AJAL

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics

Volume 3, Number 1
May 2015
ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

FAAPI

AJAL Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics

FAAPI

Volume 3, Number 1, May 2015
ISSN 2314-3576 (online) © 2015 AJAL

AJAL is an international, fully refereed, open-access e-journal led by FAAPI (Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés, www.faapi.org.ar). It is a publication for teachers, trainers, and researchers interested in sharing their expertise, experience, and concerns in the fields of Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching. AJAL welcomes original research articles, state-of-the-art articles, literature reviews, materials reviews, and classroom accounts which focus on practical aspects.

Contents

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 3-4

FAAPI

Editorial introduction

This time, our cover includes a photograph taken at an English teacher education programme (ISFD 809) in Esquel (Argentina). These future teachers are working on an article authored by Argentinian researcher Melina Porto. This is part of an institutional effort to include bibliography written by Argentinian colleagues in initial teacher education.

Like its predecessors, this number is composed of articles written by practitioners and researchers from diverse and not only Western parts of the world who, on this occasion, address a wide range of issues: action research, teacher education, reading comprehension and error correction.

At the heart of Mario R. Moya's contribution, the result of his experience as a tutor in a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course run by the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Bedfordshire in England, lies the problem of developing reflective practice at teacher training colleges. Moya's proposal is deeply rooted in Collins, Brown & Newman's Cognitive Apprenticeship model and advocates for the use of Gibb's *structured debriefing* to facilitate reflection. As expressed by the author in his closing comments, reflective practice is highly valuable "in developing both the competence of trainee teachers in the early stages of their professional training and the enhancement of the expertise of mentors".

In *Iranian teachers' and students' preferences for correction of classroom oral errors: Opinions and responses* its authors report on the results of a questionnaire administered to Iranian students and to their teachers to find out their opinion about the role of error correction in foreign language learning. The rigorous analysis and discussion of the data collected indicate that the authors are convinced of the undisputable benefits of bringing together student perspectives and pedagogical practice to enhance language learning.

Gabriella Morvay's article summarises the results of a correlational study carried out among sixty-four Hungarian high-school students learning English as a foreign language in Slovakia which explored the "contribution of first language (L1) reading ability, non-native language (L2) proficiency and non-verbal intelligence to non-native (L2) reading comprehension". The "linguistic interdependence hypothesis" and the "linguistic threshhold hypothesis" underpin Morvay's work, the four standardised proficiency tests measures used are presented and the limitations of the study are stated. To comply with

one of the objectives, the article concludes with a few recommendations "on what to prioritize in both curriculum and pedagogy at a particular stage of L2 learning".

Marina González's reflective piece based on the work carried out by Uruguayan educator Gabriel Díaz Maggioli, is an invitation to think about professional development through different scenarios. Although this contribution is based on the city of Buenos Aires, it will surely resonate with other contexts. Professional development is central to transforming education and therefore it becomes essential that we base approaches and courses of action for professional development on situations which are familiar and context-responsive.

Last, ethical problems in action research and a series of questions that may help practitioners elucidate their own identities as teacher-researchers are central in D. Banegas and L. S. Villacañas de Castro's article. After summarising three action research models, the authors of *A look at ethical issues in action research in education* discuss problems such as collaboration, power, confidentiality, authorship, ownership, representation and voice and conclude that if action research is "to become, memorable, engaging, and meaningful, it must be based on […]constant awareness of ethical dilemmas around agents' actions and decisions".

In the Book Review section readers will find an analysis of a recently published collection of articles entitled *International perspectives on materials in ELT*. The reviewer, Laurena María Moreno, considers the collection highly recommendable for it provides methods and ready-to-use activities as well as new tools to tackle with ITCs in the classroom.

The fruitful experience of convening specialists to discuss a particular object (Volume 2.1) has led us to consider devoting Volume 3.2 to a topic that is challenging and relevant to teachers: Intercultural citizenship. Interculturality has become a key area for change in Argentina's new curricula.

Darío Luis Banegas and Raquel Lothringer

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 5-13

FAAPI

Cognitive apprenticeship and structured debriefing as tools to develop reflective practice in initial teacher education

Mario Raul Moya*
Department of Teacher Education, Institute of Research in Education (IREd),
University of Bedfordshire, UK

(Received 01/07/14; final version received 05/03/15)

Abstract

This article discusses the use of reflection in the development of pre-service teachers' skills in school placements, as utilised in a Teacher Training College in Bedford, England, following the views of Schön (1987), Dewey (1988), and Eraut (1994) in relation to the use of reflection to inquire into teaching practice. Such reflective process is facilitated by the model of cognitive apprenticeship (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989) and by the technique of structured debriefing (Gibbs, 1988) for the identification of areas for improvement, the implementation of interventions, and the assessment of outcomes. The use of reflection enables teaching to be reinterpreted as a critical practice with the potential to produce transformative learning whilst also promoting communities of practice based on inquiry and action research.

Keywords: teacher training; reflective practice; cognitive apprenticeship; structured debriefing; communities of practice.

Resumen

Este artículo considera el uso de la reflexión en el desarrollo de competencias profesionales en la formación docente inicial en un curso de formación docente en Bedford, Inglaterra, siguiendo los postulados de Schön (1987), Dewey (1988) y Eraut (1994) como un instrumento de interpelación de la práctica profesional. Este proceso es facilitado por el modelo de aprendizaje y formación cognitivos (cognitive apprenticeship) (Colli, Brown & Newman, 1987) y por la técnica de la charla estructurada (Gibbs, 1988) que promueven la identificación de fortalezas y necesidades, la implementación de estrategias de intervención y la evaluación de resultados. El uso de la reflexión permite que el proceso de enseñanza se reinterprete como una práctica crítica con el potencial para producir aprendizajes transformativos y promover comunidades de prácticas basadas en la interpelación y la investigación acción.

Palabras clave: formación docente; práctica reflexiva; aprendizaje cognitivo; charla estructurada; comunidades de práctica.

* Corresponding author, e-mail: m.moya@uel.ac.uk
ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

THIS ARTICLE IS underpinned by the experience of the author as a tutor in a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course, run by the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Bedfordshire in England. This 38-week course includes university-taught sessions and two school placements, and confers the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)—a licence to teach in state-run schools. The award is regulated by the Department for Education (DfE) and comprises a series of competences summarised in eight professional standards (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards), which students (hereafter referred to as trainees) are required to attain in order to gain QTS. Each school placement runs for eight weeks, and trainees have to develop a set of reflective skills so as to plan their own training path, which is both functional and individualised. The training process begins with a mentor teacher who models teaching, supervises trainees' progress and indicates targets to be achieved. Further stages in the training include coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection and exploration, all of which are a part of the model of *cognitive apprenticeship* (CA).

Literature review

In a teacher-training model based on the notions of situated learning (Lave, 1988) and learning in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) CA becomes fundamental owing to the fact that it is a means of coaching trainees through authentic activities, tools and culture so that they can effectively perform targeted tasks on their own (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989). *Apprenticeship* implies that trainees acquire knowledge and skills from an expert (i.e. the mentor teacher), partly as a result of direct teaching (through instructional demonstration, practice and feedback) and partly by incidental observation of what the expert does. Collins, Brown & Newman (1989) describe the stages of the CA model as follows:

1. Modelling: an expert carries out a task so that the learners can observe and build a conceptual model of the processes required to accomplish a task.
2. Coaching: involves an expert observing a novice whilst they carry out a task, offering hints, feedback, modelling, reminders and new tasks aimed at bringing their performance closer to the expert performance.
3. Scaffolding: refers to the support provided to help the novice carry out a task, taking the form of suggestion or help.
4. Articulation: includes any method of getting the novice to articulate their knowledge, reasoning or problem-solving in a particular domain.
5. Reflection: enables the novices to compare their own problem-solving processes with those of an expert, another novice and, ultimately, an

internal cognitive model of expertise.

6. Exploration: involves pushing novices into a mode of problem-solving on their own. Exploration is the natural culmination of the fading of support from the expert.

Learning in a CA occurs through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991)—a process in which newcomers (i.e. trainees) enter on the periphery of a community of practice (i.e. a community of teachers in an educational setting) whilst gradually moving towards full participation. This is characterised by an interactive process in which the apprentice engages by simultaneously performing in several roles, namely status subordinate, learning practitioner, sole responsible agent in minor parts of the performance, aspiring expert and so forth—each of which implies a different set of role relations and interactive involvement (*ibid*, p.18).

The CA model is built upon the foundations of Vygotsky's (1978) socio-constructivist theory where the support provided by the mentor teacher, acting as the more experienced one, progressively fades away as the trainees develop competences and respond effectively to the multiple situations emerging in a learning environment. It is then that this environment provides both mentors and trainees with a curriculum for training, which is not prescribed but negotiated. The assumption is that learning is a product of shared cognition (Rogoff, 1995), understood as a negotiated process between the mentor and trainee, which emerges in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). *Practice*, in this sense, not only refers to teaching (i.e. the professional activity), but also to the reflective activity where both mentor and trainee jointly inquire their teaching.

The concept of reflective practice stems from Dewey (1988), who contrasted routine action with reflective action. According to Dewey, routine action is guided by factors such as tradition, habit and authority, as well as by institutional definitions and expectations. Eraut (1994) describes a process of *routinasation* in order to explain why teachers and other professionals often seem to operate on *autopilot*, such as when aspects of their practices are repeated regularly and seemingly automatically in their daily routines. Routine actions are relatively static and thus unresponsive to changing priorities and circumstances. Reflective action, on the other hand, involves a willingness to engage in constant self-appraisal and development. Reflective action, in Dewey's view, involves the 'active, persistent and careful consideration of any believer for all supported form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it' (1933, p.9). Teachers who are unreflective about their teaching tend to accept the *status quo* in their schools and simply "concentrate on finding the most efficient means to solve problems that have largely been defined for them" by others (Zeichner & Liston, 1966, p.17).

Schön (1987) extends these ideas by analysing the actions of many different

professional occupations, emphasising that most professionals face unique situations requiring the use of knowledge and experience so as to inform actions. This is an active, experimental and transactional process, which Schön refers to as *professional artistry*. This is the "kind of professional competence which practitioners display in unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice" (p.22). Schön, therefore, came to distinguish between *reflection-on-action*, which looks back to evaluate, and *reflection-in-action*, which enables immediate action. Both contribute to the capabilities of a reflective teacher enabling the exercise of informed judgement in deciding how to act. This capability makes reflective teaching a complex and highly skilled activity, as argued by Pollard (2014), who asserts that high quality teaching and, indeed, students' learning, are dependent upon the existence of such professional expertise.

Various others, such as Solomon (1987), Petty (2010) and more recently, Bolton (2014), have made a powerful case for reflection as a social practice, in which the articulation of ideas emerging in a group is central to the development of an open, critical perspective. The support of colleagues and mentors is extremely helpful in building understanding, ideas that have been extended further with concepts such as the culture of collaboration (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010), community of enquiry (Cigman & Davis, 2009) and network learning (Veugelers & O'Hair, 2005).

Reflective practice is applied in a cyclical or spiralling process, coinciding with the process of action research in which teachers monitor, evaluate and revise their own practice on a continuous basis; this is evident in the thinking of Dewey, Schön and others, through the specific conception of a classroom-based, reflective process stemming from the teacher-based, action research movement of which Stenhouse is a key figure. He argues that teachers should act as researchers of their own practices and should develop the curriculum through practical inquiry (Stenhouse, 1975). Various alternative models have since become available (Costello, 2011; McNiff, 2013; Mertler, 2013), and although there are some significant differences in terms of design, they all preserve a central concern with self-monitoring and reflection using a cyclical approach to facilitate inquiry (Alritchter *et al.*, 2013).

Reflective Practice in the Context of School Placements in a PGCE Course

Both types of reflection, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, are used in the PGCE course and involve a mentor and a trainee who are engaged in a discussion following the principles of structured debriefing (Gibbs, 1988), illustrated in Figure 1, where the aim is to explore experience-based learning. The discussion often occurs shortly after a trainee has taught a lesson. The conversation between the mentor and the trainee is neither a therapy (although it may contain some elements of one) nor a simple conversation as the discussion is intentional and organised around a plan consisting of

seven stages, as shown below:

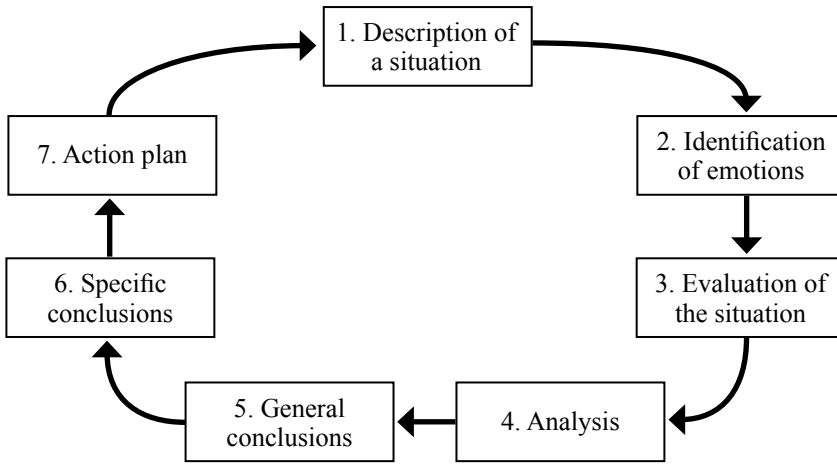

Figure 1. Stages of structured debriefing (Adapted from Gibbs, 1988).

The mentors and trainees receive training on how a structured debriefing can be conducted before the beginning of the school placement. Initially, some guidance, in the form of clued statements for example, is provided to facilitate the flow of discussion; however, its use becomes less frequent as confidence and experience in participating in this type of conversation grow. In order to maintain a register and to review highlights at a later stage, the conversation is recorded using a Dictaphone or, alternatively, notes are made, which are then used to generate action plans.

This discussion has been reported to benefit both mentor teachers and trainees alike. In the case of mentors, the use of the structured debriefing as a tool for continuous professional development enables them to revisit their practice and, for the trainees, the professional discussion of their teaching with the mentors facilitates the identification of areas of strengths and those for further development. Structured debriefing, as a tool for reflection, becomes a very useful technique when seeking to inquire into teaching, as well as when undertaking action research, as it encourages the transformation of practice instead of its routine reproduction and mere perpetuation. This is another benefit associated with reflective practice, which Garrison & Akyol (2013) link to the development of metacognitive skills. They argue that:

> Through cognitive presence [discussion], students have an increased understanding and awareness of the inquiry process, (i.e. metacognition) which, in turn, helps them improve their regulation of cognition by enabling them to select the appropriate learning strategies corresponding to the level

of inquiry…(Garrison & Akyol, 2013, p.85).

Metacognition then becomes a necessary tool to develop learning autonomy and, as such, it should underpin the curriculum for professional training and the development of expertise.

Using the Model of Cognitive Apprenticeship and the Technique of Structure Debriefing in the Creation and Development of Communities of Transformative Learning

Qualitative data generated by surveys, questionnaires, and reflective journals, garnered from the mentors and trainees who have used this model of professional training over a period of four years has been positive, and outcomes clearly show that mentors and trainees have developed a clear ownership of their own professional development, as indicated by the course's external examiners and other stakeholders, such as the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). This then gives us some ground from which to speculate about the possibilities this training model offers if applied to a larger setting, where all teachers in an educational environment participate. In principle, cognitive apprenticeship requires collaboration amongst teachers for the mutual development of professional skills, knowledge and understanding, and also creates a community of learning in which practice becomes the inquiry of teaching where the ultimate goal is to learn how to teach.

Barthes (1990, p.9) defines a community of learning as "a place where students and adults alike are engaged as active learners in matters of special importance to them and where everyone is thereby encouraging everyone else's learning". This seems to lead to a further advantage, as argued by Zhao (2013), who maintains that professional learning communities move teachers away from a view of teaching as a solitary activity to one where each teacher in a school is responsible for honing not only their own practice, but also the practice of their colleagues.

Nevertheless, we are aware of the challenges the CA model poses for teachers and educational organisations: for example, the use of structured debriefing, within a learning community, requires the re-conceptualisation of concepts such as 'school' as a setting where teaching and learning take place. This means, for example, abandoning traditional concepts that are culturally rooted, where the teacher is considered to be the one who teaches and where learners are defined as those who acquire information. The new concept of *school* is therefore that of a place where both teachers and learners are engaged in learning, one from the other. In order for teachers to learn, it is necessary that they inquire into their teaching, thus becoming researchers of their own practice as part

of their own lifelong learning.

We are also aware of the tensions apparent between the personal perspectives and beliefs of teachers and institutional cultures. The use of reflection challenges the notion that teaching is a solitary activity as it requires willingness for teachers to collaborate with other colleagues, as well as openness to critique each other's teaching, providing and receiving developmental feedback. This framework is not only novel, but also transformative in nature as it lends itself to the promotion of a culture of collaboration (Honingsfeld & Dove, 2010), the development of a community of enquiry (Cigman & Davis, 2009) and network learning (Veugelers, O'Hair & John, 2005).

Finally, we maintain that reflecting in a community of learning is an emancipatory practice where teachers break free from ritualistic teaching as they are effective problem-solvers, creative and innovative. In order to encourage such a perspective, it is necessary to ensure that educational leaders understand that collaboration, reflection and action research are instances of lifelong learning, promoting continuous professional development whilst enhancing professional learning. This perception then has the potential to transform school into a *learning school* (Middlewood, Parker & Beere, 2005).

