ranking items.)

By way of interesting comparison, we have included results of a survey of student preferences conducted by Law (1989). What makes this comparison important is the students' belief in the importance of learning oral skills above all others, in sharp contrast to the teachers' views. The complete reversal in the ranking of reading skills is also important to look at, with students ranking this area sixth and teachers, as stated earlier, ranking it first.

We would now like to look at another section of the questionnaire and the more relevant and important findings which emerged from this area of the research. In this final section of the questionnaire, the teachers were asked to respond to a set of statements concerning language teaching within the Likert Scale format. That is, they were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement, with three different levels

of agreement and of disagreement available for selection. The statements they were asked to respond to, together with percentages indicating, on the left, strong to very strong agreement, and to the right, strong to very disagreement, are included in Table 1E below.

Table 1E

37 vs <u>25</u>	53.	The communicative approach to language teaching is less effective than the grammatical/structural approach used in the past.
37 vs <u>12</u>	54.	Computers are a useful tool in language teaching.
40 vs <u>24</u>	55.	"Streaming" students into either English medium or Chinese medium secondary schools after P. 6 will improve their language skills more than does the present system.
72 vs <u>4</u>	56.	The decision-makers in Hong Kong's educational system do not take into account the feelings of teachers when making language policy decisions.
57 vs <u>10</u>	57.	Students' English standard would be improved through the study of literature written in English (i.e. short stories, poetry, drama, novels).
47 vs <u>13</u>	58.	Hong Kong students nowadays have less interest in learning English than did students in the past.
47 vs <u>12</u>	59.	The P. 6 "streaming" proposal will create a small, 'elite' group of English speaking students rather than benefitting the majority of Hong Kong students.
81 vs <u>4</u>	60.	The English standard of Hong Kong students has declined in recent years.
76 vs <u>3</u>	61.	The Chinese standard of Hong Kong students has declined in recent years.
71 vs <u>1</u>	62.	Students' English standard would be improved through the use of an 'extensive reading' scheme.
31 vs <u>19</u>	63.	Literature is not an effective language teaching tool.

The first statement we would like to draw attention to is no. 56. The responses to this statement were mentioned earlier, but are worth a second glance. Clearly, teachers feel very strongly that they have been excluded from the decision making process currently at hand on the local educational scene.

Statement no. 57 also elicited a markedly strong favourable response, with 57% of the respondents supporting a role for literature in language teaching and only 10% opposing that idea.

Statements no. 60 and 61, individually and collectively, deserve a few remarks. In each case the percentage of teachers supporting the statement was extremely high, while only a miniscule percentage disagreed with each

statement. The fact that teachers feel as strongly as they do about the decline in the standard of both languages is particularly interesting, especially during a period when many local educationists maintain that the English and/or Chinese standards have not fallen at all.

Finally, the very strong support of extensive reading, together with virtually no opposition to such a scheme, is both interesting and, from our point of view, highly encouraging.

Respondents' Attitudes Towards Mixed Code Usage and Teaching

This area of our research is particularly relevant to the concerns underlying ECR 4 with respect to the crucial and controversial question of medium of instruction. The advisability of mixed code teaching has been an especially contentious issue. ECR 4 has taken a strong stance against mixed code teaching, and the following survey results are therefore of particular use in judging the wisdom of ECR 4's opposition to mixed code teaching.

As a backdrop to a series of questions regarding teachers' feelings about mixed code instruction, we asked a pair of questions exploring teachers' personal use of a mixture of English and Cantonese and their accompanying feelings about the general practise of mixed code language use. Table 2A examines their own use of a mixed code while speaking in Cantonese:

Table 2A

What is the extent of your personal use of English when speaking Cantonese with other Chinese?	
Always	1.7% (4)
Often	6.2% (15)
Fairly often	19.4% (47)
Sometimes	66.5% (161)
Never	6.2% (15)

As the teachers' responses clearly indicate, mixed code communication is a common occurrence. Table 2B reflects teachers' feelings about such communication:

Table 2B

What are your feelings about <i>mixed use</i> of Cantonese and English among Cantonese speakers?			
Very acceptable	10.3% (25)	}	59.7
Acceptable	49.4% (120)		
Unacceptable	25.5% (62)	}	38.3
Very unacceptable	12.8% (31)		
Neutral	1.6% (4)		

These figures are interesting for a couple of reasons. First, there is the fact that a sizable majority of respondents, about 60%, are favourably inclined toward mixed code communication. While this may not be surprising in light of the fact that nearly all the teachers use the mixed code to some degree, it is nevertheless worth noting their relatively strong approval of the practice. Second, a relatively large number of respondents disapprove of mixed code conversation despite engaging in it. Thus we see that the respondents have strong feelings on the subject; indeed, less than 2% had no feelings about mixed code discourse. That teachers are polarized on the issue is a point worth bearing in mind in future discussions of the mixed code.

We will now look at how teachers feel about mixed code teaching, first in a general sense, then with respect to specific subjects. In each case the respondents were asked to comment on mixed code teaching at both lower (Forms 1–3) and upper (Forms 4–5) secondary school level.

Table 2C below reflects teachers' feelings about mixed code teaching at lower secondary school level.