Conclusion

In this article, we have presented a very succinct account of a model for teacher training based on reflective practice, and have reviewed various sources that support such practice. In particular, we have considered the benefits of cognitive apprenticeship and the technique of structured debriefing in developing both the competences of trainee teachers in the early stages of their professional training and the enhancement of the expertise of mentors. We have also used our experience as lecturers in a PGCE course, where the model is currently implemented, and have speculated about the benefits of reflection if applied within a community of learning in the context of being a collaborative activity centred on encouraging transformative learning. Furthermore, we have argued that one of the advantages of reflection is the development of metacognitive skills, which enables mentors and trainees to identify strengths and areas for future development. Moreover, we have also indicated a number of the challenges posed by reflective practice, and have further argued that there is a need to develop a renewed mindset that permits us to see teachers and teaching from a different perspective, abandoning traditional conceptions.

Whilst this article has only touched upon the bare surface of reflective practice, it is our intention to have contributed to the debate surrounding models for teacher training—a debate that is nurturing and always current.

References

Altrichter, H., Feldman, A., Posch, P., & Somekh, B. (2013). *Teachers investigate their work: An introduction to action research across the professions*. Oxon: Taylor and Francis.

Barthes, R. (1990). Writers, teachers, intellectuals. In R. Barthes, *Image, music, text* (pp. 190–216). London: Fontana Paperbacks.

Bolton, G. (2014). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development.* London: Sage Publications.

Cigman, R., & Davis, A. (2009). *New philosophies of learning.* Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Newman, S. E. (1989). Cognitive apprenticeship: Teaching the crafts of reading, writing, and mathematics. In L. B. Resnick (Ed.), *Knowing, learning, and instruction: Essays in honor of Robert Glaser* (pp. 453–494). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Costello, P. J. (2011). *Effective action research: Developing reflective thinking and practice.* London: Continuum.

Department for Education (2011, July 1). *Teachers' standards - Publications - GOV.UK.* Retrieved June 12, 2014, from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

Dewey, J. (1988). Experience and education. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.) *John Dewey: The middle works, 1899-1924.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing professional knowledge and competence.* London: Taylor & Francis.

Garrison, D., & Akyol, Z. (2013).Toward the development of metacognition construct for communities of inquiry. *Journal of Internet and Higher Education, 7*(1), 84–89. DOI: 10.1016/j.iheduc.2012.11.005.

Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods.* London: Sage.

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. G. (2010). *Collaboration and co-teaching: Strategies for English learners.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Lave, J. (1988). *Cognition in practice: Mind, mathematics, and culture in everyday life.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McNiff, J. (2013). *Action research: Principles and practice.* London: Routledge.

Mertler, C. A. (2013). *Action research 4e + digging deeper into action research.* London: Sage Publications.

Middlewood, D. P., Parker, R., & Beere, J. (2005). *Creating a learning school.* London:

Paul Chapman Publishing.

Petty, G. (2010). *Evidence based teaching: A practical approach.* Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.

Pollard, A. (2014). *Reflective teaching in schools.* London: Bloomsbury.

Rogoff, B. (1995). Observing sociocultural activity in three planes: Participatory appropiation, guided participation and apprenticeship.In J. D. Wertsch, P. del Río & A. Alvarez (Eds.). *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp.139–164). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schön, D. (1987). *Education the reflective practitioner.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Solomon, J (1987). New thoughts on teacher education. *Oxford Review of Education, 13*(3), 267–274.

Stenhouse, L. (1975). *An introduction to curriculum research and development.* London: Heinmann.

Veugelers, W., & O'Hair, M. J. (2005). *Network learning for educational change.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Zeichner, M. K. & Liston, D.P. (1996). *Reflective teaching. An introduction.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Zhao, Y. (2013). Professional learning community and college English teachers' professional development. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 14*(4), 467–487. DOI: 10.4304/jltr.4.6.1365-1370.

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 14-25

FAAPI

Iranian teachers' and students' preferences for correction of classroom oral errors: Opinions and responses

Ali Akbar Farahani
University of Tehran, Iran

Soory Salajegheh*
University of Tehran, Iran

(Received 08/03/14; final version received 31/05/14)

Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the role they believe error correction plays in learning a new language. A questionnaire was administered to 429 Iranian foreign language students and 31 of their teachers. Data comparisons using the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed agreement between teachers and students on most of the questions. However, there were some discrepancies between teachers and students specifically relating to the frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction. Considering the danger of disagreements in teacher and student perceptions, it is significant for the teachers to identify their students' preferences with respect to the factors considered to improve the language learning and attempt to manage the contrasts between student perspectives and pedagogical practice.

Keywords: oral error correction; teachers; students; correction; perceptions.

Resumen

El objetivo del presente estudio fue investigar los profesores y estudiantes las percepciones con respecto al papel que creen que el juego de corrección de errores en el aprendizaje de un nuevo idioma. Se aplicó un cuestionario a 429 estudiantes iraníes de idiomas extranjeros y 31 de sus profesores. Comparaciones de datos utilizando el análisis multivariado de varianza (MANOVA) mostró de acuerdo entre los profesores y los estudiantes en la mayoría de las preguntas. Sin embargo, existen algunas discrepancias entre los profesores y los estudiantes se refieran específicamente a la frecuencia para dar y recibir la corrección de errores hablado. Teniendo en cuenta el peligro de los desacuerdos en el maestro y percepciones de los estudiantes, es importante para los maestros para identificar las preferencias de los estudiantes con respecto a los factores considerados para mejorar el aprendizaje de idiomas y tratar de manejar los contrastes entre las perspectivas de los estudiantes y la práctica pedagógica.

Palabras clave: corrección oral del error; profesores; estudiantes; rectificación; percepciones.

* Corresponding author, e-mail: salajegheh123@yahoo.com ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

IN ANY EDUCATIONAL setting, error correction (EC) plays an important role in encouraging students' learning and is considered an invaluable tool for facilitating the process of acquisition. It also assesses the learning of learners and helps the teachers to understand how useful their teaching methodology was in maintaining a strategy to improve the quality of the educational system. Therefore, in both the first and second language learning system, EC is considered to be one of the important parts of teaching/learning programs.

Lightbown and Spada (1999) pointed out the usefulness of EC. Swain's (1995) study also claimed that correcting errors helps the students learn better, "whether the feedback is explicit or implicit (p. 48)". Some believe in recasts to provide the students with feedback. Long (1996) has also confirmed that feedback helps learning a second language. The findings from most of the researchers corroborate the effective role of EC as a mediator in educational systems. There have been numerous investigations to find out which types of EC employed by teachers are more useful.

Literature Review

Some researchers are of the opinion, based on their research results, that for foreign language learning (FLL) to be successful, carrying out the EC is necessary and beneficial. By using different types of EC and allowing the students to observe that process, promotion in learning happens (Havranek, 2002). There is a special argument that errors which affect communication should be corrected (Katayama, 2007). Employing suitable types of EC and doing EC encourage the students to learn the language and continue their communication in the target language (Ancker, 2000; Burt, 1975; DeKeyser, 1993; Hendrickson, 1978; McDonough, 2005; Schmidt, 1990).

In most cases, although the teachers do attempt to correct their learners' errors, they do not hear the correct forms from their students very soon. The EC is fruitless for FLL (Kim, 2004). Some researchers, on the other hand, believe that error correction destroys the natural learning of the language and prevents exposure to a target language naturally; thus, it should be abandoned because it will be ineffective (Chaudron, 1977; Krashen, 1987; Salikin, 2001; Truscott, 1999). In order to perform well, it is not important how much correction occurs; rather the performance of the learners is more important (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). Based on Affective Filter Hypothesis, EC damages the process of FLL (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Over the past decades, there were some studies about the teachers' attitudes toward the EC (Yoshida, 2008). The results showed that from 210 teachers, 30% of them agreed that the EC was necessary (Schulz, 2001; Liao & Wang, 2008). However, the results diverge according to the teachers' preferences. Some teachers preferred recasts (Rod & Jiang, 2009), others were inclined towards explicit feedback (Lyster & Ranta,

1997), some mentioned that teachers' and peers' EC were in favour (Lewis, 2005), and yet others believed that the timing of EC depends on the sensitivities of learners, the situation of learning, and the purpose of the activities (Kelly, 2006).

In addition to the teachers' attitudes towards the EC, there were many studies about students' opinions about the EC. According to the results of research studies, from among 89 English students, the majority had positive attitudes towards the EC (Ellis, 2007; Salikin, 2001). For FLL, the students preferred elicitation, clarification request, repetition and metalinguistic correction (Panova & Lyster, 2002). The students wanted their errors to be corrected when their communication encountered a hindrance (Liao & Wang, 2008; Nicholas, Lighbown, & Spada, 2001).

In the process of language learning and especially in the process of EC, learners are specifically important. However, this importance was considered only after the 1960s. Teachers should adopt a teaching methodology that accepts the central role of learners and as a result they should familiarise themselves with their students' learning styles and attitudes because they determine if the EC was appropriate or not (Ellis, 2007; Firwana, 2001). Research studies point to the fact that the students had a higher preference for the EC (Katayama, 2007; Timson, Grow, & Matsuoka, 1999).

The issue of recognising the differences between the opinions of students and teachers on EC has been a controversial issue in teaching and learning. Students' attitudes toward the type and success of EC can pave the way for their achievement (Schulz, 2001). If students and teachers' expectations about EC can converge, then teachers would have a better chance of guiding their students to successful language learning; otherwise, the mismatches can create dissatisfaction (Brown, 2009; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Foreign language scholars need to pay due attention to these beliefs or perceptions when organising classroom activities, considering that the teaching practices need to be viewed in the students' minds as conducive to language learning. Teachers' perceptions about the way languages are acquired also play an important role since they form the teacher's willingness to examine different approaches. Musumeci (1997), for example, ascribed the failure of previous educational approaches and innovations to the difficulty of modifying the beliefs of all the individuals involved in the instructional enterprise.

In spite of the undeniable significance of the teachers' and learners' perceptions of the error correction and its different aspects, only a few studies (e.g., Plonsky & Mills, 2006) have been conducted in this area. The present study attempts to comprehend whether there are any significant differences between teachers' and adult EFL learners' preferences in the error correction. The study would be significant in terms of pedagogy since the plans could be adjusted by the beliefs of the teachers and learners who have the major roles in the learning process.

Research Question

In order to attain the purpose, this study investigates and seeks answers to the following research question:

> Are there any significant differences between Iranian male and female teachers' and adult EFL learners' preferences for different categories of error correction in Kerman Jahad Daneshgahi Centre?

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this study included both foreign language teachers and adult EFL students making a total of 460 participants. The study aimed to investigate the possible differences in their EC preferences. The research context included five English centres (C) and one French centre. There were 101 (23.5%) students in C1, 24 (5.6%) students in C2, 143 (33.3%) students in C3, 103 (24.0%) students in C4, 26 (6.1%) students in C5 and 32 (7.5%) students in C6.

Students

The total number of the students was 29 males and females. Their ages were from 18 to 60 years old, with 65.7% of them adolescents and 35.2% adults. There were 161 (37.5%) males and 268 (62.5%) females. Their first language was Persian and the target language was either English (92.5%) or French (7.5%). Participants' learning experience included 1 year (38.2%), 2-5 years (38%), 6-9 years (15.9%), and more than 10 years (7.5%). Different proficiency level learners, that is beginning (17%), lower-intermediate (17%), intermediate (45.7%), and upper-intermediate (12.6%), took part in the study.

Teachers

A total number of 31 teachers took part in the present study. From the total, 12 (38.7%) were males and 19 (61.3%) were females. Their ages were between 25 and 40 years old, with 34.5% adolescent and 65.5% adult teachers. Teachers' teaching experience ranged from 1 year (9.7%) to 2-5 years (54.8%), 6-9 years (29%), and more than 10 years (9.7%). Additionally, they had 1 year (9.7%), 2-5 years (61.3%), 6-9 years (22.6%) and more than 10 years (6.5%) of oral skill teaching experience.

All the instructors should have passed different written and oral examinations to become employees in the JD language centres. They should have had at least one certificate in TOEFL, IELTS or TESOL, and also passed teacher training course (T.T.C.). According to the centre's regulation, the teachers should have had acceptable experience of teaching. Of all the trainers, 30 were teaching English and one of them

was a man who was teaching French. They taught foreign languages in the oral classes which were dissimilar in levels of proficiency.

Instrument

Fukuda's (2004) questionnaire forms consisted of one form for the students and one form for the teachers. Each type of the questionnaire had seven categories. One form was used for the teachers with 25 items and the other form was administered to the students with 26 items. From the first to the end of the sixth category in each form, there were 22 items which were aimed at the exploration of teachers' and students' judgements about the giving and receiving of spoken error correction, frequency of giving and receiving spoken error correction, time of spoken error correction, types of errors which need to be corrected, types of spoken error correction and sources for providing spoken error correction. In the present study, only the sections of "giving and receiving spoken error correction", "frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction" and "types of spoken errors that need to be corrected" were included. Each of the above mentioned items in the questionnaire forms had been designed based on a 5-point-Likert-scales ranking in "strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree" or "always, usually, sometimes, occasionally, never" also, "very effective, effective, neutral, ineffective, very ineffective". In addition to these sections, the seventh part of the questionnaire requested information about the respondents' demographic characteristics, the statistics of which are reported in the sections above.

Prior to conducting the main study (i.e., in the pilot study), the reliability analysis of the questionnaire was computed using Cronbach's alpha method. The results of the reliability for the whole questionnaire turned out to be 0.6 which is considered to be an acceptable level. In addition, since only three parts of the questionnaire were used in the present study, the reliability index of the three sections were estimated as follows: giving and receiving spoken error correction ($\alpha = 0.64$), frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction ($\alpha = 0.62$) and types of spoken errors that need to be corrected ($\alpha = 0.59$).

Analysis

The independent variable of the study included the participants, namely the teachers and learners. The dependent variable was the error correction with 7 categories of "reception of feedback", "frequency of feedback", "serious errors", "less serious errors", "frequent errors", "less frequent errors" and "individual errors". A significance level of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) was set. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 for personal computers (SPSS Inc., 2007) was used to compute descriptive statistics and perform inferential statistics. To analyse the relevant data, a multivariate analysis of

variance (MANOVA) was used for the research question and its subcategories. Since the independent variable of the study included only two levels of teachers and learners, the post-hoc test could not be run.

Results

MANOVA was carried out to investigate the differences between the preferences of adult EFL learners and their teachers about error correction in terms of giving and receiving spoken error correction, frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction and types of spoken errors that need to be corrected. The results are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below. Table 1 indicates the results of descriptive statistics and Table 2 shows the results of MANOVA.

	Participants	Mean	SD	N
	students	1.86	.790	429
giving and receiving spoken error	teachers	2.00	.894	31
correction (item 1)	Total	1.87	.797	460
frequency for giving and	students	1.67	.869	429
receiving spoken error correction	teachers	2.00	.775	31
(item 2)	Total	1.69	.866	460
correcting serious spoken errors	students	1.71	.931	429
(item 7)	teachers	1.81	.910	31
	Total	1.71	.929	460
correcting less serious spoken	students	2.79	1.109	429
errors (item 8)	teachers	2.68	.871	31
	Total	2.79	1.094	460
correcting frequent spoken errors	students	2.04	1.151	429
(item 9)	teachers	2.13	.885	31
	Total	2.04	1.135	460
correcting infrequent spoken	students	2.66	1.130	429
errors (item 10)	teachers	2.87	1.088	31
	Total	2.67	1.127	460
correcting individual spoken	students	2.02	1.128	429
errors (item 11)	teachers	2.39	1.145	31
	Total	2.35	1.132	460

Table 1. Descriptive statistics results for EC.

The results of the descriptive statistics show that the mean score for the second

category such as 'frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction' is higher for the teachers than the students. In other words, the teachers want to give corrective feedback on their students' spoken errors more frequently.

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	reception of feedback	.547[a]	1	.547	.861	.354	.002
	frequency of feedback	3.212[b]	1	3.212	4.310	.038	.009
	serious errors	.290[c]	1	.290	.336	.563	.001
	less serious errors	.399[d]	1	.399	.333	.564	.001
	frequent	.243[e]	1	.243	.189	.664	.000
	infrequent	1.291[f]	1	1.291	1.016	.314	.002
	individual	3.875[g]	1	3.875	3.038	.082	.007
Intercept	reception of feedback	431.312	1	431.312	679.101	.000	.597
	frequency of feedback	388.691	1	388.691	521.544	.000	.532
	serious errors	356.742	1	356.742	412.771	.000	.474
	less serious errors	865.764	1	865.764	722.623	.000	.612
	frequent	501.843	1	501.843	388.982	.000	.459
	infrequent	884.326	1	884.326	696.156	.000	.603
	individual	561.771	1	561.771	440.442	.000	.490
Participants	reception of feedback	.547	1	.547	.861	.354	.002
	frequency of feedback	3.212	1	3.212	4.310	.038	.009
	serious errors	.290	1	.290	.336	.563	.001
	less serious errors	.399	1	.399	.333	.564	.001
	frequent	.243	1	.243	.189	.664	.000
	infrequent	1.291	1	1.291	1.016	.314	.002
	individual	3.875	1	3.875	3.038	.082	.007
Error	reception of feedback	290.886	458	.635			
	frequency of feedback	341.333	458	.745			
	serious errors	395.832	458	.864			
	less serious errors	548.723	458	1.198			
	frequent	590.887	458	1.290			
	infrequent	581.796	458	1.270			
	individual	584.166	458	1.275			
Total	reception of feedback	1903.000	460				
	frequency of feedback	1657.000	460				
	serious errors	1746.000	460				
	less serious errors	4122.000	460				
	frequent	2512.000	460				
	infrequent	3872.000	460				
	individual	2513.000	460				
Corrected Total	reception of feedback	291.433	459				
	frequency of feedback	344.546	459				
	serious errors	396.122	459				
	less serious errors	549.122	459				
	frequent	591.130	459				
	infrequent	583.087	459				
	individual	588.041	459				

a. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)
b. R Squared = .009 (Adjusted R Squared = .007)
c. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)
d. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)
e. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)
f. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)
g. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .004)

Table 2. MANOVA results for EC.