Table 2C

What, in general, is your attitude toward <i>mixed code teaching</i> at the <i>lower secondary level</i> ?	
Strongly favour	7.8% (19)
Favour	33.7% (82)
Slightly favour	35.8% (87)
Slightly oppose	10.7% (26)
Oppose	7.8% (19)
Strongly oppose	3.7% (9)

Here we see a decidedly positive attitude toward mixed code teaching, with about 3/4 of the respondents indicating some degree of acceptance of the practice, and with just over 40% registering a favourable to strongly favourable attitude. It is also worth noting that just 11½% are particularly opposed to the idea. All of these figures are interesting in comparison with those in Table 2D below.

Table 2D

What, in general, is your attitude toward <i>mixed code teaching</i> at <i>upper secondary level</i> ?	
Strongly favour	1.2% (3)
Favour	13.6% (33)
Slightly favour	24.3% (59)
Slightly oppose	24.3% (59)
Oppose	23.5% (57)
Strongly oppose	12.3% (30)

These figures show, of course, that significantly fewer teachers favour mixed code teaching, in general, at the upper secondary level, with just under 40% reacting favourably. At the same time, far more teachers signalled some degree of disapproval of mixed code teaching, with fairly considerable increases in all three categories of opposition.

With these figures in mind, let's look at how the teachers feel about mixed code teaching on a subject basis, first at the lower secondary level in Table 2E:

Table 2E

For which subjects do you think it is acceptable to use a <i>mixture</i> of Cantonese and English as the teaching medium in <i>lower forms</i> ?		
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Not acceptable</i>
English	18.6% (45)	81.4% (197)
History (foreign)	55.8% (135)	44.2% (107)
Geography	63.2% (153)	36.8% (89)
Maths	69.0% (167)	31.0% (75)
Science	68.2% (165)	31.8% (77)
Social Studies	67.4% (163)	32.6% (79)
EPA	66.5% (161)	33.5% (81)
None	13.6% (33)	86.4% (209)

We can see here that, with the strong exception of English and the slight exception of History, the teachers favoured mixed code teaching by about a 2–1 margin, a figure in line with the results indicated in table 2C.

Looking now at the teachers' feelings about the teaching of various subjects at upper secondary school level, we find that the 2-1 margin favouring the mixed code has shifted somewhat, as reflected in table 2F:

Table 2F

For which subjects do you think it is acceptable to use a <i>mixture</i> of Cantonese and English as the teaching medium in <i>upper forms</i> ?		
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Not acceptable</i>
English	8.3% (20)	91.7% (221)
History (foreign)	23.8% (57)	76.3% (106)
Geography	34.6% (83)	65.4% (157)
Maths	49.2% (118)	50.8% (122)
Biology	47.5% (114)	52.5% (126)
Chemistry	45.8% (110)	54.2% (130)
Physics	49.2% (118)	50.8% (122)
Commercial studies	34.6% (83)	65.9% (157)
Computer studies	35.8% (86)	64.2% (154)
None	28.8% (69)	71.3% (171)

The first thing to note here is the even stronger opposition to mixed code teaching of English, with about 92% of the respondents opposing the idea. The 76.3% of opposition to mixed code teaching of History (foreign) is also interesting to note. Meanwhile, we see about a 50-50 split in four conceptually-dominated subjects: Maths, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, while the remaining subjects show a reversed 2-1 margin, with teachers this time shifting against the mixed code.

Bearing these and some of the earlier results in mind, we would now like to offer some reflections on our results and make recommendations arising from them.

Recommendations

Before offering specific recommendations deriving from our research results, we would like to briefly sketch an illustration of our respondents who, on the basis of the general profile data described earlier, seem to represent an accurate sampling of teachers in Hong Kong.

We have found that the teachers feel, on the whole, that they have achieved at least an acceptable standard of English, and that they largely feel comfortable in using the language with foreigners, while having some reservations about communication in English with other Chinese. Furthermore, they feel more positively inclined, as both users and teachers of English, with the receptive than the productive skills. They also, with few exceptions, tend to use at least some English while conversing in Cantonese, though a fair number do not approve of that practice. As for the use of the mixed code in teaching, they favour it at lower secondary level and are selectively opposed to, or in favour of, the idea at upper secondary level depending on the subject taught.

While many conclusions can be drawn from these and other results of our research, we feel the following points are especially important with regards to teaching.

1. The seemingly common perception in Hong Kong that local teachers feel insecure about their English does not hold true, though their hesitation about use of the language with other Chinese must be noted. The significance of this to us is that it contradicts a standard belief in Hong Kong, i.e. that local teachers need exposure to expatriates in order to improve their English and build their confidence in using it. Given that the only strong insecurity about using English is in the context of communication with other Chinese, the real need is to find ways for local teachers to more effectively interact in English with their local compatriots. Further exposure to expatriates will not achieve this goal. And given that the teachers are teaching Chinese students, it is especially important that they overcome their fears or doubts about using English with other local people. We would therefore like to see an emphasis in teacher training courses on building teachers' confidence in the use of English with other Chinese.

2. The vast majority of teachers we surveyed, like the largest group in Hong Kong's schools, fell within the age range of 29–40. Most of these respondents did not have a university education, and it was these teachers who generally expressed some doubts about their use of English, either in general or in teaching. We view these findings within a larger context, that of the Government's recent call for a significant increase in the number of people who can study at tertiary level. Our strong feeling is that a set number of these future places be reserved for teachers falling within the crucial 29–40 age group. The acquisition of a tertiary qualification would increase, in general, their personal and professional self-esteem and self-confidence (other data we compiled showed that university graduates possess significantly more confidence in themselves than do other, non-graduate teachers). At the same time, study at this level would, given an effectively designed and managed English language component, enable these teachers to further develop their language ability and their feelings about the language. It is our belief that setting aside a suitable number of tertiary level places for teachers in this age range is crucial to the future of English language teaching in Hong Kong.
3. On the subject of mixed code teaching, our findings suggest a few important points. First, the view of mixed code teaching in ECR 4 is a monolithic one which broadly dismisses the idea of mixed code teaching. This is at least partly because it does not, apparently, take into account teachers' feelings about mixed code teaching. Second, and following from our first point, there is a need for flexibility in attitudes toward, and use of, mixed code teaching. As our results clearly indicate, teachers are very selective in their feelings about mixed code teaching, with their attitudes varying according to the forms being taught as well as the subject(s) being taught. This suggests to us that it is counterproductive to dictate an outright and total rejection of mixed code teaching. What we propose, instead, is a more flexible view which distinguishes between 'good' and 'bad' mixed code teaching. That is, in certain forms and in the teaching of certain subjects, mixed code teaching might be the most effective means of instruction, hence making it 'good'. In other forms and with respect to some subjects, such as English and History, the mixed code approach should be avoided, thus making it 'bad'. It seems to us that this kind of distinction between 'good' and 'bad' mixed code teaching would leave schools and teachers considerable room to make intelligent decisions on when to use, and when to avoid, mixed code instruction, rather than adopting the highly restrictive approach outlined in ECR 4.

Conclusion

Some of the data produced in our research will come as a surprise, and some will not. Taken collectively, the data suggest to us that what teachers feel about their use of English and their teaching of the language goes to some degree against the grain of thought which prevails among many of Hong Kong's educationists. The ultimate importance of this difference between what teachers feel and what other educationists assume they feel is tied to the main point made in the introduction to this paper: that it is both unjust and impractical to exclude teachers from the decision-making process. This point is best illustrated with respect to ECR 4. Had an effort been made to systematically collect teachers' attitudes about, say, mixed code teaching, the Commission might well have made significantly different recommendations on the question of mixed Code teaching. Because teachers were not consulted in a systematic way, and because they were not permitted to help form the Commission's recommendations, faulty guidelines which are virtually certain to become policies have been put forth. The relatively simple and highly logical approach of including, in an authoritative sense, teachers in the decision-making process would have led to recommendations which would more accurately reflect teachers' strengths as well as insights into the realities of language teaching in Hong Kong's schools.

While some of our data are in line with what educationists apparently assume about local school teachers, enough are not to reinforce our thesis: that sound, effective educational planning, as well as education itself, cannot take place until those who must implement, on a daily, indeed an hourly, basis, are included in the formation of educational policies. In short, school teachers must be given a significant role in influential bodies such as the Education Commission and the Board of Education. Until and unless that time comes, Hong Kong's teachers will be forced to implement policies and approaches which, lacking their input, will fail to produce the desired results because of the uninformed conditions under which they were generated.

TOWARDS REFLECTIVE TEACHING

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Most teachers develop their classroom skills fairly early in their teaching careers. Teachers entering the profession may find their initial teaching efforts stressful, but with experience they acquire a repertoire of teaching strategies which they draw on throughout their teaching. The particular configuration of strategies a teacher uses constitute his or her 'teaching style'. While a teacher's style of teaching provides a means of coping with many of the routine demands of teaching, there is also a danger that it can hinder a teacher's professional growth. How can teachers move beyond the level of automatic or routinized responses to classroom situations and achieve a higher level of awareness of how they teach, of the kinds of decisions they make as they teach, and of the value and consequences of particular instructional decisions? One way of doing this is through observing and reflecting on one's own teaching, and using observation and reflection as a way of bringing about change. This approach to teaching can be described as 'Reflective Teaching', and in this paper I want to explore how a reflective view of teaching can be developed.

What is reflection?

Reflection or 'critical reflection', refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. It is a response to past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basis for evaluation and decision-making and as a source for planning and action. Bartlett (1990) points out that becoming a reflective teacher involves moving beyond a primary concern with instructional techniques and 'how to' questions and asking 'what' and 'how' questions that regard instruction and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes.

Asking 'what and why' questions gives us a certain power over our teaching. We could claim that the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control we can exercise over our actions. In reflecting on the above kind of questions, we begin to exercise control and open up the possibility of transforming our everyday classroom life.

Bartlett, 1990. 267.

How does reflection take place?

Many different approaches can be employed if one wishes to become a critically reflective teacher, including observation of oneself and others, team

teaching, and exploring one's view of teaching through writing. Central to any approach used however is a three part process which involves:

Stage 1 The event itself

The starting point is an actual teaching episode, such as a lesson or other instructional event. While the focus of critical reflection is usually the teacher's own teaching, self-reflection can also be stimulated by observation of another person's teaching.