MANOVA showed a significant difference between the teachers and learners' preferences only in the item of 'frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction' ($F = 4.31$, $p < 0.03$). But, there were not any significant differences between the preferences of these two groups of participants about the other items. This finding is in line with those of descriptive statistics showing that teachers ($M = 2.0$, $SD = 0.77$) prefer the application of error correction more frequently than the learners ($M = 1.67$, $SD = 0.86$).

Discussion

The results of the research question which investigated the differences between the preferences of adult EFL learners and their teachers about error correction in terms of giving and receiving spoken error correction, frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction and types of spoken errors that need to be corrected showed significant differences in one category. The results of MANOVA showed that there were significant differences between teachers and learners only in the "frequency for giving and receiving spoken error correction" category and for the other items there were no difference between teachers and learners. For the other items, there was convergence between the teachers and learners.

The findings of previous research have also showed the disagreements that exist between teachers and learners and also among teachers themselves about the conditions of error correction. These differences are especially pronounced when different teaching methodologies are practised in the language classroom since they adopt different procedures. Based on audio lingual school, for example, negative assessment is to be avoided as far as possible since it functions as "punishment" and may inhibit or discourage learning. Meanwhile, the humanistic school is based on the assumption that "assessment should be positive or non-judgmental" because it "promotes a positive self-image of the learner as a person and language learner," and also based on skill-learning pedagogy "the learner needs feedback on how well he or she is doing" (Ur, 1996, p. 243).

But because of these positive and negative effects, researchers and language educators disagree about whether errors have to be corrected, what errors should be corrected, how to correct them and when to correct them (see for example, Hendrickson, 1978; Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Timing of feedback has been a disputing subject among many teachers and researchers. Some believe that error correction should be provided frequently when the aim is promotion in accuracy. It seems correction of errors at this stage may improve the quality of learning in later use of language. However some others believe in delayed correction when the aim of the lesson is fluency in order not to deter reluctant activity or damage self-confidence of the students.

The strong preference for error correction expressed by students in the present study reiterated the findings of researches with EFL/ESL participants (e.g., McCarger, 1993; Wipf, 1993). It is interesting to surmise the possible causes of this difference between teachers and learners. These beliefs could possibly be the result of the ways language is instructed or evaluated (e.g., the use of grammar-focused instruction and discrete-point tests) or both; preferences can be related to a belief among students about the efficacy of grammar study which has been passed from one generation to another; or that these preferences can be based on real personal experiences that persuaded most of students that their success in learning could be achieved by rule consciousness and error correction. It seems clear that students share certain beliefs about the functions of formal education. They perceive the teacher as a specialist whose role is to provide feedback and explain the knowledge.

Although certain concordances are expected from the members of a profession with respect to the procedures for forming knowledge and skills in their discipline, foreign language teachers as a community show considerable differences in their beliefs. Their sources of beliefs are complicated, stemming from their in-service and pre-service development, their professional experience, and also their language learning experience regarding the way they were instructed.

To select an appropriate error correction strategy, teachers have to consider social and situational context. It has to regard the level, age, needs, skill, time, material and all other factors that may play some role in the teaching-learning processes.

Language learning can be hampered if students hold specific beliefs about the role of error correction and if their expectations cannot be met. It is the teacher's own decision to examine or not his/her students' realizations of the factors they assume to improve language learning and to ascertain whether student preferences or pedagogical practices are to be changed to prevent conflicts between the two. If teacher attitudes and actions do not coincide with student expectations, there can be a decrease in learner motivation and teacher credibility.

Hattie and Timperley, (2007) pointed out that "the main purpose of feedback is to reduce discrepancies between current understandings and performance and a goal." Therefore teachers have to ensure "that feedback is targeted at students at the appropriate level, because some feedback is effective in reducing the discrepancy between current understandings and what is desired, and some is ineffective."

Fox (1993) suggests that teacher assistant trainers in preparation programmes can require teacher assistants to inspect their own assumptions about language and language acquisition and how they can be extended to teacher development in general. In spite of the methodological views of those responsible for teacher development, if there exists incompatibility between the orientation they provide and the opinions and convictions

of those who will practise the actual teaching, it will reduce their efforts.

Conclusion

The study has clear implications for the teachers of all levels to consider the beliefs and perceptions both of themselves and their learners about error correction and consider the appropriate situations and timing to provide the feedback. In this way, they can reduce the contradictions between the learners' actual needs and the educational goals. This is specifically important for teachers of younger learners and newcomers whose perceptions and beliefs need to be respected and employed in the process of learning to better form their perspectives of language learning. In this way they can have a better understanding of their learning needs and purposes and can better adapt their linguistic resources for the learning task.

References

Allwright, D., & Bailey, K. (1991). *Focus on the language classroom.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ancker, W. (2000). Errors and corrective feedback: updated theory and classroom practice. *English Teaching Forum, 38*(4), 20–24.

Brown, A. (2009). Students' and teachers' perceptions of effective foreign language teaching: A comparison of ideals. *The Modern Language Journal, 93*(1), 46–60.

Burt, H. D. (1975). Error analysis in the adult EFL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 9*(1), 53–63.

Chaudron, C. (1977). A descriptive model of discourse in the corrective treatment of learners' errors. *Language Learning, 27*(1), 29–46.

DeKeyser, R. M. (1993). The effect of error correction on L2 grammar knowledge and oral proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal, 77*(4), 501–514.

Ellis, R. (2007). Corrective feedback in theory, research and practice. University of Auckland. www.Celea.org.cn/2007/keynote/ppt/Ellis.pdf

Ellis, R., & Jiang, W. (2009). Measurements of development in L2 written production: The case of L2 Chinese. *Applied Linguistics, 9*(1), 1–24.

Firwana, S. S. (2011). *A comparison between Palestinian EFL teachers' and students' attitudes toward oral error and their correction.* Retrieved January 2014 from http://www.iugaza.edu.ps/ar/periodical/.

Fox, C. A. (1993). Communicative competence and beliefs about language among graduate teaching assistants in French. *Modern Language Journal, 77*(3), 313–324.

Fukuda, Y. (2004). *Treatment of spoken errors in Japanese high school oral communication classes*. Unpublished Master's thesis, California State University,

San Francisco.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 81–112.

Havranek, G. (2002). When is corrective feedback most likely to succeed? *International Journal of Educational Research, 37*(3-4), 255–270.

Hendrickson, J. (1978). Error correction in foreign language teaching: Recent theory, research, and practice. *Modern Language Journal, 62*(8), 387–398.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (Eds.). (2006). F*eedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Katayama, A. (2007). Learners' perceptions toward oral error correction. In k. Bradford-Watts (Ed.), *JALT 2006 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 34-42). Tokyo: JALT.

Kelly, S. (2006). Error correction. *English Language Centre, 17*(1), 68–107.

Krashen, S. D. (1987). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Oxford: Pergamon.

Lewis, M. (2005). Role of self-correction in learning ESP. *ESP World, 20*(3), 72–84.

Liao, M-C, & Wang, H.C. (2008). *Differences in student and teacher perceptions of grammar instruction and error correction.* 25th International Conference of English Teaching and Learning.

Lightbown, P. & Spada, N. (1999). Instruction, first language influence, and developmental readiness in second language acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal, 83*(1), 1–22.

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19*(1), 37–66.

MacIntyre, P., & Gardner, R. (1994). The subtle effects of induced anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning, 44*(2), 283–305.

McCargar, D. F. (1993). Teacher and student role expectations: Cross-cultural differences and implications. *Modern Language Journal, 77*(2), 192–207.

McDonough, K. (2005). Identifying the impact of negative feedback and learners' responses on ESL question development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 27*(1), 70–103.

Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (2004). *Second language learning theories* (2nd edition). Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Musumeci, D. (1997). *Breaking tradition: An exploration of the historical relationship between theory and practice in second language teaching.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Nicholas, H., Lightbown, P., & Spada, P. (2001). Recasts as feedback to language learners. *Language Learning, 51*(4), 719–758.

Panova, I., & Lyster, R., (2002). Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 36*(4), 573–595.

Plonsky, L., & Mills, S. V. (2006). An exploratory study of differing perceptions of error correction between a teacher and students: Bridging the gap. *Applied Language Learning, 16*(1), 55–74.

Salikin, H. (2001). Correcting errors in the communicative speaking class. *JIBS (Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra), 1*(1), 67–88.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11*(2), 129–158.

Schulz, R. A. (2001). Cultural differences in student and teacher perceptions concerning the role of grammar instruction and corrective feedback: USA-Columbia. *The Modern Language Journal, 85*(2), 244–258.

Swain, M. (1995). The output hypothesis: Just speaking and writing are not enough. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 50*(1), 158–164.

Timson, S., Grow, A., & Matsuoka, M. (1999). Error correction preferences of second language learners: A Japanese perspective. *The Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET).NII-Electronic Library Service. 30*, 135–147.

Truscott, J. (1999). What's wrong with oral grammar correction? *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 55*(4), 437–456.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wipf, J. (1993, May). *Error correction in the foreign language classroom: A student perspective.* Paper presented at the Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages Conference, Eugene, OR.

Yoshida, R. (2008). Teachers' choice and learners' preference of corrective feedback types. *Language Awareness, 17*(1), 78–93.

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 26-47

FAAPI

The role of L1 reading ability, L2 proficiency and non-verbal intelligence in L2 reading comprehension

Gabriella Morvay*
Borough of Manhattan Community College, The City University of New York, USA
(Received 05/01/15; final version received 31/03/15)

Abstract

This correlational study investigated the relative contribution of first language (L1) reading ability, non-native language (L2) proficiency and non-verbal intelligence to non-native (L2) reading comprehension among 64 Hungarian high-school students learning English as a foreign language in Slovakia. Using standardized measurements for all variables, the study concluded that for L1 reading ability to be transferred to L2 reading comprehension, one has to have sufficiently high L2 language proficiency. The correlation between non-verbal intelligence and L2 reading comprehension was significant, albeit not a particularly strong one. The study is consistent with other previous findings, and lends further support to both the linguistic threshold and linguistic interdependence hypotheses.

Keywords: non-verbal intelligence; L2 proficiency; L1/L2 reading comprehension.

Resumen

Este estudio correlacional investiga la contribución relativa de la habilidad de lectura en la primera lengua (L1), el dominio de la lengua no-nativa (L2) y la inteligencia no-verbal hacia la comprensión de lectura de la lengua no-nativa (L2) entre 64 estudiantes húngaros de nivel bachillerato aprendiendo inglés como idioma extranjero en Eslovaquia. Utilizando medidas estandarizadas en todas las variables, el estudio concluye que para que la habilidad de lectura de L1 se transfiera a la comprensión de lectura en L2, uno debe tener un dominio suficientemente alto de L2. La correlación entre la inteligencia no-verbal y la comprensión de lectura en L2 fue significativa, aunque no particularmente fuerte. El estudio es consistente con los resultados previos en otras investigaciones y además apoya las hipótesis del umbral de lingüística y de la interdependencia lingüística.

Palabras clave: inteligencia no-verbal; dominio de L2; comprensión de lectura en L1/L2.

* Corresponding author, e-mail: gmorvay@bmcc.cuny.edu
ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO effective non-native language (hereafter L2) reading comprehension has been at the center of researchers' attention for many years. Despite the existence of numerous studies on L2 reading comprehension, (e.g., Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Jiang, 2011; Koda, 2007, Nassaji, 2003) the precise factors involved in L2 reading have not been researched to the extent one would expect. This might be due to the fact that much of L2 reading research has been a replication of native language (hereafter L1) reading studies. Also, researchers in L2 routinely adopted L1 conceptual frameworks for conducting research in L2 (e.g., Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1978; McLeod & McLaughlin, 1986, among others).

Clearly the field needs studies that investigate distinct skills that contribute to L2 reading comprehension. The gap in L2 reading research is obvious when it comes to investigating adults whose L1 reading skills are high, and who are relatively proficient in their L2 as well, for most substantial research has focused on L2 learners who are either children or adults with special needs or whose L1 literacy skills are low (e.g., August, 2001; August, Calderón & Carlo 2002). Relatively little study has been undertaken concerning the processes involved when skilled L1 readers attempt to become fluent L2 readers.

The current study examined the necessary skills for fluent L2 reading in learners of English as a foreign language, whose native language is Hungarian, and who study English in a classroom setting as opposed to a natural second language environment. The study is a correlational one; therefore, it establishes various relationships between L1 reading skills, L2 proficiency and non-verbal IQ; it does not, however, establish a causal relationship between them.

The Relationship between L1 and L2 Reading

Koda (1994) identified three conditions that distinguish L2 reading from L1 reading: 1) the influence of prior literacy; 2) limited linguistic knowledge, and 3) cross-linguistic effects of lower level processes. In this study, the first two factors will be examined in light of Alderson's (1984) widely quoted question of whether difficulty in L2 reading is a reading problem or a language problem.

Alderson's question–whether native language literacy level or L2 proficiency would be a better predictor of L2 reading performance–is related to Koda's first two differences between L1 and L2 reading: the influence of prior literacy and the language learner's L2 proficiency. In other words, the questions are: How much L1 literacy does a reader need in order to read successfully in the L2, and, how much L2 proficiency does one need in order to transfer L1 literacy skills and read successfully in the L2? Two hypotheses were formulated regarding this issue, both by Cummins (1978, 1979 a&b, 1981, 1984). The issue of the relationship between L1 and L2 reading has been framed in two hypotheses:

The Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis and the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis. Relevant to these theories is Clarke's (1980) "short circuit hypothesis" (also referred to as "linguistic ceiling hypothesis") that argues that "limited control over the language 'short circuits' the good readers' system, causing him/her to revert to known reading strategies when confronted with a difficult or confusing task in the second language" (p. 206). What he meant by this is that being an efficient reader in L2 is largely a function of linguistic proficiency in that language.

More recently, Grabe (2009) identified several differences between L1 and L2 reading, and he categorized them into linguistic and processing; developmental and educational; and finally, sociocultural and institutional differences.

The Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis

The Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis initially was also called the "short circuit" hypothesis, meaning that a lack of L2 linguistic knowledge ultimately "short-circuits" L1 reading knowledge. Therefore, a certain level of L2 linguistic ability must be obtained before L1 reading skills can be effectively transferred and aid L2 reading comprehension.

Within this hypothesis is the assumption that language is the key factor in reading/literacy activities. In other words, one has to know enough of the language in order to read it. To extend this hypothesis more broadly, it also assumes that

> those aspects of bilingualism that might positively influence cognitive growth are unlikely to come into effect until children have attained a certain minimum or threshold level of proficiency in the second language. Similarly, if bilingual children attain only a very low level of proficiency in one or both of their languages, their interaction with their environment through these languages both in terms of input and output, is likely to be impoverished (Cummins, 1981, p. 38.).

This suggests that there are at least two benefits from a sufficient level of L2 knowledge; the first as it relates to reading in particular and the second, more broadly, in regard to cognitive advantages. The latter interpretation, in fact, has become more generally associated with the Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis, while the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis has become more closely linked to reading skills.

The Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis

L2 readers have access to their L1 as they read, and they can use their L1 as a strategy to help comprehend a text. It was Cummins (1979) who first claimed that academic

skills, such as reading, can easily be transferred from one language to another, and he makes a strong case for the transfer of literacy skills across languages. He states that an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency exists common to all written languages. Differently put, reading is a skill that can be developed in any language, and that a universal pattern of skill development exists. Once readers have acquired such skills in their L1, they just have to transfer them to similar tasks in L2. Therefore, the transfer of such skills must result in a very positive correlation between L1 and L2 reading. Studies that demonstrate cross-linguistic effects of skills between L1 and L2 (e.g., Geva, Wade-Woolley & Shany, 1997, Koda, 1990; Wade-Woolley, 1999), serve as evidence that particular aspects of reading, or the sub-skills underlying the reading process, have the potential of carrying over from one language to a subsequent one. Grabe (2009) refers to it as the Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis, or Common Underlying Proficiency Hypothesis. He also claims that there is "strong evidence that underlying cognitive processes supporting L1 and L2 reading are basically the same" (p. 141).

Nevertheless, unique features characterize L2 reading comprehension. These specific features have to do with the interaction of L1 literacy and L2 proficiency, among other factors including lexical and syntactic skills in the L2 especially (Jeon, 2011; Sparks, Patton, Ganshow & Humbach, 2011; Zhang, 2012).

Most researchers hypothesize a stronger relationship between L2 proficiency and L2 reading than between L1 reading and L2 reading. For example, Bernhardt and Kamil (1995) found after examining several studies that L1 reading accounts for between 10% and 16% of the variances in L2 reading, whereas L2 proficiency accounts for between 30% and 38%. In some studies L2 proficiency accounts for as much as 55% (e.g., Hacquebord, 1989) of L2 reading ability. Overall, more evidence supports the conclusion that the problem of L2 reading is more attributable to weakness in L2 proficiency than to L1 reading ability. An important finding that helps sort out the issue is that the relationship between L1 and L2 reading ability becomes stronger when the learners' L2 proficiency becomes higher. Lower-level L2 readers are either not able to transfer their L1 reading skills, or even if they do, the degree of transfer is smaller in comparison to higher-level learners (Brisbois, 1995; Lee & Shalleart, 1997). According to Bernhardt (2005), L2 language-specific factors, such as, vocabulary and syntactic skills as well as comprehension strategies operate "synchronically, interactively and synergistically" (p. 140) during the L2 reading process. Bernhardt's (2005) suggestion is to design studies that look into the question whether reading strategies can compensate for weaknesses in syntax and vocabulary.