Stage 2 Recollection of the event

The next stage in reflective examination of an experience is an account of what happened, without explanation or evaluation. Several different procedures are available during the recollection phase, including written descriptions of an event, a video or audio recording of an event, or the use of check lists or coding systems to capture details of the event.

Stage 3 Review and response to the event

Following a focus on objective description of the event, the participant returns to the event and reviews it. The event is now processed at a deeper level, and questions are asked about the experience.

Let us examine approaches to critical reflection which reflect these processes.

Peer Observation

Peer observation can provide opportunities for teachers to view each others teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles and to provide opportunities for critical reflection on their own teaching. In a peer observation project initiated in our own department, the following guidelines were developed.

1. *Each participant would both observe and be observed.* Teachers would work in pairs and take turns observing each others' classes.
2. *Pre-observation orientation session.* Prior to each observation, the two teachers would meet to discuss the nature of the class to be observed, the kind of material being taught, the teacher's approach to teaching, the kinds of students in the class, typical patterns of interaction and class participation, and any problems that might be expected. The teacher being observed would also assign the observer a goal for the observation and a task to accomplish. The task would involve collecting information about some aspect of the lesson, but would not include any evaluation of the lesson. Observation procedures or instruments to be used would be agreed upon during this session and a schedule for the observations arranged.
3. *The observation.* The observer would then visit his or her partner's class and complete the observation using the procedures that both partners had agreed on.

4. *Post-observation.* The two teachers would meet as soon as possible after the lesson. The observer would report on the information that had been collected and discuss it with the teacher (Richards and Lockhart, 1991).

The teachers identified a variety of different aspects of their lessons for their partners to observe and collect information on. These included organization of the lesson, teacher's time management, students' performance on tasks, time-on-task, teacher questions and student responses, student performance during pairwork, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, and students' use of the first language or English during group work.

The teachers who participated in the project reported that they gained a number of insights about their own teaching from their colleague's observations and that they would like to use peer observation on a regular basis. They obtained new insights into aspects of their teaching. For example:

"It provided more detailed information on student performance during specific aspects of the lesson than I could have gathered on my own."

"It revealed unexpected information about interaction between students during a lesson."

"I was able to get useful information on the group dynamics that occur during group work."

Some teachers identified aspects of their teaching that they would like to change as a result of the information their partner collected. For example:

"It made me more aware of the limited range of teaching strategies that I have been using."

"I need to give students more time to complete some of the activities I use."

"I realized that I need to develop better time management strategies."

Longer term benefits to the department were also sighted:

"It helped me develop better a working relationship with a colleague."

"Some useful broader issues about teaching and the programme came up during the post-observation discussions."

Written accounts of experiences

Another useful way of engaging in the reflective process is through the use of written accounts of experiences. Personal accounts of experiences through writing are common in other disciplines (Powell 1985) and their potential is increasingly being recognized in teacher education. A number of different approaches can be used.

Self-Reports

Self-reporting involves completing an inventory or check list in which the teacher indicates which teaching practices were used within a lesson or within a specified time period and how often they were employed (Pak, 1985). The inventory may be completed individually or in group sessions. The accuracy of self reports is found to increase when teachers focus on the teaching of specific skills in a particular classroom context and when the self-report instrument is carefully constructed to reflect a wide range of potential teaching practices and behaviors (Richards, 1990).

Self-reporting allows teachers to make a regular assessment of what they are doing in the classroom. They can check to see to what extent their assumptions about their own teaching are reflected in their actual teaching practices. For example a teacher could use self-reporting to find out the kinds of teaching activities being regularly used, whether all of the program's goals are being addressed, the degree to which personal goals for a class are being met, and the kinds of activities which seem to work well or not to work well.

Autobiographies

Abbs (1974, cited in Powell 1985) discusses the use of autobiographies in teacher preparation. These consist of small groups of around 12 students who meet

for an hour each week for at least 10 weeks. During this period of time each student works at creating a written account of his or her educational experience and the weekly meetings are used to enable each person to read a passage from his or her autobiography so that it can be supported, commented upon by peers and the teacher (43).

Powell (1985) describes the use of reaction-sheets—sheets student teachers complete after a learning activity has been completed—in which they are encouraged 'to stand back from what they had been doing and think about what it meant for their own learning and what it entailed for their work as teachers of others' (p. 46). I have used a similar technique in working with student teachers in a practicum. Students work in pairs with a co-operating teacher and take turns teaching. One serves as observer while the other teaches, and completes a reaction sheet during the lesson. The student who teaches also completes his or her own reaction sheet after the lesson. Then the two compare their reactions to the lesson.

Journal Writing

A procedure which is becoming more widely acknowledged as a valuable tool for developing critical reflection is the journal or diary. The goal of journal writing is,

1. to provide a record of the significant learning experiences that have taken place.

2. to help the participant come into touch and keep in touch with the self-development process that is taking place for them.
3. to provide the participants with an opportunity to express, in a personal and dynamic way, their self-development.
4. to foster a creative interaction
 - between the participant and the self-development process that is taking place
 - between the participant and other participants who are also in the process of self-development
 - between the participant and the facilitator whose role it is to foster such development

(Powell, 1985, Bailey, 1990)

While procedures for diary keeping vary, the participant usually keeps a regular account of learning or teaching experiences, recording reflections on what he or she did as well as straightforward descriptions of events, which may be used as a basis for later reflection. The diary serves as a means for interaction between the writer, the facilitator, and sometimes other participants.