Another useful notion to further our understanding of the relationship between L2 proficiency, L2 reading and L1 reading ability is that of compensation. In fact, Alderson (1984) raised some questions related to compensatory mechanisms that might play a role

in L2 reading: "Is it conceivable that good first-language readers will require a lower threshold before being in a position to utilize their good reading strategies? Will the attainment of a higher-level of competence compensate a good first-language reader?" (p. 21). What Alderson means is that it might be possible to compensate for somewhat deficient L2 proficiency by high L1 reading ability and vice versa.

In addition to L2 vocabulary knowledge and L2 syntactic awareness, Guo and Roehrig (2011) investigated the role of metacognitive awareness in L2 reading comprehension. In a well-designed and well-executed study, they attempted to answer whether the three above-mentioned factors were three separate psychological constructs, and if so, how they related to reading comprehension. In their findings, they concluded that two major factors are responsible for differences in L2 reading comprehension (when L1 proficiency or verbal intelligence is controlled for). These two factors were L2 vocabulary or syntax, and metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies. In their study, vocabulary knowledge was so highly correlated with syntactic awareness that neither of them could be distinguished as separate factors explaining reading comprehension. This finding, however contradicts other findings from previous studies suggesting that vocabulary knowledge and syntactic awareness are separate psychological constructs (Shiotsu & Weir, 2007). As far as the relationship between L2 reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness is concerned, in contrast to L2 language (syntax and vocabulary) metacognitive awareness did not make a unique contribution to predicting L2 reading comprehension. These results together actually support the linguistic threshold hypothesis which was discussed previously. Namely, "reading is primarily a linguistic skill" (Guo & Roehrig, 2011, p. 59).

Yamashita (2002) attempted to investigate whether high L1 reading ability compensates for low L2 proficiency (measured by grammar and vocabulary) and vice versa, i.e., whether high L2 proficiency compensates for low L1 reading ability. In her experiment with 241 Japanese learners of English she found that the answers to both of these questions were positive, but as has been repeatedly shown, the compensatory facilitation of L1 reading ability was much smaller than that of L2 proficiency. Yamashita confirmed that L2 proficiency is primarily responsible for high levels of L2 reading comprehension, suggesting that, as the linguistic threshold hypothesis proposes, without a firm basis of L2 proficiency, achieving high levels of L2 reading is difficult. Nevertheless, her results also indicated that readers with high L1 reading ability benefited from their L1 reading skills at least to some extent even if their L2 proficiency was low. This suggests that the transfer of L1 reading ability happens in spite of low L2 proficiency, thus supporting the linguistic interdependence hypothesis, but disputing the threshold hypothesis as it is usually formulated. In fact, Yamashita proposes a new model of the linguistic threshold. She hypothesizes that there are three levels of the

linguistic threshold: the fundamental level, the minimum level, and the maximum level. Before readers reach the fundamental level, L2 proficiency is so low that it cannot contribute to explaining any of the variance of L2 reading. The contribution of L2 proficiency increases when readers' L2 proficiency becomes higher and approaches the minimum threshold. Consequently, when L2 proficiency reaches a very high level, the maximum threshold is reached and the contribution of L1 reading ability will increase in its contribution.

Reading and Non-Verbal IQ

Cognitive assessment is well grounded in psychometric theory (Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso & Mascolo, 2006; Flanagan, Alfonso, Ortiz & Dynda, 2010), and intelligence tests might offer useful information to reading teachers as well as L2 instructors. While originally IQ was conceptualized as a single "g" factor that represented global intelligence, the most recent IQ tests developed in the last 15 years have been centered on theoretical perspectives that emphasize multi-dimensional cognitive factors. One of the most empirically supported and widely accepted theories of intelligence is the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory, which is the basis for many modern psychometric measures. The CHC theory is a fusion of the two most prominent theoretical models of intelligence, the Cattell-Horn fluid-crystallized (Gf-Gc) theory and Carroll's three-stratum theory of cognitive abilities (Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso, & Mascolo, 2006; McGrew, 2005).

The Cattell-Horn theory proposes that general intelligence is actually an accumulation of numerous abilities working together in various ways to bring out different intelligences. Gf-Gc theory separates these abilities broadly into two different sets of abilities: fluid intelligence, which Cattell describes as the ability to reason and solve novel problems, and crystallized intelligence, which is the ability to reason with previously learned information and develops largely as a function of education, experience, and language development (Kamphaus, Winsor, Rowe, & Kim, 2005).

The nature of the relationship between reading ability and performance on IQ tests has been controversial, and their correlation has been variously estimated to lie between 0.05 and 0.80 (Cotton & Crewther, 2009). The diversity in correlations may be due to the measures of intelligence and reading adopted by individual researchers.

Most of the studies investigating this relationship (e.g., Jensen, 1980,1986, 1998; Naglieri & Das, 1997; Siegel, 1988; Stanovich, Cunningham & Feeman, 1984) have been carried out with children, and the results are usually related to one's beginning stages of reading and predictions of future reading comprehension ability. Some researchers claim: "When elementary school children of the same age are matched on decoding skill, their rank on a test of reading comprehension is practically the same as on IQ" (Jensen, 1980, p.325). However, most researchers would caution that the explanation of

reading ability by a global trait rather than a sub-skill or a group of skills is untenable, for it fails to reflect the complexity of the reading process.

Measured intelligence also plays a role in diagnosing children with dyslexia. Stanovich (1991) criticizes the fact that measured intelligence was adopted as a foundational construct for the definition of dyslexia. His point is than an IQ test score is not properly interpreted as a measure of a person's potential. Thus, to the extent that IQ scores were viewed as measures of potential, "the practice of diagnosing dyslexia by measuring discrepancies from IQ scores was misconceived from the beginning" (p. 10).

In one of the earlier studies on the relationship between IQ (both verbal and non-verbal), Hage and Stroud (1959) claim that the results correlating 800 ninth graders' scores on The Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence Test and the Pressey Reading Rate and Comprehension test revealed that non-verbal intelligence correlated with both their reading comprehension and to some extent to their reading rate. This relationship suggests that the abilities measured by reading rate and comprehension tests are also among the abilities measured by the nonverbal test. They also drew attention to the fact that the nonverbal IQ of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children has been found to correlate with reading achievement about as highly as the verbal IQ, and that two of the nonverbal tests correlated with reading more highly than any of the verbal tests.

Stanovich et al. (1984) examined the relationship between the Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices Test (SPM), the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, and the Reading Survey of the Metropolitan Achievement test. Correlations ranged from 0.30 in elementary grades to a high of 0.70 in grades 9 and above. Age-related changes in the association between reading and intelligence have been reported in a number of studies (Naglieri, 1996; Vellutino, 2001; Vellutino, Scanlon, & Lyon, 2000). With increasing age, this correlation value increases. Therefore, with adults, the relationship between reading comprehension and IQ is a stronger one.

These studies, however, measured the relationship between L1 reading and non-verbal IQ; the relationship between L2 reading and non-verbal IQ has not been investigated, to the best of our knowledge.

The Study

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relative contribution of first language reading ability, L2 proficiency, and non-verbal intelligence to L2 reading comprehension, and inform classroom instructors about the pedagogical implications of the results. Relative contribution is a procedure by which subsets of variables can be selected and their relative importance assessed, which, typically, is done in a stepwise fashion.

Hypotheses

The hypothesis for the research question comes from research that claims that reading skills in two languages are transferrable (Frost, Katz, & Bentin, 1987; Haynes & Carr, 1990; Koda, 1992, Shiotsu, 2009). It considers the relative contribution of L1 reading ability to L2 reading comprehension. Given that this study's participants were highly skilled readers in their L1, it is posited that their reading comprehension difficulties in L2 will not originate from L1 literacy deficiencies, but rather from inadequate L2 knowledge, whether vocabulary or syntax. It is hypothesized that L1 reading comprehension will contribute significantly to L2 reading comprehension among skilled L1readers. While a non-verbal IQ test was given to our participants to screen and exclude those with below average non-verbal IQ, no correlation between non-verbal IQ and reading comprehension is hypothesized for the obvious reason that reading is a highly verbal skill, referring to the extent to which a person can approach words, sentences and written texts.

Participants

Participants were 65 twelfth graders attending a high school in Galanta, Slovakia. Their ages ranged from 17 to 19, with a mean age of 18.3 years (SD .71). Participants were administered a non-verbal IQ test to ensure that each had normal intelligence. One participant was eliminated due to lower than average non-verbal IQ score and uncooperative behavior. Thus, analyses were conducted on 64 students (26 males, and 38 females). They were recruited via the help of the school principal and local English teachers. The language of instruction in the school is Hungarian, which is the L1 of all the participants. Participants' background information was collected via a written questionnaire in Hungarian. In addition, all participants were foreign language learners of English, all of whom have been learning the language in a classroom setting since the approximate age of 11, ensuring relative equality among participants in their language learning experiences. The average number of years the participants had studied English was 8. All participants were literate in Slovak, but did not speak it at home.

Materials

In the study, four standardized proficiency tests measures were used. All of the tests were group-administered, and except for the Gate-MacGinitie Reading Test that required 60 minutes to complete, each test took 30 minutes.

Michigan Listening Comprehension Test. The University of Michigan English Language Institute Listening Comprehension Test is a standardized proficiency measure designed to assess knowledge of English grammar through listening and writing responses to 45 multiple-choice questions. This measurement was used to determine

the proficiency levels of participants in order to answer what relationship, if any, can be found between L2 language proficiency and L2 reading comprehension. The test questions were pre-recorded by a native English speaker and were administered via a laptop computer. The participants listened to either a one-sentence question as in (1), or to a one-sentence statement as in (2), and then checked the appropriate response from a three-choice written list (A., B., C.) on an answer sheet. The questions and the answers were not accessible in written form.

1. Do you know if Grandfather is coming for dinner on Thursday?
   a) Yes, we are.
   b) Yes, he is.
   c) Yes, they are.

2. I've never seen snow here.
   a) There has been no snow in the past.
   b) There has been less snow in the past.
   c) There has been more snow in the past.

Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) Level 6. This standardized reading test is designed to provide a general assessment of reading achievement of native English speakers in grade 6. While it is designed for native speakers in the 6th grade, an earlier pilot study with 11th graders revealed that Level 4 was much too easy for them. Therefore, we speculated that Level 5 would be an adequate match for 11th graders, and Level 6 for 12th graders, the population in the research. The test consists of a Vocabulary and a Comprehension section, with 45 and 48 items respectively.

The vocabulary test measures reading vocabulary; the words are presented in a brief context intended to suggest which part of speech the word belongs to, but not to provide clues to meaning. Participants are expected to select the word or phrase out of five possible choices that is closest in meaning to the test word, which is underlined. An example is shown in (3), where choice a) would be the correct response:

3. *-a big garage*
   a) place for cars
   b) machine
   c) sidewalk
   d) covered porch
   e) cloth sack

The comprehension section measures readers' abilities to read and understand different types of prose. Example (4) illustrates a literal question from a non-fiction context:

4. *Sometimes – not very often – we get two full moons in one month. That second full moon is called a "blue moon". No one knows why. Now we say "once in a blue moon" to mean "once in a long time".*

   To be a "blue moon," the moon must be…..
   a) dark
   b) long
   c) blue
   d) full

Hungarian National Reading Competency Measure (OKM). The reason for administering a native language reading test was to ensure that no participant had reading disabilities, i.e. that each scores within the "normal" range. The Hungarian Reading Competency Measure was selected as it is the standardized reading test of the Hungarian Ministry of Education that is administered every year to each 4th, 6th, and 10th grader. This standardized test is used for the Europe-wide PISA-project. This test measures only comprehension of different styles of prose, some of which are extensive in length. The participants select their answers on a multiple-choice questionnaire. While in English, reading tests always contain a separate vocabulary section, the Hungarian test almost exclusively concentrates on inference making, tone of prose and other aspects of comprehension.

Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). The NNAT is a 38-item test of non-verbal reasoning, such as reasoning by analogy, serial reasoning, and spatial visualization, which are said to be independent of language proficiency or educational background. The test also claims that its scores are predictive of academic success, and has a variety of educational applications. It has separate test levels from Kindergarten through Grade 12. Level G is designed for grades 10-12, and thus was used in our study. Test questions include items that ask for reasoning by analogy, serial reasoning and spatial visualization. Reasoning-by-analogy items require the students to recognize the logical relationship between several geometric shapes. Serial reasoning items require students to recognize a sequence of shapes and changes in the sequence. Spatial visualization items are among the most difficult ones, for they require students to recognize rotations or shapes that intersect. It is widely used in several school districts to identify gifted and talented children. Its results may also be used to screen students for general ability who

may not perform well because their school performance is hindered by limited English proficiency.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the mean correct scores for all participants in each test taken. The five measurements that were used yielded the following means, standard deviations (SD) and raw numbers for minimum, maximum and item totals.

Variable	Number of participants	Mean correct	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Total number of items
English (L2) reading comprehension	64	19.85/44%	11.27	0	44	45
English (L2) vocabulary	64	21.29/52%	6.05	8	35	40
English (L2) proficiency	64	31.10/69%	6.61	17	44	45
Hungarian (L1) reading comprehension	64	16.90/77%	3.08	10	22	22
Non-verbal IQ	64	28.88/76%	4.84	15	37	38

Table 1. Descriptive results of the variables.

The widest range (with SD of 11.27) was found with the English reading comprehension test, where the participants scored anywhere between 0 minimum and 44 maximum out of the possible 45. The English vocabulary and the English proficiency tests also produced a relatively wide range of scores, most participants scoring in the mid-range. Hungarian reading comprehension and the non-verbal IQ resulted in almost the same percent correct (77 and 76 respectively), with relatively small SDs. These results indicate our participants' high non-verbal intelligence and relatively high first language literacy level in addition to their relatively high L2 proficiency.

Relationships between L2 Reading Comprehension and the Independent Variables

The data were analyzed using STATA 10.0 software. In order to find out how the various factors relate to L2 reading comprehension and to each other, a correlational analysis was performed which is shown in Table 2.

	English (L2) reading comprehension	English (L2) vocabulary	Hungarian (L1) reading comprehension	English (L2) proficiency	Non-verbal IQ
English (L2) reading comprehension	1.000				
English (L2) vocabulary	.543**	1.000			
Hungarian (L1) reading comprehension	.376**	.396**	1.000		
English (L2) proficiency	.399**	.518**	.245	1.000	
Non-verbal IQ	.282*	.490**	.31*	.252*	1.000

*p≤ .05, **p≤ .01

Table 2. Correlations between all the variables in the study.

If we look at the correlations among the independent variables, we can note that English vocabulary knowledge most highly correlates with English proficiency (.518), while non-verbal IQ and Hungarian reading comprehension are also quite high, with correlation coefficients measuring .490 and .397 respectively. Both results are somewhat puzzling given that the Hungarian lexicon is not related in any way to that of English, and also that the non-verbal IQ test presumably taps into different abilities from the vocabulary test.

The inter-correlation of variables is usually a problem for research, for it suggests that the variables are not totally independent from each other. The highly complex task of reading comprehension—and the measurement of it—involves skills that overlap: word knowledge, syntactic comprehension, and inferencing. From Table 2, we can note that L1 reading comprehension and non-verbal IQ significantly correlated with L2 reading comprehension. First, we will take a closer look at L1 reading comprehension for it maintained its significance even at the .01 level. Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis (1980) posits that there is underlying academic language proficiency such that L1 reading skills will support L2 cognitive skills, thus possibly explaining the correlations we found. To further test this hypothesis, we regressed L1 reading comprehension with L2 reading comprehension with participants in the top and the bottom halves of the Michigan English proficiency test. This was also to examine whether there is a "threshold" such as that suggested by the early Threshold Hypothesis (Cummins, 1980, 1984), whereby a certain level of L2 linguistic ability must be obtained before L1 cognitive skills (e.g. reading) can be effectively transferred to L2 reading.

In order to answer this question, we tested our participants on the Michigan test, which is a standardized proficiency test used for placement purposes in many colleges.

The part we utilized was the listening comprehension section that tests aural grammar comprehension by multiple choice responses to one sentence—either a question or a statement—prompts. We divided our participants' scores on the Michigan into two medians enabling us to have more robust numbers in each broad group. Thus, we had a bottom and a top proficiency group with 32 participants in each group. It is by chance that the median is also equal to half of our participants. In order to ensure that the two groups are in fact different, we performed a t-test. The group statistics are given in Table 3.

English (L2) Proficiency	Number of participants	Mean score	Standard deviation
Low	32	.5681	.0925
High	32	.8139	.0660

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the low and high proficiency groups.

After a paired-samples t-test, we conclude that the two groups are statistically different $t(31) = -12.32$, $p<0.001$, clearly representing two distinct proficiency levels.

In Table 4 we used the previously determined two English proficiency (measured by the Michigan test) groups' Hungarian reading scores to calculate the contribution of L1 reading comprehension to L2 reading comprehension.

English (L2) reading comprehension	Coef.	Std. Error	t	P > | t |	R-squared	Adj. R-squared
Hungarian (L1) reading Top half of English (L2) proficiency N=32	1.7315	.7137	2.43	.021	.1640	.1361
Hungarian (L1) reading Bottom half of English (L2) proficiency N=32	.6287	.4785	1.31	.199	.054	.022

Table 4. The relative contribution of L1 reading comprehension to L2 reading comprehension according to L2 language proficiency.

We can note that L1 reading comprehension ability only contributes significantly to L2 reading comprehension at the higher proficiency level; at the lower proficiency level it does not. This suggests that in order for L1 skills to be helpful, one needs to attain a certain threshold level of L2 proficiency in order for Linguistic Interdependence to take effect.

Discussion

Let us begin with reiterating some of the characteristics of our participants and their results on the various tests. Given our participants' mean age (18.3) and the fact that at the time of testing they had been studying English as a foreign language for 7-8 years on average, our findings indicate that we experimented with a relatively highly skilled cohort that possessed good L1 reading skills as well as relatively high L2 proficiency. Furthermore, their performance on the non-verbal IQ and L1 reading comprehension was close to 80%, and their L2 proficiency was almost 70%. L2 reading comprehension and L2 vocabulary performance, however, were in the lower range of 44 and 52% respectively.