Collaborative Diary Keeping

A group of teachers may also collaborate in journal writing. A group of my colleagues recently explored the value of collaborative diary-keeping as a way of developing a critically reflective view of their teaching (Brock, Yu and Wong, 1991). Throughout a 10 week teaching term they kept diaries on their teaching, read each other's diaries, and discussed their teaching and diary keeping experiences on a weekly basis. They also recorded and later transcribed their group discussions and subsequently analyzed their diary entries, their written responses to each other's entries, and the transcripts of their discussions, in order to determine how these three interacted and what issues occurred most frequently. They reported that:

Collaborative diary-keeping brought several benefits to our development as second language teachers. It raised our awareness of classroom processes and prompted us to consider those processes more deeply than we may otherwise have. Collaborative diary-keeping also provided encouragement and support; it served as a source of teaching ideas and suggestions; and in some sense it gave us a way to observe one another's teaching from a "safe distance". . . .

By reading one another's diary entries, we were able to share our teaching experiences, and we often felt that we were learning as much from one another's entries as we were from our own. Reading and responding to the entries led us back to our own teaching to consider how and why we taught as we did.

These teachers observed however that

1. collaborative diary-keeping is more effective if the scope of issues considered is focussed more narrowly,

2. a large block of time is needed,
3. participants must be comfortable in sharing both pleasant and unpleasant experiences and be committed to gaining a clearer picture of their teaching and their classrooms.

Recording Lessons

For many aspects of teaching, audio or video recording of lessons can also provide a basis for reflection. While there are many useful insights to be gained from diaries and self-reports, they cannot capture the moment to moment processes of teaching. Many things happen simultaneously in a classroom, and some aspects of a lesson cannot be recalled. It would be of little value for example, to attempt to recall the proportion of Yes-No Questions to WH-Questions a teacher used during a lesson, or to estimate the degree to which teacher time was shared among higher and lower ability students. Many significant classroom events may not have been observed by the teacher, let alone remembered, hence the need to supplement diaries or self-reports with recordings of actual lessons.

At its simplest, a tape recorder is located in a place where it can capture the exchanges which take place during a lesson. With the microphone placed on the teacher's table, much of the teacher's language can be recorded as well as the exchanges of many of the students in the class. Pak (1985) recommends recording for a one or two week period and then randomly selecting a cassette for closer analysis. This recording could be used as the basis for an initial assessment. Where video facilities are available in a school, the teacher can request to have a lesson recorded, or with access to video equipment, students themselves can be assigned this responsibility. A 30 minute recording usually provides more than sufficient data for analysis. The goal is to capture as much of the interaction of the class as possible, both teacher to class and student to student. Once the initial novelty wears off, both students and teacher accept the presence of the technician with the camera, and the class proceeds with minimum disruption.

Conclusions

A reflective approach to teaching involves changes in the way we usually perceive teaching and our role in the process of teaching. As the examples above illustrate, teachers who explore their own teaching through critical reflection develop changes in attitudes and awareness which they believe can both benefit their professional growth as teachers, as well as improve the kind of support they provide their students. Like other forms of self-inquiry, reflective teaching is not without its risks, since journal writing, self-reporting on making recordings of lessons can be time consuming. However teachers engaged in reflective analysis of their own teaching report that it is a valuable tool for self-evaluation and professional growth. Reflective teaching suggests that experience alone is insufficient for professional growth, but that experience coupled with reflection can be a powerful impetus for teacher development.

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MOTIVATION, THE SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNER AND THE TEACHER

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Introduction

Thought must first pass through meanings and only then through words . . . Thought is not the superior authority in this process. Thought is not begotten by thought; it is engendered by motivation, by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. (Vygotsky, 1922).

Vygotsky's statement of the primacy of motivation in cognition and communication is worth reiterating. It is often assumed that motivational aspects of the second language learning process are immutable phenomena; either conferred benefits or irksome constraints for the teacher. The general belief seems to be that students either enter the learning process motivated to learn or they do not, and that the consequences of this lottery have to be accepted and accommodated.

In this brief and preliminary paper aimed at Hong Kong teachers of General English working with students at all post-primary levels, I want to suggest that learner motivation is actually in a constant state of flux brought about by a concatenation of developmental, personality and attitudinal factors. This point alone means that the area is one of limitless richness and complexity. However, although motivation is a deeply personal impulse, it is possible to identify dimensions of motivation under which individualistic factors are largely subsumed. This is fortunate in that it enables us to discuss an essentially subjective topic in more general terms, and so identify ways in which pedagogic planning can take aspects of learner motivation into account.

Three main dimensions of motivation are readily identifiable. These are displayed below with their various definitions and drives. Needless to say, the dimensions are in constant parallel interaction.

Dimensions of Motivation

Holistic

Definition: the individual as organism seeking to realise its fullest potentialities: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Drive: – Egocentric.

Cultural-Linguistic

Definition: the individual as user of non-native languages in relation to others within and across cultures.

Drives: – Instrumental.

– Integrative.

Cognitive-Linguistic

Definition: the individual in formal learning situations.

Drives: – Security and Progress.

– Involvement in the Learning Programme.

– Cognitive Engagement.

– Incentive to Sustain Impetus.

Holism: The Whole Student Approach.

Abraham Maslow's pioneering work (1954) in presenting a unified hierarchy of individual needs which naturally motivate human behaviour, was influential in Western education systems in the 1960s and early 1970s. Maslow's hierarchy is constructed on the essentially Western notion that maximal ego-centred development is the goal of each and every individual. The hierarchy represents the individual's progress in meeting needs and wants which range from the purely physiological to the highly creative; from survival to self-actualisation.

Maslow's explicit description of what is entailed in the process of "becoming whole" has helped teachers to perceive learners as constantly striving individuals, since at each level of attainment a new need is created; defined and potentially limited to some extent by the degree of success achieved at the previous level. The developing and enquiring individual, then, is constantly in a state of what might be termed necessary and beneficial disequilibrium. The concept of learner disequilibrium may have profound implications for teacher behaviour; these are elaborated as the discussion develops.

Maslows' work, however, is of limited direct relevance to the language teacher; he makes no reference to the position a second language might occupy on the hierarchy of needs. Despite this we can guess with some confidence that the position is likely to depend heavily on the cultural and occupational context in which the individual finds himself. Maslow does, however, provide an important global, if semi-deterministic, view of the individual as a striving organism; a view which may help the teacher to be more aware of the student in whole-person terms rather than simply in his or her studial capacity. The need for the Hong Kong teacher to regard each learner in whole person terms is all the more urgent in view of the extremely competitive nature of the local education system and its potentially destructive effects on the individual learner.

The Cultural-Linguistic Dimension

At the level of the individual within and across cultures, the motivation to learn a foreign or second language has tended to be stated in dichotomous, either-or terms; that is a learner is driven by either instrumental or integrative motivation (Gardener, 1968 and 1979). Instrumental motivation is engendered and sustained by extrinsic forces such as job getting, promotion enhancement or passing examinations, while the integrative type is generated intrinsically by positive perceptions of the target language culture and its peoples. Gardner himself has stated unequivocally that

integrative motivation provides the strongest, deepest and most lasting drive to learn the target language. Perhaps the most important feature to note about learners motivated by instrumental ends, is that they may take a dangerously short-term view of learning resulting in fossilisation of key aspects of the target language system and their communicative use. As Stevick indicates (1982):

Apparently people acquire as much of a language as they really need for what they really want, but only that much.

It is, nevertheless, surprising that the categories of instrumental and integrative motivation have been accepted as canons of linguistic law. This dichotomy, like any other dichotomy, may be a useful contrasting device but can hardly hope to account accurately for the actual operations of such a multi-faceted, elusive quality as motivation. Gardner's research data originated from the bilingual situation in Montreal and the close-proximity nature of this environment may have produced too strong an emphasis on integrative motivation for wider applicability. Porter Ladousse (1982) seems to support the notion that the integrative variety has little relevance other than to close-proximity environments.

In fact, the social context in which the second language learning takes place may well be a very powerful constraint on the development of that language, in that this context provides the parameters of intra-national identity and solidarity. It is clear, taking Hong Kong as an example, that close-proximity bilingual environments do not necessarily engender integrationist tendencies. Richards and Luke (1982) present a convincing case for regarding Hong Kong as essentially dualistic in socio-cultural terms, and Pierson and Fu's (1982) findings point up an important linguistic consequence of this separatism; that is Hong Kong people's uneasiness in using English and in their negative perceptions of other local people who speak English in situations where the use of Chinese would be natural.

In sharp contrast to all this, is the fact that in Hong Kong the level of instrumental motivation to learn English runs very high. Perceptions of English as low in status but high in utility set up a strong contradiction in the learner. He or she needs English to achieve success in terms of education and occupation, but at the same time the majority of Hong Kong people have strongly anti-integrationist tendencies. This attitude is manifested linguistically in the very high levels of virtually intractable fossilisation found in the English of many Hong Kong learners and users of English. A form (not variety) of English seems to have developed in Hong Kong which meets practical intra-national needs, while preserving socio-cultural identity and solidarity. This form, consequently, has limited international viability.

Low affective drive is common to many contexts in which English is a foreign, rather than second, language. There is, of course, little the teacher can do to alter cultural-linguistic constraints radically although, as will be described later, these may be modified to some extent. Incidentally, it is interesting to note in passing that, in sharp contrast to English, French and Japanese in Hong Kong appear to enjoy high status but have relatively

restricted utility at present. These positive perceptions are, perhaps, the result of admiration for particular facets of French and Japanese cultural-economic life; style and economic success respectively.

The strongest strain of integrative motivation, drawing closer to or actually integrating into the target language culture, seems then to be generally untenable. It is certainly difficult to conceive of a degree of own culture alienation so great, or target culture attraction so overwhelming, that an individual would wish to disown his own context of development completely, although some isolated instances of this do, of course, exist.