One might legitimately ask the question why choose such high level learners. The rationale for selecting young adults with high level skills lies in Cummins's hypothesis (1984) according to which transfer of L1 reading (or other academic skills) to L2 will only occur if students have achieved a considerably high level of L1 skills. Furthermore, Clarke's (1980) Linguistic Ceiling Hypothesis also presupposes a certain level of L2 proficiency in order for students to benefit from high level L1 reading skills. In addition, high levels of L2 proficiency were important if we want to contribute to the growing literature on potential threshold effects in L2 reading, i.e. that L1 skills will only transfer to L2 reading if learners have reached relatively high levels of proficiency in the non-native language.

The research question investigated the interaction of L1 reading abilities and L2 language proficiency as well as the extent of contribution of non-verbal IQ. The prediction was that L1 reading comprehension would significantly contribute to L2 reading comprehension, while non-verbal IQ will not. Let us begin with the second part of the hypothesis.

While the sole purpose of administering the Naglieri non-verbal IQ test was to ensure that the participants' intelligence fell within the normal range, it is important to notice that the IQ measure significantly correlated with L2 reading comprehension, and almost all the other variables as well.

The researcher predicted a non-correlation between reading, which is a verbal skill, and non-verbal IQ. This hypothesis was based on Vellutino et al. (2000) and Rutter and Yule (1975) who questioned the validity of using IQ scores to estimate expected reading achievement. These researchers contend that measures of language and language-based skills are better predictors of reading ability than are IQ scores.

In this study, however, a strictly nonverbal IQ still moderately correlated (at the .05 level) with both L1 and L2 reading comprehension. In response to Vellutino et al. (2000), Naglieri (2001) demonstrates that evidence from large-scale investigations (e.g., Carver, 1990; Naglieri & Das, 1997; Naglieri & Ronning, 2000) indicates that both group- and

individually administered tests of nonverbal ability are significantly and substantially correlated with reading achievement, suggesting that there is ongoing controversy about the relationship between non-verbal IQ and reading. The results of the current research lend themselves to the debate—this time involving L2 reading—supporting Naglieri's claim of a positive (albeit not particularly strong) relationship with non-verbal IQ. It is also conceivable that reading in a non-native language is more dependent on IQ than L1 reading is. Furthermore, it is possible that non-verbal IQ contributes to L2 aptitude. In other words, those, whose IQ is higher, will achieve a higher level L2 proficiency, which in turn, will translate to higher L2 reading comprehension. This speculation is not impossible given that researchers have found strong correlations between working memory and language learning success (Harley & Hart, 2002; Miyake & Friedman, 1998; Robinson, 2002). Reading in L2 does require highly analytical skills, so it only makes sense that non-verbal IQ would significantly correlate with reading.

Let us finally turn our attention to L1 reading comprehension and its role in L2 reading. We can claim that limited L2 proficiency prevents the transfer of higher-level skills in L1 to L2 reading.

The results of the current study differ from those of Yamashita, but are consistent with other previous findings, though in those studies (e.g., Bossers, 1992; Brisbois, 1995) language proficiency was always measured by grammar and vocabulary as opposed to an independent measure in this study. The results indicate that the degrees of correlation of L1 reading and L2 language proficiency to L2 reading comprehension are virtually equivalent (.376 and .399 respectively). Moreover, the percentage of L1's contribution to L2 reading shows an interesting and important distribution across L2 language proficiency. While the contribution in the top L2 proficiency group is significant, it is not the case with the lower level group. In other words, this indicates that students in our study at least need to attain a threshold level of L2 proficiency before their L1 reading skills can aid in their L2 reading comprehension. This is in line with Alderson's (1984) prediction that reading ability in an L2 is more likely to be influenced by proficiency in the L2 itself than by L1 reading ability alone. The current study revealed a significant correlation between L1 and L2 reading measures, providing further support that literacy skills transfer across languages within the same orthography (Bernhardt &Kamil, 1995; Bossers, 1991; Brisbois, 1995; Lee & Schallert, 1997; Perkins, Brutten & Pohlmann, 1989; Pichette, Segalowitz, & Connors, 2003; 1979; Taillefer, 1996; Yamashita, 1999, 2002), and giving credibility to the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis.

It seems then that being a good reader in L1 only helps in L2 reading comprehension if one also has a high enough proficiency in L2. This is an important finding that demonstrates empirically the interdependence of L1 literacy skills and L2 linguistic skills in L2 reading comprehension, and more specifically, a relatively high threshold

for the transfer of L1 reading skills. Further research is needed to help illuminate the conditions under which a high threshold (as in our study) vs. a lower threshold (as in Yamashita's 2002 study) is required for this transfer to occur.

Limitations of the Study

As a cross-sectional, correlational study, it can only suggest relationships, while its predictive power is limited. Furthermore, the fact that the independent variables inter-correlate makes it very difficult to determine the exact amount of each measurement's contribution.

There are also ways our test materials could be improved. For example, the Hungarian reading measure was intended for 10th graders in Hungary, not 12th graders. Unfortunately, there was no available standardized reading measure for this grade, and so we were constrained to use this lower level version. The fact that the Hungarian reading test used substantially longer passages (in some occasions more than a page long), means that it is not quite comparable with the English reading comprehension measure.

A recurring problem for studies that attempt to investigate the contribution of L2 proficiency to L2 reading is the fact that there is no consensus among researchers as to the construct of L2 proficiency. In other words, L2 proficiency has been operationalized and measured differently by the various researchers, and there has been no agreement as to how represent the constructs associated with knowledge of the language (Lee & Schallert, 1997).

The study might also have benefited from the more current Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) statistical analysis, which more effectively deals with data where independent variables inter-correlate. Cronbach and Meehl (1955) pose two questions relevant to convergent and discriminant evidence as they relate to the evaluation of construct-validity: the first is whether the measures correlate with other measures they theoretically should correlate with. The second question is whether the measures that are supposed to be theoretically distinct correlate with each other. A well-designed study investigating the construct validity of measures of varieties of L2 reading comprehension should therefore include measures that are theoretically distinguishable as well as measures that are theoretically related. Our theoretically unrelated measure was only the non-verbal IQ, while all the other measures were theoretically related to L2 reading comprehension.

Conclusions

To recapitulate the findings of this study, we can claim that there is a significant correlation between non-verbal IQ and L2 reading comprehension, albeit not a particularly strong

one. However, L1 reading comprehension makes a very significant contribution, but only when L2 language proficiency is in the upper range. Therefore, Alderson's question whether L2 reading difficulties represent a reading problem or a language problem cannot be answered straightforwardly, for it looks like L1 reading skills in proficient readers can only be transferred after one achieves a relatively high threshold level of linguistic proficiency in L2. Thus both L1 reading skills and L2 proficiency interact in interesting ways as they contribute to L2 reading.

Since one of the objectives of the study was to shed light on what to prioritize in both curriculum and pedagogy at a particular stage of L2 learning, some (if not specific) pedagogical strategies based on the findings of this study are due so that difficulties of less proficient L2 readers could be appropriately addressed. Participants in this study had relatively high level of L1 reading comprehension skills, but that was only helpful when their L2 proficiency was also relatively high. The obvious recommendation would be to concentrate on improving their L2 proficiency. However, since reading is part of language proficiency, the author of this study believes that focusing on language proficiency by systematic reading for meaning while concentrating on vocabulary and sentence structure may produce positive outcomes. Also, the often-neglected skill of listening should be systematically practiced (mainly vocabulary and listening skills) by struggling L2 readers. Finally, reading is an extremely complex activity not only in L2, but also in L1, and thus, will always be a bit elusive.

References

Alderson, J. C. (1984). Reading in a foreign language: A reading problem or a language problem? In J. C. Alderson & A. H. Urquhart (Eds.), *Reading in a foreign language* (pp. 1–24). London: Longman.

Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

August, G. (2001). *The road to second language reading: How do we get there?* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Graduate Center CUNY, New York.

August, D., Calderon, M., & Carlo, M. (2002). Transfer of skills from Spanish to English: A study of young learners. Report for practitioners, parents, and policy makers. Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC. ED-98-CO-0071.

Bernhardt, E. B. (2005). Progress and procrastination in second language reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 25*, 133–150.

Bernhardt, E. B., & Kamil, M. (1995). Interpreting relationships between L1 and L2 reading consolidating the linguistic threshold and the linguistic interdependence hypothesis. *Applied Linguistics, 16*(1), 15–34.

Bossers, B. (1991). On thresholds, ceilings and short-circuits: The relation between L1 reading, L2 reading and L2 knowledge. *Revue de l'AILA, 8*(1), 45–61.

Brantmeier, C., Hammadou Sullivan, J., & Strube, M. (2014). Toward independent L2 readers: Effects of text adjuncts, subject knowledge, L1 reading, and L2 proficiency. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 26*(2), 34–53.

Brisbois, J. E. (1995). Connections between first- and second-language reading. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 27*(4), 565–584.

Carrell, P. L., & Eisterhold, J. C. (1983). Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly, 17*(4), 553–573.

Carver, R.P. (1990). Intelligence and reading ability in grades 2-12. *Intelligence, 14*(4), 449–455.

Clarke, M. (1979). Reading in English and Spanish: Evidence from adults ESL students. *Language Learning, 29*(1), 121–150.

Clarke, M. (1980). The short circuit hypothesis of EFL reading – or when language competence interferes with reading performance. *The Modern Language Journal, 64*(2), 203–209.

Coady, J., Magoto, J., Hubbard, P., Graney, J., & Mokhtari, K. (1993). High frequency vocabulary and reading proficiency in ESL readers. In T. Huckin, M. Haynes & J. Coady (Eds.), *Second language reading and vocabulary learning* (pp. 217–227). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Cotton, S. M., & Crewther, S.G. (2009). The relationship between reading and intelligence in primary school aged children: Implications for definitional models of dyslexia. *The Open Education Journal, 2*(1), 42–50.

Cronbach, L., & Meehl, P. E. (1955). Construct validity in psychological tests. *Psychological Bulletin, 52*(4), 281–302.

Cummins, J. (1978). Educational implications of mother tongue maintenance in minority language children. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 34*(3), 395–416.

Cummins, J. (1979a). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working Papers on Bilingualism, 19*, 197–205.

Cummins, J. (1979b). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of Educational Research, 40*(2), 222–251.

Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In California State Department of Education (Ed.), *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework* (pp. 3–49). Los Angeles: National Dissemination and Assessment Center.

Cummins, J. (1984). *Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Cziko, G. A. (1978). Differences in first- and second language reading: The use of

syntactic, semantic and discourse constraints. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 34*(3), 473–-489.

Das, J. P., & Naglieri, J. A. (2001). The Das-Naglieri cognitive assessment system in theory and practice. In J.J. Andrews, D., H. Saklofske & H. L. Janzen (Eds.), *Handbook of psychoeducational assessment: Ability, achievement and behavior in children* (pp. 33–63). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Flanagan, D., P., Alfonso, V. C., Ortiz, S. O., & Dynda, A. M. (2010). Integrating cognitive assessment in school neuropsychological evaluations. In D. Miller (Ed.), *Best practices in school neuropsychology: Guidelines for effective practice, assessment, and evidence-based intervention* (pp. 101–140). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Flanagan, D., P., Ortiz, S. O., Alfonso, V. C., & Mascolo, J. T. (2006). The Achievement Test Desk Reference: A guide to learning disability identification: Learning from the Tower of Babel. *Psychology in the Schools, 43*, 807–825.

Frost, R., Katz, L, L., & Bentin, S. (1987). Strategies for visual word recognition and orthographic depth: A multilingual comparison. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, 13*, 104–115.

Geva, E., Wade-Woolley, L., & Shany, M. (1997). Development of reading efficiency in first and second language. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 1*, 119–144.

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Guo, Y., & Roehrig, A. D. (2011). Roles of general versus second language (L2) knowledge in L2 reading comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 23*(1), 42–64.

Hage, D.S., & Stroud, J. B. (1959). Reading proficiency and intelligence scores, verbal and nonverbal. *Journal of Educational Research, 52*(7), 258–262.

Hacquebord, H. (1989). *Text comprehension in Turks learning Dutch.* Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

Harley, R., & Hart, D. (2002). Age, aptitude, and second language learning on a bilingual exchange. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Individual differences and instructed language learning* (pp. 301–330). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Hawas, H. M. (1990). Vocabulary and reading comprehension: An experimental study. *International Review of Applied Linguistics, 87-88*, 43–65.

Haynes, M., & Carr, T. H. (1990). Writing system background and second language reading: A component skills analysis of English reading by native speakers-readers of Chinese. In T. H. Carr & B. A. Levy (Eds.), *Reading and its development: Component skills approaches.* (pp. 375–421). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Jensen, A. R. (1980). *Bias in mental testing.* New York: Free Press.

Jensen, A. R. (1986). g: Artifact or reality? *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 29*(3), 301–331.

Jensen, A. R. (1998). *The g factor: The science of mental ability.* Westport, CT: Praeger.

Jeon, E. H. (2011). Contribution of morphological awareness to second-language reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(2), 217–35.

Jiang, X. (2011). The role of first language literacy and second language proficiency in second language reading comprehension. *The Reading Matrix, 11*(2), 177–190.

Kamphaus, R.W., Winsor, A. P., Rowe, E. W., & Kim, S. (2005). A history of intelligence test interpretation. In D.P. Flanagan & P. L. Harrison (Eds.), *Contemporary intellectual assessment* (2nd ed., pp. 23–38). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Koda, K. (1988). Cognitive process in second language reading: Transfer of L1 reading skills and strategies. *Second Language Research, 4*(2), 133–156.

Koda, K. (1990). The use of L1 reading strategies in L2 reading: Effects of L1 orthographic structures on L2 phonological recoding. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 12*(4), 393–410.

Koda, K. (1992). The effects of lower-level processing skills on FL reading performance: Implications for instruction. *The Modern Language Journal, 76*(4), 502–512.

Koda, K. (1994). Second language reading research: Problems and possibilities. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 15*(1), 1–28.

Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language learning: Crosslinguistic constraints on second language reading development. *Language Learning, 57*(1), 1–44.

Lee, J.-W., & Schallert, D.L. (1997). The relative contribution of L2 language proficiency and L1 reading ability to L2 reading performance; a test of the threshold hypothesis in an EFL context. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(4), 713–39.

MacGinitie, W. H., MacGinitie, R. K., Maria, K., Dreyer, L. G., & Hughes, K. G.(2000). *Gates-MacGinitie reading tests. Level 6* (4th ed.). Riverside: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

McGrew, K. S. (2005). Cattell-Horn-Carroll theory of cognitive abilities. In D. P. Flanagan & P. L. Harrison (Eds.), *Handbook of contemporary intellectual assessment* (2nd ed., pp. 136–182). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

McLeod, B., & McLaughlin, B. (1986). Restructuring or automatization? Reading in a second Language. *Language Learning, 36*(2), 109–123.

Miyake, A., & Friedman, N. (1998). Individual differences in second language proficiency: Working memory as language aptitude. In A. Healy & L. Bourne (Eds.), *Foreign language learning: Psycholinguistic studies on training and retention* (pp. 339–364). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Naglieri, J. A. (2001). Do ability and reading achievement correlate? *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(4), 304–305.

Naglieri, J. A. (1997). Naglieri nonverbal ability test. San Antonio, TX: Psychological Corp.

Naglieri, J. A. (1996). An examination of the relationship between intelligence and

Reading using the MAT-SF and MAST. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment,14*(1), 65–69.

Naglieri, J. A., & Das, J. P. (1997). *Das-Naglieri cognitive assessment system.* Itasca, IL Riverside Publishing.

Naglieri, J. A., & Ronning, M. (2000). The relationship between general ability using the NNAT and SAT reading achievement. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment, 18*(3), 230–239.

Nassaji, H. (2003). Higher-level and lower-level text processing skills in advanced ESL reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal, 87*(2), 261–276.

Perkins, K., Brutten, S. R., & Pohlmann, J. T. (1989). First and second language reading comprehension. *RELC Journal, 20*(1), 1–9.

Pichette, F., Segalowitz, N., & Connors, K. (2003). Impact of maintaining L1 reading skills on L2 reading skill development in adults: Evidence from speakers of Serbo-Croatian learning French. *The Modern Language Journal, 87*(3), 391–403.

Robinson, P. (2002). Effects of individual differences in intelligence, aptitude, and working memory on adult incidental SLA: A replication and extension of Keber, Walkenfield, and Hernstadt (1991). In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Individual differences and instructed language learning* (pp. 211–266). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Rutter, M., & Yule, W. (1975). The concept of specific reading retardation. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 16*(3), 181–197.

Shiotsu, T. (2009). Reading ability and components of word recognition speed: The case of L1-Japanese EFL learners. In Z. H. Han & N. J. Anderson (Eds), *Second language reading research and instruction: Crossing the boundaries* (pp. 15–39). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Siegel, L. S. (1988). Evidence that IQ scores are irrelevant to the definition and analysis of reading disability. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 42*(2), 201–215.

Sparks, R. L., Patton, J., Ganshow, L., & Humbach, N. (2011). Subcomponents of second-language aptitude and second-language proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(2), 253–73.

Stanovich, K. E. (1991). Discrepancy definitions of reading disability: Has intelligence led us astray? *Reading Research Quarterly, 26*(1), 7–29.

Stanovich, K., Cunningham, A., & Feeman, D. (1984). Intelligence, cognitive skills, and early reading progress. *Reading Research Quarterly, 19*(3), 278–303.

Taillefer, G. F. (1996). L2 reading ability: Further insight into the Short-Circuit Hypothesis. *The Modern Language Journal, 80*(4), 461–477.