It is rather more likely, as already indicated that specific features of the target language culture may be admired or particularly valued by learners. Flavell (1984) for example, reported on the very considerable number of young Brazilian adults learning English to understand and possibly perform Anglo-American pop music. This particularist and narrowly-focussed motivation is actually a very positive, and potentially expandable phenomenon and once again indicates that, in reality, there is probably no sharp distinction to be made between instrumental and integrative modes of motivation. Interestingly, Burstall (1975) found that the two motivational drives by no means stand in mutual exclusion or contradiction, and that non-threatening and successful learning experiences develop positive attitudes to the target language, its people and culture that were not present at the start of the learning programme.

For the teacher this realisation is a crucial breakthrough because it promises a way in which positive attitudinal and instrumental drives might be linked to achieve optimal learning through combining extrinsic and intrinsic elements of motivation. In this way it might be possible to take the learner from limited perceived target language needs to a positive desire to learn more about a culture through its language and so continually progress in the acquisition of the target language. This is not to say that the learner is likely to become integrationist in any strong sense, but low affective drive and the resulting high level of fossilisation might be prevented.

I want to suggest, then, that integrative motivation might best be redefined as a force potential in any environment conducive to second language acquisition while acknowledging that it could equally well be viewed in universal, non-linguistic terms as the drive for acceptance and security to bring a sense of belonging to a particular community.

The Cognitive-Academic Dimension

I use this term to refer to the level of the individual in formal learning situations. This is naturally the level at which teachers are most directly concerned with questions of student motivation. Burstall's findings (op. cit.) strike an intuitive and positive chord for many teachers; that no matter how poorly motivated a learner may appear to be, the aware and sensitive teacher can actively develop strategies to generate, harness and sustain a motivational dynamic not entirely directed towards instrumental ends. I want to propose an integrated four-point plan; one that as presented is not very

elaborate but which should provide a practical framework for the enhancement of motivation in the second language classroom.

Security and Progress

My first point relates to the need for the teacher to create a low-anxiety atmosphere in the classroom while, at the same time, allowing the learner to perceive that real progress is being made. This is of particular importance for learners with potentially inhibiting socio-cultural backgrounds or personality types. Although there is little direct action the teacher can take to influence these factors, it is worth noting in passing that Pickett (1978) offers a description of the ideal background of a second language learner, some features of which are; secure but non-restrictive early rearing, no binding identification with a particular socio-economic class, and no confining membership of an exclusive, monodialectal regional grouping. The good language learner is open-minded and accepts cultural and linguistic variation with good grace and humour.

Krashen (1981) has absorbed the basic personality types of introvert and extrovert into his model of second language acquisition, claiming that extroverts are more likely, because of their lack of inhibition, to communicate more effectively in the early stages of the second language programme than their self-repressing introverted classmates. This is displayed schematically below:

<i>Learner</i>	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Rules</i>	<i>Personality</i>
Monitor overuser	—	+	introverted
Monitor underuser	+	—	extroverted

More importantly perhaps, Krashen has also emphasised the need to allow for a relatively silent, receptive period early in the second language acquisition process. Part of the reason for this is to lower the affective barrier erected by many learners when presented with a form of learning which threatens individual identity. Allowing for an appropriate lag between reception and production of language has become one of the bedrock principles of communicative approaches to teaching and, in the sense that this has reduced the use of audiolingual techniques demanding immediate oral responses, has been reasonably successful in dismantling affective barriers. However, comprehensible input from the teacher and reception-based work for the student does not provide enough momentum to keep the learner optimally motivated. Output, and consequent feedback, are the means by which a learner becomes acquainted with his level of success. Successful learning experiences will tend to engender the desire for more success. It is in this way that the individual's resolution to progress is strengthened.

However, in large teacher-centred classes, students have little opportunity to deliver enough output to be judged fairly or receive constructive feedback to enhance feelings of security and success. Teachers, then, need to build approaches into the learning programme which do allow for

substantial and significant output without threatening the learner with individual, oral production in front of the whole class. Project and theme work, and activities utilising interactive techniques including the interactive noticeboard, intra- and inter- school English Days and visits, and the electronic mail system are clearly most likely to facilitate this. Swain (1990) describes the need for the teacher to:

... plan for opportunities for sustained language use by students where they are motivated to express faithfully and precisely their thought, and are provided with useful and consistent feedback.

Comprehensible input from the teacher is of little use if students, through lack of language practice and use, are able only to produce virtually incomprehensible output, or at least language so marked by gross error that it has little international viability.

Substantial practice and feedback is not only essential to sustain motivation, but also to prevent the fossilisation of erroneous target language forms already mentioned. The fossilisation potential of learning programmes too sharply focussed on fluency development has long been recognised. Canale and Swain (1979) acknowledge that a certain level of grammatical competence must be reached before strategic, communicative and discourse competencies are able to play their vitally important roles in language use; that "what can be said determines what can be meant." More recently, Major (1988) linked the effects of fossilised language to studies investigating perceptions of the relative gravity of errors and concluded:

There is a significant difference between a listener who merely understood the [inaccurately formulated] message and was unaffected, one that understood but was annoyed in the process, and one who understood and was sympathetic. In all three situations the basic message may be the same, but the total meaning and impact are different.