Vellutino, F. R. (2001). Further analysis of the relationship between reading achievement and intelligence. Response to Naglieri. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(4), 306–10.

Vellutino, F.R., Scanlon, D. M., & Lyon, G. R. (2000). Differentiating between difficult-to-remediate and readily remediated poor readers. More evidence against the IQ-achievement discrepancy definition of reading disability. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*(3), 223–238.

Wade-Woolley, L. (1999). First language influences on second language word reading: All roads lead to Rome. *Language Learning, 49*(3), 447–471.

Yamashita, J. (1999). Reading in a first and a foreign language: A study of reading comprehension in Japanese (the L1) and English (the L2). Unpublished PhD Thesis, Lancaster University, Lancaster, England.

Yamashita, J. (2002). Mutual compensation between L1 reading ability and L2 language proficiency in L2 reading comprehension. *Journal of Research in Reading, 25*(1), 81–95.

Zhang, D. (2012). Vocabulary and grammar knowledge in second language reading comprehension: A structural equation modeling study. *The Modern Language Journal, 96*(4), 558–75.

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 48-57

FAAPI

Personally-driven professional development for teachers in the state run system in the City of Buenos Aires: Scenarios

Marina González*
Universidad de Flores, Argentina

(Received 23/02/15; final version received 30/03/15)

Abstract

In this reflective article, the author intends to consider issues that affect professional performance from an ELT Management perspective. The concept of possible future professional development scenarios within the professional development scheme applied in primary schools in the city of Buenos Aires will be discussed to consider the feasibility of the application of innovative professional development. If the future is something that we can influence, then scenario building may be seen as a tool to support professional choices in everyday practice.

Keywords: Buenos Aires; professional development; scenarios; complex social systems; state schools.

Resumen

El presente artículo de reflexión procura abordar, desde la perspectiva de la gestión de Lenguas Extranjeras, temas que afectan el desempeño profesional. Se discute el concepto de la construcción de posibles escenarios futuros de desarrollo profesional en el marco del esquema aplicado en escuelas primarias en la ciudad de Buenos Aires para evaluar la factibilidad de implementación de un desarrollo profesional innovador. La construcción de este tipo de escenarios pueda aportar solidez en las decisiones profesionales diarias si se considera al futuro como un acto de creación.

Palabras clave: Buenos Aires; desarrollo profesional; escenarios; sistemas sociales complejos; escuelas estatales.

* Corresponding author, e-mail: Marina.gonzalez@uflo.edu.ar ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

> By studying the complex social system, social scientists influence the functioning of the social system. Science itself is adaptive and responsive to the (changing) circumstances mankind has found and will find itself in. Human beings use findings in science. As a result new patterns emerge. These may lead to new research issues. Science itself is an evolutionary process within the complex social system.
>
> (About social complexity, University of Groeningen)

WE LIVE IN a world that is constantly changing. We, as educators, working in state or private sectors at different levels, constitute part of the team of actors that shape the reality we live in, as well as our imminent future. Under such a reading of the world around us, we may support a vision of education as a complex social system that involves exchanging information and a continual adaptation to new information and knowledge. Rules, norms, conventions, ethics and the legal system create a framework in which human beings can act (Hajek, 1964).

In this reflective article, I intend to consider issues that affect our professional performance, seeking to shed some light on the intricate design of the interaction between forces in our educational settings. Nowadays, valuable research is being shared on the implementation of different projects in the state run sector worldwide (Akpan & Ntukidem, 2008; Banegas, 2013; Diaz Maggioli, 2012; Karavas, 2014; Stanley, 2015). Large scale language policies become scenarios where there can be tension and compromise among the different actors, and addressing the needs of said actors can produce renderings of ideas that are sometimes quite different on the surface from the intentions that incited them. The changes experienced by a proposal are undoubtedly due to forces that have had an impact on the project at a specific moment in its development.

Yet often when reference is made to the connection between theory and practice, the response is generally linear. It seeks one to one correspondence between concepts and products. It reads just as if we could explain the nature of the connection by complaining about lack of communication between theory and practice. Researchers sometimes focus on matters that are too abstract, while practitioners aim for more practical insights. A happy medium, which would serve as a bridging point between researchers' and practitioners' views, is difficult to establish, but the search for one supports attempts towards the transformation of the reality of everyday practice. In this reflective article, from an ELT management perspective, I will examine the idea of different possible future professional development scenarios within the professional development scheme used for EFL primary school teachers in the city of Buenos Aires, in order to consider the feasibility of the application of innovative professional development as in Diaz Maggioli's characterization (2012).

To this end, I will briefly develop the concepts of social complexity, introduce a characterization of deductive scenario planning, and relate these two concepts within the frame of innovative professional development.

Conceptual Background

Professional development is a consistent feature in many fields of activity. In education, it has evolved and subdivided through time (Richards & Farrell, 2005). First known as training, it then broke down into pre-service and in-service training, and later on into professional development (PD), thus widening the field. More recently, an expansion of PD introduced Personal Learning Networks (PLN) onto the scene, where Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and self-access online courses are just some of its newest trends. But what are we talking about when we mention professional development in our present reality? What defining traits do we need to characterize professional development?

In order to keep the discussion within a certain frame, I propose to organize the present thinking exercise along Diaz Maggioli's proposed terminology (Díaz Maggioli, 2012, p. 139), and to consider this within the larger framework of professional development in Richards and Farrell's (2005) foundational work.

From this proposed general framework, we can differentiate professional development from training in the nature of its scope. While the former holds a more holistic view of the profession, the latter focuses on the immediate, institutionally created needs and demands of the professional (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p.3). Another important aspect of the distinction is the timespan during which teacher learning occurs. Traditional views have held teaching certificate achievement time as the moment of culmination, though a contradiction can later be perceived as professional development often views teachers as ineffective and focuses on solving these flaws (Diaz Maggioli, 2012, p 138). On the other hand, if teacher learning is perceived from a socioconstructivist point of view, where teachers will undergo a learning process throughout their lives in their specific communities of practice so as to grow personally and professionally, then "collaborative decision making and collective construction of learning opportunities" should be the norm. (Diaz Maggioli, 2012). The difference can be observed in Table 1 below.

Traditional PD	Visionary PD
• Top-down decision making	• Collaborative decision making
• A "fix it" approach	• A growth-driven approach
• Lack of ownership by teachers	• Collaborative construction
• Prescriptive	• Inquiry-based
• One-size-fits-all	• Differentiated offerings

• Fixed and untimely delivery methods	• Varied and timely delivery methods
• Decontextualized	• Based on the evolution of the community
• Little or no follow up	
• Little or no evaluation	• Proactive assessment

Table 1. Characteristics of professional development today (Diaz Maggioli, 2012)

Another element to consider in this general frame is what we consider to be a PD activity. The strongest association is made with workshops, seminars or sessions. It is not specifically the activity that marks whether it is a traditional or innovative attempt, but rather the purpose behind it. A variety of alternatives are available for PD, but when centralized decision making and prescriptiveness prevail, the array of choices diminishes to the ones mentioned above. Reading circles, inquiry groups, mentoring, team teaching, construction of critical incidents, and collaborative action research are options that have been explored already and that embody professional growth experiences within a specific community, but these options will only find their place if new pathways in PD are welcomed.

A socioconstructivist vision of education as portrayed in the proposal of Visionary Professional Development presents us with a complex model. To be more specific, if education is considered as a system constituted by a number of actors with different interests and needs, we could very well say that it fits the definition of a complex social system as defined in the field of sociology.

Moreover, quoting from specialists on complexity and uncertainty from the University of Groeningen (2014), we can note that:

> Interaction within complex social systems involves exchanging information and a continual adaptation to new information and knowledge. Rules, norms, conventions, ethics and the legal system create a framework in which human beings can act. This model has emerged from the interaction between human beings, and continues to evolve. For example, the government is an institution that results from this interaction. Complex social systems show evolutionary dynamics. They are constantly in a flux, without having objectives of their own and without any knowable endpoint or equilibrium.

The last element to introduce for the exercise proposed is that of scenarios. It is not a common term in teaching, but it is growing in educational planning as we can see in

the *Metas Educativas 2021* [2021 Educational Goals] by UNESCO and OEI, as well as in management and global policies worldwide. Although the term originally referred to a storyline, when the concept of scenario planning was coined, it came to represent "one of a family of foresight processes which capture the dynamic of change by placing today's reality within the context of tomorrow's possibilities." (Day, 2001)[1].

To develop the concept further, the two definitions of scenario planning below provide us with more characteristics.

1. Process of visualizing (1) which future conditions or events are probable, (2) what their consequences or effects would be like, and (3) how to respond to, or benefit from, them (Businessdictionary.com, 2013)
2. Anchored in creativity and intuition, scenario planning is a strategy tool used to discover potential future environments in order to understand how today's strategic decisions will have an impact on an organization in times to come. The key elements in scenario planning are creative thinking, imagination, an informal methodology and the use of qualitative, subjective information. (University of Technology Sydney, 2009).

Davis & Mackintosh (2013)

There are two main types of scenarios, inductive and deductive. Considering the necessary degree of discussion and variables to build each of the types, I settled for deductive scenarios for the purposes of the present article. Deductive scenarios revolve around few predetermined factors and uncertainties, and apply a logical, non-random structure to the scenario framework. The elements I considered to develop the possible scenarios comply with the following categorization as set in Mercer (1995), which is represented in the graph I developed following Davis & Mackintosh (2013).

- *Drivers of change*: factors which move an organization away from its usual path. They are thought to have major impact on the future.
- *Predetermined factors*: predictable issues that will exist in the short term. *Basic trends* belong to this section and set the context within which an organization operates.
- *Key uncertainties*: factors that will have major impact on organizations but whose result is not known.
- *Rules of the game*: representation of the system within which scenarios will be developed. They assure the plausibility and consistency of

scenarios.

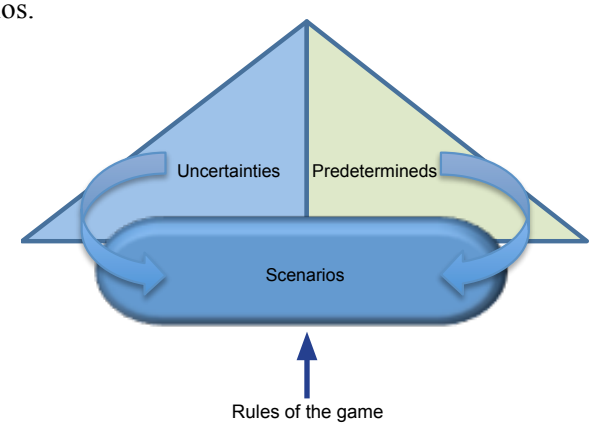

Figure 1. Main forces in a deductive scenario.

Discussion

The educational management system in the city of Buenos Aires does not work in isolation from the rest of the city administration. Thus, professional development for teachers working in state-run primary schools in the city follows a centralized scheme. High-ranking officials within the supervising structure meet with appointed trainers and set the agenda for the year. This would place the present state of things within the traditional practice of Professional Development. If, on the other hand, we wanted to explore Innovative Professional Development, we would need to develop scenarios. In the next few pages, I will characterize a set of three basic deductive scenarios for the present situation by fleshing out the concepts of basic trends and key uncertainties from Figure 1 into those presented in Figure 2. The purpose of drawing them together is to think about which ones are desirable, and to evaluate which measures are necessary to build towards the most desirable scenario.

- *Drivers of change*: Teachers' varying degree of satisfaction with current PD offer. Teachers' experiences in other fields of knowledge. Self access professional development opportunities.
- *Basic trends*: resistance to training offer, lack of real participation, tendencies towards a discourse of dissatisfaction, competitiveness.
- *Key uncertainties*: Teachers' personal search for PD opportunities. Teachers' professional quests.
- *Rules of the game*: Teachers working in different districts and different schools and many times at different levels of education, a team of supervisors in charge of the activity in the districts, a supervisor/

coordinator and an officer of Foreign Language Policy depending upon the the city or the Ministry of Education.

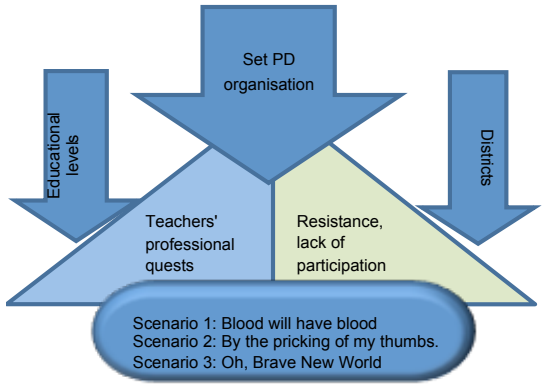

Figure 2: Characterization of items for proposed PD scenarios in the city of Buenos Aires.

Scenario 1: Blood will have blood

Basic trends maintain force according to a centralized power scheme. Thus, a schedule of training sessions is produced for all teachers in their respective districts. Attendance and participation vary depending on the level of urgency and cohesion applied by officials and school principals. Training continues to represent the needs as perceived by ministry officials. Teachers view the system as a *star-system*. Hence, some teachers, schools and /or districts struggle to shine while others may not feel supported, or select an easy way out by not creating trouble or projects. Some interesting offers appear every now and then, like video conferencing, exchanges between schools under programs supported by well recognized international organizations, but the transmission model prevails and certain needs fail to be addressed. Discontent continues due to historical values, and performance weaknesses are considered either as a personal failure on the part of teachers or students, or created by a context that exceeds the powers of the teacher.

Applicable PD options for the scenario: workshops, seminars, show and tell sessions, expert visits.

Scenario 2: By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes

Centralized offers continue to be the norm, but in certain areas, teachers create study groups or interventions that are either allowed and supported by the district or at least not considered inappropriate. Different visions among officials enrich internal discussions and expand the training agenda. As a result, some isolated interesting or effective approaches to local needs are developed. For example, some specific issues are

addressed through the creation of interdisciplinary task groups. Some teachers become natural mentors for a period of time with the risk that, without the necessary support, they will feel defeated or burdened. Some achievements find their way to the general public through district meetings or union publications. There is no overall sense of achievement but sense of belonging in certain communities grows strong.
Applicable PD options: critical incidents, team teaching, and mentoring gain momentum over workshops and seminars.

Scenario 3: Oh, Brave New World
Teachers' quest strengthens. Teachers find ways to associate with peers at the local level and new PD activity begins at school level through self-sought grouping. Professional performance thrives as they are able to find answers to their specific concerns on a local scale, particularly those related to wider educational challenges or paradigm changes. Groups gather to find ways to respond to students' attitudes and needs from a socio-cultural perspective, to develop a sense of community and belonging so that action research can be proposed. Teachers feel empowered and interdisciplinary teams get together to improve the situation at community level. Supervision find a new approach to their roles, and act as liaison officers and provide support. Recognition in quantifiable terms is given to the professionals who engage in such activities.
Applicable PD options: mentoring, reading circles, inquiry groups, team teaching, construction of critical incidents, collaborative action research.

Evaluation

The objective behind the building of the deductive scenarios presented above has been to start considering the future beyond the immediate future. If we agree that the future should not be a repetition of the past, but something that we should actively influence, as shown in the efforts of the UNESCO and the OEI, then working on the scenarios described above and potentially creating a few more, like one considering sustainability at its axe, can support our choices in everyday practice.

Mentoring, for example, is a practice that has grown over the past 10 years in different parts of the world and under different understandings of the meaning of the term. Nevertheless, its implementation was achieved for certain periods of time in the state sector in Uruguay (Diaz Maggioli, 2012), and in the private sector in the city of Buenos Aires, Gonzalez (2009, pp23-24) and both authors provide a picture of its challenges and limitations.

The number of teachers working at primary school level in the city of Buenos Aires has multiplied exponentially in the past seven years due to the implementation of English as a mandatory subject from first form. The multiplicity of the actors at

play calls for a wider vision of professional development to cater for a more satisfying future for all actors involved. In turn, this achievement will define the profile of teacher education standards, as is currently happening in different parts of Latin America, where curriculum design is being analyzed and the pedagogical aspect of teacher training is receiving further boost to meet the needs of our 21st century communities, students and families.

In the case of PD, the fact that graduates belong to different majors in English, mainly teacher training and translation studies, means that it may be time we start considering these not as higher and lower levels of aptitude, but as different approaches to the understanding of English as a subject of study. Different professionals will not thrive in settings where they feel disqualified and are not invited to share their two cents. On the contrary, disqualification of degrees accepted in statutory documents may lead towards more invisibility of possessed knowledge, and a lack of interest in taking part in inquiry groups.

PD opportunities that allow expansion into the specificities of the path not taken during undergraduate studies may pave the way towards better prepared professionals with a wider vision achieved through in-service PD.

Another possible implication relates to teacher training curricula. An important percentage of trainees do not work at schools after graduating. A hypothesis yet to be corroborated within academia links foreign languages and arts applicants motifs to pursue a career in an area that identifies more with the object of study than with the pedagogical implications of the object. Research is necessary to explore this hypothesis; still, it is worth considering it as one of the many potential factors at play in the complex social system of tertiary education in the city of Buenos Aires, and in our country in general so as to generate the necessary spaces or intersections between courses of studies, so that they may create a sounder, more personal search for lifelong paths of professional development that are both community-oriented and directly enriching.

The diversity of needs and realities calls for professionals who can identify themselves within such communities and have the tools to make a meaningful intervention that will be adequately supported.

Note

1. This quote is found at http://wikieducator.org/Introduction_to_scenario_planning/Definitions#cite_ref-1

References

Akpan, C., & Ntukidem, P. (2008). Teachers perception of training and retraining programme and their attitude towards work in public secondary schools in Cross

River State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Special Educational Needs, 5*(4), 92–100.

Banegas, D.L. (2013). Teachers developing language-driven CLIL through collaborative action research in Argentina. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick.

Davis N., & Mackintosh, W. (2013). Scenario planning for educators. University of Canterbury. Retrieved from http://wikieducator.org (Last accessed 15/03/2015).

Diaz Maggioli, G. (2012). *Teaching language teachers: Scaffolding professional learning*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Education.

Gonzalez, M. (2009). Implementing a mentoring project at an argentine language school, Universidad CAECE, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Hayek, F. A. (1964). The theory of complex phenomena. In M. Bunge (Ed.), *The critical approach to science and philosophy* (pp. 332–349). London: The Free Press.

Mercer, D. (1995). Simpler scenarios. *Management Decision, 33*(4), pp.32–40.

Richards, J., & Farrell, T. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stanley, G. (2015). Plan Ceibal English: Remote teaching of primary school children in Uruguay through videoconferencing. Unpublished. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/s/e3dec8b2da (Last accessed 28/03/2015).

OEI, C. Secretaría General Iberoamericana. (2010). Metas Educativas 2021. La educación que queremos para la generación de los bicentenarios. Madrid: OEI.

University of Groeningen. Decision making in a complex and uncertain world. Future learn. Retrieved from http://www.futurelearn.com/courses/complexity-and-uncertainty-2 (Last accessed 17/02/2015).

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 58-67

FAAPI

A look at ethical issues in action research in education

Darío Luis Banegas*
University of Warwick, UK

Luis S. Villacañas de Castro
University of Valencia, Spain

(Received 10/10/14; final version received 20/03/15)

Abstract

This reflective contribution covers a wide range of ethical issues which are bound to arise when teacher-researchers engage in technical, practical or critical models of action research. Once these three models are briefly explained, the paper proceeds to justify why ethical dilemmas are an intrinsic part of action research, precisely on account of its collaborative nature and of the diverse motivations, perspectives, and institutional roles held by its participants. As a result, questions around power and control are also likely to arise. Hence, we stress the need for action researchers to anticipate these ethical issues and be prepared to handle them through sincere and respectful dialogue among all participants.

Keywords: ethics; action research; collaboration; power; voice.

Resumen

La presente contribución reflexiva cubre un amplio espectro de cuestiones éticas que suelen emerger cuando los docentes-investigadores se involucran en los modelos técnico, práctico, y crítico de la investigación-acción (IA). Luego de describir brevemente estos tres modelos, el artículo examina cuestiones éticas como partes inherentes de la IA en relación a las diferentes motivaciones, perspectivas, y roles institucionales ejercicios por sus participantes. Como resultado, preguntas sobre el poder y el control surgen en la IA. En consecuencia, el artículo resalta la necesidad de los docentes-investigadores de anticiparse a estas cuestiones éticas y de estar preparados para gestionarlas mediante el diálogo sincero y respetuoso entre todos los participantes.

Palabras clave: ética; investigación-acción; colaboración; poder; voz.

* Corresponding author, e-mail: D.Banegas@warwick.ac.uk ISSN 2314-3576 (online)

ACTION RESEARCH (AR) HAS evolved in various ways and traditions (Burns, 2010; Crookes, 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Noffke, 1997; Ryan, 2013; Somekh, 2010). Fields such as applied linguistics and education are usually enlarged by AR-framed contributions from a variety of geographical contexts and institutional settings (for recent examples see Bevins & Price, 2014; Calvert & Sheen, 2015; Castro Huertas & Navarro Parra, 2014; Talandis & Stout, 2014).

In an attempt to define AR, Burns (2010, p. 2) relates it to "the ideas of reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher'. AR involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to exploring your own teaching contexts," and adds that AR seeks "to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation in order to bring about changes and, even better, improvements in practice."

In principle, this definition succeeds in highlighting the agents and reasons behind AR. In Burns' view, AR is in the hands of teachers, and reflexivity, action, and transformation appear embedded in the process of teachers examining their own teaching practices. In this regard, AR is taken as an opportunity for teachers' professional development (see Wyatt, 2011; Yayli, 2012).

Drawing on this introductory definition we summarise three models of AR and discuss some of the ethical issues underlying the implementation of AR in foreign language learning and teaching. Throughout the paper, we pose questions we have asked ourselves in our identities as teacher-researchers. We believe that ethical issues deserve serious attention in AR, and all research in fact, because dilemmas around power, benefits, voice and how all actors involved are represented, among others, may affect the very nature of AR: transformative praxis.

Action Research Models

Cain and Harris (2013) summarise three models of AR: (1) technical, (2) practical, and (3) critical. Technical AR refers to experiences from joint projects between schools and universities where the former bring to the table initial ideas and interests. Practical AR is about the "here and now" and it is usually ignited by teachers themselves or their institution. They seek to maximise performance within the opportunities and constraints of their educational institution. These experiences are generally small in scope and may not be published in peer-reviewed journals. Last, critical AR carries political and emancipatory undertones, the objectification of which is normally dependent on AR allowing for an expansion of the participants' self-awareness as individuals in society (Villacañas de Castro, 2014). While the other two models seem to operate within pre-established environments, critical AR seeks to challenge social order, power, and control, and promote democratic undertakings and horizontality. However, this does not mean that technical or practical action research experiences are innocuous. In a

thorough review of action research, Noffke (1997) convincingly argues that even in the personal and professional dimensions of AR, dimensions we can relate to technical and practical AR, the political angle is manifested through issues of power and control. Put another way, these models are not exclusionary of each other.

Whatever the tradition or model, AR cannot be enacted as an individual's event. There is an inherent element of participation and collaboration as knowledge is viewed as socially constructed in Vygotskian terms. While *collaboration* and *participation* can be used interchangeably, some authors prefer *participatory* to highlight involvement and ownership (e.g. Townsend, 2013). Through any of the models above, collaborative action research (CAR) promises several benefits to those who swim its waters (Banegas et al., 2013; Bleicher, 2013; Wyatt, 2011; Yayli, 2012). However, benefits also come together with challenges. According to Cain and Harris (2013) and Patthey and Thomas-Spiegel (2013), AR can be time-consuming, face-threatening, unpaid, and loaded with ethical issues which may threaten the aims of any AR project. We shall turn to this last challenge.

Ethics in AR

Ethical issues in educational research and AR are extensively examined in the literature (Beach & Eriksson, 2010; Coghlan, 2013; Collins, 2004; Floyd & Arthur, 2012; Jones & Stanley, 2010; Locke, Alcorn & O'Neill, 2013; Lomas Scott & Fonseca, 2010; Mockler, 2014; Nolen & Putten, 2007; Puchner & Smith, 2008; Walford, 2005; White & Fitzgerald, 2010; Zeni 1998, 2009). In the paragraphs which follow we briefly discuss some ethical issues we may find in the process of AR based on recent publications and our experiences.

Discussing Ethical Issues

There are a variety of ethical issues that must be taken into consideration. Many of these involve negotiating the relationships between people involved in a given study. In this section, we will highlight the following issues: collaboration, young learners, power, confidentiality, anonymity, authorship and ownership, representation and voice, benefits, and sustainability.

Collaboration. Both collaboration and participation need to be voluntary and participants must be autonomous and free to withdraw at any time without any consequences. It is important to discuss co-option and coercion so as to avoid or minimise their presence. There may be cases where a school principal or a language coordinator decides to embark on AR at institutional level: Are teachers really free to opt out? Will they appear as uncooperative or unprofessional? Is AR "a democratic undertaking or a web of collusion and compliance?" (Jones & Stanley, 2010, p. 151).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2007, p. 35) warn us that "in our enthusiasm for the idea of inquiry […], we urge and in some ways impose this perspective."

Collaboration and the genesis of any project must lie in the hands of those who wish to research their own classrooms. In the case of researcher-teacher researchers' collaboration, it may be dangerous for a researcher or more experienced teacher-researcher to impose on colleagues their own innovative, liberating and emancipatory agenda when others involved seem to be content with the professional environment they inhabit. In this regard: Do I have the right to impose political ideas on my colleagues, ideas which more often than not have a bearing on personal educational choices? Will I make them feel as outdated in their language teaching approaches? Do I see myself as their saviour? Why do I feel I need to "mess" with my colleagues' status quo? What will happen if the order of things is altered? Will I become liable for whatever happens?

Young learners. Other cases of collaboration include researching with young and teenage learners. In a recent review of child participation in applied linguistics research, Pinter (2013) includes three constructions: children as objects, children as subjects, and children as co-researchers. Given the sociocultural and qualitative architecture of educational action research, children and teenagers may participate as subjects and co-researchers (Leeson, 2007; Smit, 2013), especially when AR is conducted according to the critical model outlined above. When children are part of AR some questions surface: Can they also opt out? Will that affect their grades? Will the project data be threatened if a learner decides to leave even after signing informed consent? Will parents force their kids to participate? Will a teacher manipulate the learners to obtain "positive" data? Doyle (2007) observes that

> while the research may be part of the teacher's professional development, the children are not there for the teacher's development. The opposite is the case. The teacher is there for the development of the children (p. 77).

Authors agree (Groundwater-Smith, 2007; Smit, 2013; Yonezawa & Jones, 2009) that sustainable educational reform may start from the inside out and this entails the involvement of learners by creating a context which promotes participation. At the same time, teachers need to ensure that broader participation will be sought as opposed to (mis)representation in the hands of student leaders. For different reasons, teacher-researchers may decide to collect data from student leaders thinking that their views are supported by their peers. However, Banegas (2013) carried out class interviews where student leaders spoke out and their peers remained silent or supported leaders' ideas. Nevertheless, divergent opinions emerged among the learners when the author followed up such interviews with a questionnaire.

In addition, we need to understand that vulnerability is at play. Even when we embark on a project which places young and teenage learners as participants in roles such as active informants, co-researchers, and even researchers themselves, we need to be critical about the impact that the project will have on them and the wider community. Thus, learner participation entails a number of ethical issues related to their participation in the following dimensions: level, focus of decision making, content, nature of participation activity, frequency and duration, benefits and impacts.

In our quest for emancipation, critical thinking, and democracy, we may run the risk of arriving at conclusions and implications which will later become impossible to implement at an institutional level. Working with young learners also entails issues around power. Although we as teacher-researchers should be emotionally receptive and open to seek symmetry (e.g. Postholm and Skrøvset 2013), we may also need to consider that teachers and learners have different institutionally and socially assigned roles.

Power. The ethical dilemmas behind collaboration bring about the issue of power. Power is linked to pre-established roles, positions, and relationships, for example, a school principal researching his/her school including teachers. There are other instances of unequal distribution of power such as that between a teacher as an insider and a researcher as an outsider in a school-university project and their different roles and academic backgrounds, or a researcher with an insider's perspective. In these relationships there may be cases of privileged knowledge, sensitive information, and ongoing personal relationships that are in tension with professional relationships. Mockler (2014) remarks that teacher researchers should have the desire to identify and understand the power dynamics at work within the classroom. We may agree that knowledge is power and knowing about something which others do not may confer a researcher or a teacher with special access to the social fabric of their embedded practices. Power is thus linked to maintaining confidentiality.

Confidentiality and anonymity. They are usually addressed together with informed consent (e.g. Doyle 2007; Locke et al., 2013) and respect for participants (see Hedges, 2001; Mockler, 2014). Doyle (2007, p. 81-82) defines confidentiality as:

> not having identifying characteristics such as name or description of physical appearance disclosed so that the participants remain unidentifiable to anyone outside the permitted people promised at the time of informed consent. Anonymity is only one aspect of ensuring confidentiality. It involves using a fictional or no name at all rather than the participant's real name.

We believe that such definitions of confidentiality and anonymity are problematic

because they are depicted as synonymous. Confidentiality means more than that. For example, Campbell and McNamara (2007) conclude that confidentiality means that participants can be open to us and tell us their stories in confidence but refuse to allow us to use their data. In other words, participants may be willing to talk but unwilling to be quoted even if they remain anonymous.

There may be cases where anonymity cannot be achieved because participants could be easily traceable through the context of the research and the researchers and/or authors. Actually, anonymity also raises issues in relation to the very nature of AR. If AR is supposed to be local and context-responsive, is anonymity a delusion? Can we ensure confidentiality and anonymity when the same participants engage both in individual and focus group interviews?

Authorship and ownership. Anonymity is associated to ethical issues of authorship and ownership. It may be the case that participants do wish to appear under their real names as they believe they own the data provided, particularly if the experience places them under a positive light. It may also be the case that participants demand to be co-authors of the project-based reports. Sometimes it is not enough to include them in our acknowledgements. In AR, everybody counts and without participants we cannot go very far. However, this should be discussed every time researchers share their findings at different forums.

Representation and voice. Issues behind ownership are linked to representation and voice. Informed consent forms usually include the participant's right to corroborate data and our interpretation. Participants may ask to have data analysis revisited if they feel they have been misinterpreted or placed under a negative light. Should this happen, we may need to acknowledge this request in our report to follow transparency and honesty, but again we will fail to protect the participant and make him/her feel deceived.

Collection methods may be face-threatening. In a recent CAR project (Banegas, 2013), a participating teacher stopped observing the author's lessons when learners perceived that their teaching styles were in sharp contrast. The author experienced the danger of representing participating teachers as heroes or villains. Such a situation revealed the aspect of voice and authorial stance, which became significant in relation to the same phenomena. Even when we claim to follow principles of respect and negotiation, it is us interpreting other people and writing about them.

While the situations above may be embedded in technical AR or in projects where teachers are not the authors (for example someone writing a dissertation), there may be issues of representation when teachers are the researchers. When teachers investigate their own practices within a culture of performativity, they may ignore data which they feel will "rock the boat" and threaten job stability. Conversely, they may overvalue anecdotal data in such a way that one successful account is portrayed as the common

pattern in the classroom.

Benefits. All AR projects have consequences and benefits. Discussing benefits depend on principles of honesty and transparency. Banegas (2013) led a CAR project through which he obtained a doctorate degree, and his invested interests forced him to be open about unequal benefits. While he sought to help his colleagues and himself develop professionally and produce a positive impact in their learners' experience, he was the only one to become a doctor of applied linguistics. Benefits are to be discussed and outweighed from the start and while the research project unfolds in order to ensure that participants acknowledge their different motivations. They also need to be properly included in reports because they will shed light on the extent to which AR is technical, practical, or emancipatory, and the personal motivations behind it.

Sustainability. When a CAR project aims at improving already good practices or transforming a challenging landscape, care should be taken in relation to whether action will continue after the research is completed, funding stops, and external facilitators return to their universities. Teachers taking part in AR may be interested in sustaining their effects over time, but develop concerns about their inability to pursue AR alone. It is in this scenario that empowerment becomes crucial because AR seeks to turn small-scale, localised initiatives into long-lasting practices which trigger new cycles, new questions, and further topics for inquiry. It is also essential that the project is teacher-generated and teacher-developed so that they feel co-responsible and involved. If a project fails to achieve this, the participating teachers may abandon their explorations, even when they proved successful, and return to previous practices because they never really felt part of it or because they do not have the time and support to continue. Furthermore, school administrators and policy makers may discourage teachers to enact a different curriculum particularly in hierarchical systems and settings.

Conclusion

The growing number of teachers and lecturers engaged in researching their own practices indicates an encouraging landscape because it provides hopes for qualitative and educational research. Research which involves learners and teachers needs to produce a direct impact on learning and teaching practices. Yet, for AR to become memorable, engaging, and meaningful, it must be based on respect, honesty, teachers and learners' interests, and constant awareness of ethical dilemmas around agents' actions and decisions.

While the literature offers several contributions on ethical issues in AR, we believe that this paper has offered further insights into ethical issues derived from power and voice.

References

Banegas, D.L. (2013). Teachers developing language-driven CLIL through collaborative action research in Argentina. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick.

Banegas, D.L., Pavese, A., Velázquez, A., & Vélez, S.M. (2013). Teacher professional development through collaborative action research: Impact on foreign English language teaching and learning. *Educational Action Research, 39*(2), 185–201.

Beach, D., & Eriksson, A. (2010). The relationship between ethical positions and methodological approaches: A Scandinavian perspective. *Ethnography and Education, 5*(2), 129–142.

Bevins, S., & Price, G. (2014). Collaboration between academics and teachers: A complex relationship. *Educational Action Research, 22*(2), 270–284.

Bleicher, R.E. (2014). A collaborative action research approach to professional learning. *Professional Development in Education, 40*(5), 802–821.

Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Cain, T., & Harris, R. (2013). Teachers' action research in a culture of performativity. *Educational Action Research, 21*(3), 343–358.

Calvert, M., & Sheen, Y. (2015). Task-based language learning and teaching: An action-research study. *Language Teaching Research, 19*(2), 226–244.

Campbell, A., & McNamara, O. (2007). Ways of telling: The use of practitioners' stories. In A. Campbell & S. Groundwater-Smith (Eds.), *An ethical approach to practitioner research: Dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research* (pp. 99–112). Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Castro Huertas, I.A., & Navarro Parra, L.J. (2014). The role of songs in first-graders' oral communication development in English. *Profile, 16*(1), 11–28.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S.L. (2007). Everything's ethics: practitioner inquiry and university culture. In A. Campbell & S. Groundwater-Smith (Eds.), An ethical approach to practitioner research: *Dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research* (pp. 24–41). Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Coghlan, D. (2013). What will I do? Toward an existential ethics for first person action research practice. *International Journal of Action Research, 9*(3), 333–352.

Collins, S. (2004). Ecology and ethics in participatory collaborative action research: An argument for the authentic participation of students in educational research. *Educational Action Research, 12*(3), 347–362.

Crookes, G. (1993). Action research for second language teachers: Going beyond teacher research. *Applied Linguistics, 14*(2), 130–144.

Doyle, D. (2007). Transdisciplinary enquiry: Researching with rather than on. In A. Campbell & S. Groundwater-Smith (Eds.), *An ethical approach to practitioner*

research: Dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research (pp. 75–87). Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Floyd, A., & Arthur, L. (2012). Researching from within: External and internal ethical engagement. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 35*(2), 171–180.