Providing opportunities for increased practice could be facilitated by the use of self-directed (self-access) learning materials particularly for listening, reading and writing. After all, the ultimate objective of self-access systems is maximum individualisation of learning. This personalisation of the learning process should enhance motivation provided regular review sessions with teachers are built into the programme to maintain internal dynamism and counterbalance the social isolation inherent in self-access systems. For speaking and pronunciation, I would advocate regular recording, promptly followed by monitoring (with the teacher) of the taped samples for the learner to detect progress and repair problems effectively.

Involvement in the Learning Programme

The learner needs to be able to perceive that there are real purposes and benefits to be derived from learning a second language and that the learning programme is appropriately focussed and internally dynamic. Only then are they likely to feel involved fully in the learning process.

It is something of a surprise, then, that although teachers may well know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where they are going, the students usually do not. It is a truism that school-level students remain largely unaware of the reasoning and goals, other than examination-passing, underlying the second language learning programme. The learners are left bereft of a real purpose to learn and of the directions that learning will take. The fact that the learners in question are often relatively young is no reason for keeping them unenlightened.

To promote participative learning, I want to suggest that the teacher could interview at least a representative cross-section of students before the start of the learning programme to gauge the approximate nature and range of learner interests. These interests could then be fed into the programme as projects, topics or themes. The programme might then be perceived as taking regard of student needs and wants. This kind of activity on the part of the teacher should have beneficial effects in generating and sustaining learner motivation.

The suggestion here implies a move towards more learner-centred (almost client-centred) approaches to teaching. A co-occurring de-emphasising of prescribed study areas and of the set textbook in favour of relevant tasks and activities derived from source books or created by individual teachers to meet student demand is also implied. I am not, of course, suggesting a radical and sudden change to a negotiated procedural syllabus, but a limited number of student suggestions could be easily accommodated within most school-based learning programmes.

Keeping the learner informed in order to keep him motivated does not stop at this point. It needs to be seen as a continuous process. For example, a student version of both medium-and longer-term teaching plans could be produced and referred to at regular intervals to let students see clearly just where they are, what is to be tackled next and why.

The teacher might also consider spending a few minutes at the beginning of each lesson (or just the first of the week's lessons if time is very short) sketching a very brief overview of the lesson or lessons on the board. Time elements might be included if this is felt to be useful. Again, this would allow students to see the direction of their learning and may well enhance motivation to achieve clear-cut ends within a certain time-scale. To communicate these details effectively, the teacher will need to conceive and phrase lesson objectives in terms of learner activity; an empathetic process in itself.

Involving the learner in the global teaching and learning process is of the greatest possible importance since language, as a subject per se, is rarely enough to motivate to any significant extent. It is not surprising, for instance, that Munby (reported in Porter Ladousse op.cit.) recorded a drastic decrease in motivation among African students when English was introduced as a subject rather than being used as the medium of instruction for the delivery of science subjects; a genuinely communicational use of the target language.

Cognitive Engagement

There is no such thing as a learner completely uninterested in each and every aspect of learning a second language. An interest (in the sense of psychological arousal) will exist, albeit slight, grudging and covert, as a natural consequence of exposure to the language and aspects of its culture. The teacher's task is to bring this level of arousal to maximum positive pitch. This all seems obvious enough but is easily forgotten in the teaching process. Arousal will not be maximally effected, for example, by the provision of a very brief "motivation" section early in the lesson in which pictures or realia might be used to stimulate interest in the whole lesson. This kind of procedure reflects a clear use of Stimulus-Response models of learning based on relatively unrefined behaviourist psychology. Motivation is regarded here a short-range force designed to operate over the span of the single lesson as a necessary condition for the achievement of prescribed, and equally short-range behavioural objectives. Such procedures keep the content of the learning process distant from the learner and make little attempt to encourage his active cognitive participation in the process. Cognitive engagement in the learning process must be seen as inextricably linked to motivation. Ausubel (1968) expresses this concisely:

The most appropriate way of arousing motivation to learn is to focus on the cognitive rather than the motivational aspects of learning, and to rely on the motivation that is developed from successful educational achievement to energise further learning.

Learner curiosity is perhaps best aroused by using the appeal of those aspects of the target language which meet the developmental interests of a particular group of learners. Staging the lesson, or activities within it so that pre, while and post phases occur should help to maximise motivation to learn through engaging learners in a primarily cognitive process; the pre stage to utilise existing knowledge on the topic of study and raise expectations, the while stage to provide a purposeful means of confirming or disconfirming those expectations and to provide guidance in processing input, the post stage to build on what has been learned and provide a sense of completion to the whole process. Clearly, the use of tasks and activities based on the principles of problem-solving are likely to be most effective in engaging the learner's cognitive machinery fully.

Channels of exposure to the target language and its peoples and culture are, of course, important in maximising the cognitive engagement of the learner, and in maintaining the beneficial disequilibrium required to keep the learner wanting to learn more. Authentic print and video materials provide the best channels of exposure, since they naturally embody aspects of the target language culture. The corollary of this applies too; that learners are made much more aware of their own culture by learning about foreign ones. It hardly needs to be reiterated that even this kind of exposure will fail if the topic presented is not made interesting and appropriate for the developmental level of particular learners.