Groundwater-Smith, S. (2007). Student voice: Essential testimony for intelligent schools. In A. Campbell & S. Groundwater-Smith (Eds.), *An ethical approach to practitioner research: Dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research* (pp. 113–128). Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Hedges, H. (2001). Teacher/Researchers in Early Childhood: Ethical Responsibilities to Children. *Networks: An On-line Journal for Teacher Research, 4*(2). Retrieved from http://journals.library.wisc.edu/index.php/networks/article/view/43/47

Jones, M., & Stanley, G. (2010). Collaborative action research: A democratic undertaking or a web of collusion and compliance? *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 33*(2), 151– 63.

Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2005). Participatory action research: Communicative action and the public sphere. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 559–603). London: Sage.

Leeson, C. (2007). Going round in circles: Key issues in the development of an effective ethical protocol for research involving young children. In A. Campbell & S. Groundwater-Smith (Eds.), *An ethical approach to practitioner research: Dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research* (pp. 129–143). Abingdon/ New York: Routledge.

Locke, T., Alcorn, N., & O'Neill, J. (2013). Ethical issues in collaborative action research. *Educational Action Research, 21*(1), 107–123.

Lomas Scott, C., & Fonseca, L. (2010). Overstepping the mark: Ethics procedures, risky research and education researchers. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 33*(3), 287–300.

Mockler, N. (2014). When 'research ethics' become "everyday ethics": The intersection of inquiry and practice in practitioner research. *Educational Action Research, 22*(2), 146–158.

Noffke, S. (1997). Professional, personal, and political dimensions of action research. *Review of Research in Education, 22*(3), 305–343.

Nolen, A.L., & Putten, J.V. (2007). Action research in education: Addressing gaps in ethical principles and practices. *Educational Researcher, 36*(7), 401–407.

Patthey, G.G., & Thomas-Spiegel, J. (2013). Action research for instructional improvement: The bad, the ugly, and the good. *Educational Action Research, 21*(4), 468–484.

Pinter, A. (2013). Child participant roles in applied linguistics research. *Applied Linguistics, 35*(2), 168–183.

Postholm, M.B., & Skrøvset, S. (2013). The researcher reflecting on her own role during action research. *Educational Action Research, 21*(4), 506–518.

Puchner, L.D., & Smith, L.M. (2008). The ethics of researching those who are close to you: The case of the abandoned ADD project. *Educational Action Research, 16*(3), 421–428.

Ryan, T.G. (2013). Communicative elements of action research as teacher development. *Networks: An On-line Journal for Teacher Research, 15*(2), 1–12.

Smit, B.H.J. (2013). Young people as co-researchers: Enabling student participation in educational practice. *Professional Development in Education, 39*(4), 550–573.

Somekh, B. (2010). The collaborative research network: 30 years of agency in developing educational action research. *Educational Action Research, 18*(1), 103–121.

Talandis, G., & Stout, M. (2014). Getting EFL students to speak: An action research approach. *ELT Journal, 69*(1), 11–25.

Townsend, A. (2013). Principled challenges for a participatory discipline. *Educational Action Research, 21*(3), 326–342.

Villacañas de Castro, L. S. (2014). Meta-action research with pre-service teachers: A case study. *Educational Action Research, 22*(4), 534–551.

Walford, G. (2005). Research ethical guidelines and anonymity. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education, 28*(1), 83–93.

White, J., & Fitzgerald, T. (2010). Researcher tales and research ethics: The spaces in which we find ourselves. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 33*(3), 273–285.

Wyatt, M. (2011). Teachers researching their own practice. *ELT Journal, 65*(4), 417–425.

Yayli, D. (2012). A hands-on experience of English language teachers as researchers. *Teacher Development, 16*(2), 255–271.

Yonezawa, S., & Jones, M. (2009). Student voices: Generating reform from the inside out. *Theory into Practice, 48*(3), 205–212.

Zeni, J. (1998). A guide to ethical issues and action research. *Educational Action Research, 6*(1), 9–19.

Zeni, J. (2009). Ethics and the "personal" in action research. In S. Noffke & B. Somekh (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of educational action research* (pp. 254–266). London: Sage.

Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics
Vol. 3, No. 1, May 2015, 68-70

FAAPI

Book review

International perspectives on materials in ELT

Edited by S. Garton & K. Graves, New York, Palgrave, 2014, Pp. v + 292, ISBN 978-1-137-02329-2 (hbk): £65.00; US$ 95.00; ISBN 978-1-137-02330-2 (pbk): £21.99; US$ 30.00; ISBN 9781137023322 (ebook)

International perspectives on materials in ELT was published in May 2014 and is a compilation of several articles written by authors from all over the world, including Argentina, Japan, Spain, and Thailand. As the title suggests, it presents a varied collection of insights on how materials are crucial to the teaching of English, as well as how they are perceived in different contexts.

The volume contains sixteen chapters organised into four sections: (1) Global and Local Materials, (2) Materials in the Classroom, (3) Materials and Technology, and (4) Materials and Teacher Education. Although not every chapter has a conclusion per se, each one of them includes a segment titled "Engagement priorities" where the author(s) provide the reader with some questions to reflect upon after reading the section, together with an extensive list of references. Some of the chapters also include a copy of selected activities used by the authors to illustrate their point. These activities can be useful to readers who may want to use such exercises with their own students or as templates to create new activities. It is worth mentioning that not all materials discussed are deemed successful, a view that readers can easily relate to. Some of the authors, such as Joe Pereira, Fabrizio Maggi, Maurizia Cherubin and Enrique García Pascual, have tried a number of materials in their teaching practice but they have not been as effective as they thought they would be. That said, this publication includes not only selected materials to adopt straightaway, but also suggestions on how teachers could implement and modify them for specific purposes.

There is an introductory chapter to the volume that provides an overview of what is understood by materials in ELT and "the way that teachers use them" (Garton & Graves, 2014, p. 11), as well as a summary of what each section deals with. This chapter makes a

point that, contrary to other publications, this book includes a more theoretical approach to ELT materials.

Part 1 includes four articles that discuss how textbooks are used and how they influence students in diverse parts of the world. It provides a clear definition of the ELT textbook, the difference between global, localised and local textbooks especially in Argentina, how materials are adapted to suit Bahrani learners' needs and how Algerian English textbooks represent culture.

Part 2 provides readers with examples of how materials, including textbooks, can be used as adaptable tools to teach English as a Second or Foreign language around the globe. Each chapter deals with one country in particular, i.e. Albania, Ghana, Thailand, and the United States. They provide a wide perspective on how to adapt the material to suit different students with heterogeneous levels of proficiency in different contexts.

Part 3 focuses on technology as a variable when considering materials in ELT. Among the technological suggestions are mobile phones, Interactive Fiction (IF) and Web 2.0 Tools. Bangladesh is one of the countries that has experience using mobile phones in the EFL classroom. Portugal has seen the growth in utilising Interactive Fiction at the service of Digital Game-based Language Learning. Teachers claim it enhances the students' reading skills while it challenges them. Lastly, chapter 12 discusses Web 2.0 (Google Documents, Google Calendar, Skype) and the Interactive WhiteBoard, as well as their advantages and drawbacks.

Finally, Part 4 presents, through actual examples in the United States (The Story Reading Project), Brazil (Pre-Service Teachers' course) and Japan (factors influencing the adoption of new textbooks), different ways of adapting ELT materials.

The concluding chapter is written by the editors and works as a final word as well as a vision of the future where English will continue to be a well-established lingua franca (2014, p. 270) and therefore, new materials will need to be developed to teach it.

Overall, the book brings together different views on how to use materials when teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Some articles provide a more practical approach readers can apply directly in their classes; others are descriptions of experiences which can enhance our understanding of how people in different parts of the world teach and select materials for teaching.

This book is suitable for teachers who are starting their teaching career because it provides methods and ready-to-use activities or for those who have been teaching for some years for it includes newer tools such as mobile phones and IWB that could be used in the classroom. Also, teacher trainers can take advantage of these authors' approaches to teaching with traditional (textbook) and new (mobile phones, Web 2.0) tools.

It is certainly a comprehensive publication that should not be missed if you are

interested in ELT materials.

Laureana María Moreno
Escuela 4, D.E. 9 “Provincia de Córdoba”, CABA, Argentina
laureanamoreno@gmail.com

Guidelines to authors

Please, read carefully all the sections below before submitting your manuscript. The Editor may reject your submission if your manuscript does not follow the instructions below.

To publish with AJAL, all Argentinian authors or half of them in a multi-authored article must be members of a teacher association (TA) linked to FAAPI by the time the submission is made. If you are the sole author of the manuscript submitted, please ensure that you have become a member of a TA before submitting your manuscript. **Make sure that your contribution, even when based on a local context and issue, reaches an international readership.**

International authors who are the sole authors of the manuscript submitted do not need to be part of a TA in Argentina for publishing with AJAL. If you are an international author and your manuscript is co-authored by an Argentinian author, please ensure that the latter is a member of a TA linked to FAAPI. If you are an international author and your manuscript includes other international co-authors, please contact the Editor at ajaleditor@faapi.org.ar before making your submission. The Editors will ensure that each issue has a balanced representation of Argentinian and international authors.

AJAL does not accept articles authored by more than four authors.

Ethics and copyright

By submitting your manuscript to AJAL, you confirm that you have read and followed all instructions to authors. You confirm that it is an original manuscript whose authorship belongs to you and that it has not been published previously or under consideration for publication elsewhere. By submitting your manuscript you also confirm that all potential conflicts of interest have been taken care of successfully and that your manuscript does follow strict ethical procedures such as data protection, anonymity, consent forms from participants, permissions from published materials or any third parties. Please, see the author form which you then must complete and submit together with your manuscript.

Once your article is accepted, you should authorise AJAL to reproduce the full text on AJAL website. This will imply filling in a publication license form to be indicated by the editor. If you wish to use the article again in a publication written or edited by you, you may do so provided that its original publication in AJAL is acknowledged.

Types of manuscripts you may submit

We welcome the following types of manuscripts:

Original research article: this is a manuscript which reports the outcomes of your own research. It usually includes sections such as introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, conclusions and implications, and references. Length:

between 5,000 and 7,000 words (including tables and graphs, without references and appendices).

Literature review/state-of-the-art article: this is a critical review of the literature on a particular theme of interest to AJAL. Sections may vary but authors are encouraged to include conclusions which promote reflection and suggestions for further research. The article should contain a minimum of 30 quality references. Length: between 3,000 and 5,000 words (including tables and graphs, without references)

Reflective article: this is an article based on theoretical underpinnings. It includes description, analysis, and evaluation of a specific topic or issue. Length: between 2,000 and 3,500 words (including tables and graphs, without references).

Classroom activities: this is an article which describes strategies, techniques, or activities which could be applied to the EFL classroom. The Editors will favour those which are the product of your own creation and/or adaptation and that you may have tried. The manuscript should be highly practical with clear instructions, and direct classroom application or implementation. Length: between 1,000 and 3,500 words (including tables, without references and appendices).

Classroom account: this is a narrative article based on personal classroom experiences such as projects, materials development, or other special systematic undertakings. Length: between 1,000 and 3,500 words (including tables, without references and appendices).

Materials review: this is a review of a book, software, website, or any other resource of relevance to AJAL readers. Length: between 600 and 1,500 words. Before submitting your manuscript, please contact the Materials Review Editors at ajalmatreviews@faapi.org.ar to discuss the material you wish to review.

How to prepare your submission

- Read these instructions carefully. For issues which are not included here, please contact the Editor at ajaleditor@faapi.org.ar before submitting your manuscript.
- Authors must submit a complete manuscript. We do not accept abstracts prior to a complete submission.
- Do not format your submission in the style of a published article. All manuscripts should be sent as Word documents containing unjustified texts.
- Authors' names, self-referentials (e.g. As I have outlined elsewhere (Wright, 2011)) and affiliations MUST NOT appear in the manuscript. Remember that all manuscripts undergo blind reviewing.
- Make sure that your manuscript is written in accurate English (AmE and

BrE spelling are accepted but these should not be used simultaneously). Please, have your manuscript proofread or edited before submitting. Manuscripts in need of serious editing will be rejected and will not go through the peer review process.

- Make sure you respect the word count according to the type of manuscript you submit.
- Your manuscript should be sent as a Word document with the following format: Times New Roman, 12, double-spaced, unjustified). Do not insert page breaks in your manuscript.
- With the exception of materials reviews, all manuscripts should include a title. The title must be clear and self-contained. Please avoid long titles. Only capitalise the first word and proper nouns.
- The title of your materials review should start like this: 'Review of (title of book or website) by (authors). If it is a book, also include the information (if applicable) as shown in the example below:

  CLIL. Content and Language Integrated Learning
  D. Coyle, P. Hood and D. Marsh
  Cambridge
  Cambridge University Press
  2010
  Pp. v + 173
  ISBN 978-0-521-11298-7 (hbk): £54.50; US$ 71.20
  ISBN 978-0-521-13021-9 (pbk): £21.00; US$ 25.91
  ISBN 13:9780511740473 (Adobe e-reader): US $71.00
- With the exception of materials reviews, all manuscripts should have two abstracts, one in English and one in Spanish. Each abstract should be around 100-120 words. The abstracts must be followed by a maximum of five key words in both English and Spanish.
- Indent all paragraphs except the first paragraph of each section.
- No line space should be left between paragraphs or under (sub) headings. Line space should be left between sections.
- Avoid or minimise the use of footnotes. If they are necessary, place them after your conclusions.
- Use double inverted commas for short quotations and single inverted commas for quotations within quotations.
- To highlight a word or concept, use *italics*.
- Indent long quotations (40 words or longer).
- For all quotations refer to authors as follows:

According to Levin (2010, p. 359), 'governments around the world continue to be intensively involved in changing their education systems.' (for long quotes you may place the author's surname, year: page sequence below the quote, ranged right)

- For lists use Arabic numerals.
- For bullet-points, use •
- Figures and tables should be clearly labelled with a number and caption. For example: Figure 1. Types of motivated behaviours. (For captions use Times New Roman, 9). Format your figures and tables as you wish them to appear.
- For materials reviews, do not include appendices or use headings.
- With the exception of materials reviews, appendices must be signalled in the text and then placed after your reference list. Label appendices as Appendix A, B, C...
- With the exception of materials reviews, use headings and subheadings. Please, do not name the first section of your manuscript. Name the sections in which your manuscript is divided following the example below:

  Methodology (Times New Roman, 12, bold face, indented, upper case and lower case headings).

  Data Collection Instruments

  (Times New Roman, 12, left-aligned, uppercase and lowercase headings).

  Interviews. (Times New Roman, 12, bold face, indented, a period, lowercase heading).
- For in-text references follow these examples:

  James (2009) argues that…

  Gómez and Pérez (2008) raise other issues since…

  The situation in Argentina has shown relatively low improvement (Andes, 1998; Gómez & Pérez, 2008; Zander, 2000).

  Little (2006a) observes that…

  Little (2006b) denies that…
- For works authored by three or more authors, include all surnames the first time you refer to them, and et al. in subsequent references, for example:

  Smith et al. (2010) signal that…

  This has been signalled by many works (Smith et al., 2010)

- Full references: all authors cited in your manuscript must appear in your reference list. Follow these examples:

Bruner, J. (2002). *Making stories: Law, literature and life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gee, J.P. (2005). Semiotic social spaces and affinity spaces: from the Age of Mythology to today's schools. In D. Barton & K. Tusting (Eds.), *Beyond communities of practice* (pp.214-232). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lantolf, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and problems.* Dublin: Authentik.

Meza Rueda, J.L. (2008). *Historia de maestros para maestros. Pedagogía narrativa expresada en relatos de vida.* Bogotá: Universidad de La Salle.

Pérez-Cañado, M.L. (2012). CLIL research in Europe: Past, present, and future. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 15*(3), 315-341.

Prince, P. (2011). What's the story? Motivating e-learners with fiction. In D. Gardner (Ed.), *Fostering autonomy in language learning* (pp. 225-233). Gaziantep: Zirve University.

Richards, K. (2006). "Being the teacher": Identity and classroom conversation. *Applied Linguistics, 27*(1), 51-77.

Smith, R. (2003). Teacher education for teacher-learner autonomy. In J. Gollin, G. Ferguson & H. Trappes-Lomax (Eds.), *Symposium for language teacher educators: Papers from Three IALS Symposia.* Edinburgh: IALS, University of Edinburgh. Retrieved May 2, 2012, from http://homepages.warwick.ac.uk/~elsdr/Teacher_autonomy.pdf

Smith, R., & Erdogan, S. (2008). Teacher-learner autonomy: Programme goals and student-teacher constructs. In T. Lamb & H. Reindeers (Eds.), *Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities and responses* (pp. 83-102). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Ushioda, E. (2011). Motivating learners to speak as themselves. In G. Murray, G. Xuesong & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Identity, motivation and autonomy in language learning* (pp.11-24). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

What to submit and how

1. You must submit the following documents:
   a. Author form
   b. Complete manuscript in Word format (including tables and figures).
   c. If applicable, you must submit tables and figures as separate files:

submit tables as Word documents and figures/illustrations in TIFF format.

2. **With the exception of materials reviews, all other submissions (documents a-c above) must be sent to ajaleditor@faapi.org.ar**
3. Materials reviews (documents a-b above apply here too) should be sent to **ajalmatreviews@faapi.org.ar**

What happens once you submit your manuscript

1. You will receive an email acknowledging receipt in around 4 days.
2. We expect to return to you with the evaluators' comments in around 40-60 days.
3. If your manuscript is accepted with minor changes, you will be expected to resubmit your manuscript in 15 days.
4. If your manuscript is considered for 'revise and resubmit' (major corrections), you will be expected to resubmit your manuscript according to a time frame agreed with the editor.

AJAL

FAAPI