Teacher Development or Training?: Recent Developments in Second/Foreign Language Teacher Education

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The research focus in second language teacher education for the last decade has undergone a shift from searching for better ways to train teachers to trying to describe and understand the process of how teachers learn to teach through their self-awareness or reflection. In line with this recent shift of emphasis from the notion of training to that of development, the idea of teacher exploration or an exploratory approach has often been discussed as a sort of "liberating tool" for teachers from the pressure of identifying a best or better way of teaching (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). This paper, thus, outlines and discusses recent developments in the field by addressing a) how is teacher development different from teacher training? b) what is teacher exploration in relation to teacher development? and c) what are activities that teachers can use to work on their development and to explore their teaching? While illustrating some of the key assumptions that underlie the idea of teacher development/exploration in contrast to traditional views of teacher training, this paper also emphasizes the potential benefits of an exploratory approach as part of our own learning processes as language teachers and educators.

As Freeman (1991) clearly points out, an increasing body of research in the field of teacher education and development over the past decade has challenged the process-product notion of language teaching, in which teaching is seen as the exercise of specific ways of acting or a set of behaviors that need to be taught directly. Such a criticism on the process-product paradigm reflects the recognition that teaching involves both action and the thinking that underlies it (Shulman,

1986) and especially the higher-level cognitive processes that are less amendable to direct instruction or training than specific ways of behavioral techniques or skills (Richards & Nunan, 1990, p. xii).

In other words, the research focus in teacher education or development has undergone a shift from searching for better ways to train teachers to trying to describe and understand the process of how teachers learn to teach through their self-awareness or reflection. When our classroom practice is viewed as a manifestation of our interactive decision making, the process of how teachers learn to make such decisions needs to be examined in relation to what factors or influences underlie their classroom actions (Richards, 1998).

Gebhard (2006) notes by referring to Fanselow's (1977, 1987) idea of an exploratory approach that we can "discover much by exploring simply to explore, not just to solve a problem" (Gebhard, 2006, p. 6), and "small changes can have big consequences" (p. 23). In other words, when we try new things (something we have never tried before) or try the opposite of what we usually do, "we can compare them with what we usually do, and based on this comparison we can see our teaching differently, including our beliefs about teaching and learning" (Gebhard, 2005, p.3).

The idea is that through exploration, we can learn and discover a lot about our own teaching by changing the way we teach, making small changes to our teaching, or trying new behaviors, just to see what might happen. So in line with the recent shift of emphasis in the field of second language education from the notion of training to that of development, the idea of teacher exploration can be viewed as a sort of "liberating tool" for teachers from the pressure of identifying a best or better way of teaching, and we can free ourselves to explore alternative possibilities for change (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999).

This paper, thus, outlines and discusses recent developments in second language teacher education by addressing the following three questions:

1. How is teacher development different from teacher training?
2. What is teacher exploration in relation to teacher development?
3. What activities can teachers use to develop and explore their teaching?

While examining the idea of exploration in language teaching in contrast to traditional views of teacher training, this paper also emphasizes the potential benefits of an exploratory approach as part of our own learning processes as language teachers and educators.

Q.1 What is Teacher Development and How is it Different

from Teacher Training?

The essential difference between teacher training and development is whether the element of personal growth is involved or not in the teacher learning processes. Some of the defining characteristics of both concepts can be identified in reference to Wallace's (1991) three models of teacher learning: a) the applied science, b) craft, and c) reflective models.

> a) The applied science model suggests that teachers learn to be teachers by drawing on research-based theories and applying that knowledge into their practice. This knowledge is thought to be generalizable.
>
> b) The craft model refers to learning to teach in the way apprentices learn crafts: by modeling and imitating an expert teacher and following directions without questioning why they need to do so.
>
> c) The reflective model means teachers learn by reflecting on their own experience. They then apply what they have learned through reflection into their practice with the aim of further refining their professional abilities.

The notion of teacher training seems to correspond to Wallace's first and second models, while teacher development can be categorized into the third model.

Why Do We Need this Distinction?

The rationale behind this distinction is probably attributable to the issue of teacher learnability, often characterized as a dilemma of teacher education (Richards, 1990). In other words, the training perspective of teacher preparation seems to reflect what is often called the micro approach, in which teaching can be broken down into discrete and tangible skills or techniques, while the view of teacher development goes beyond those atomistic dimensions of teaching to the beliefs, knowledge, and thinking processes that underlie actual teaching behaviors (Freeman, 1989). As research on classroom clearly shows, language teaching involves not only low-inference skills, or mastery of rules and routines of practice, such as how to make a lesson plan, how to set up group work, and how to use strategies for effective questioning, eliciting and giving feedback, but also high-inference decision making in terms of when and why teachers behave the way they do in the classroom (Britten, 1985; Medley, 1979). Wajnryb (1992) observes that the latter are less amenable to being taught explicitly, because they are more abstract and more conceptual, and more complex (p. 10).

Although some aspects of teaching can be delivered to teachers in preparation as techniques to be mastered, such a prescriptive view of teaching, though sometimes efficient in terms of the time and effort required of teacher educators, does not necessarily lead to effective teaching (Richards, 1990). When teaching is seen more as a dynamic process characterized by constant change, teachers also need to acknowledge the fact that "there is no best way to behave" (Parker, 1984, p. 220) and to learn to make decisions that are fit for the constant changes of the language classroom. But how can teachers learn to make such "interactive decisions" without some kind of help? In order for us to learn to do so, we first need to become aware of our experiences as teachers. Otherwise, many of the moment-to-moment decisions we make while we teach would be lost and left into total oblivion. Our conscious awareness of what we do in the classroom, thus, needs to be cultivated along with our assumptions and beliefs that underlie our actual teaching practice.

As Bartlett (1990) and Wallace (1991) note, our reflective efforts, which involve posing questions about how and why we teach the way we do in the classroom and what values our behavior represent, can provide a lot of opportunities for us to change. It should be noted, however, that the notion of change in the "training" perspective is quite different from the change that the "development" approach entails. In the latter perspective, changes are not necessarily limited to the behavioral level as expected in the former, but rather changes occur in the levels of attitude and awareness that lead to deeper understanding of our teaching practice (i.e. an affirmation of current practice) (Freeman, 1989; Bailey, 1991). In other words, the main tenet of teacher development as opposed to training is not to judge what we do but to describe and understand "what we are now by reflecting on how we got to be here" (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001, p. 247).

Indeed, a critical stance toward ourselves as individual language teachers may pose a challenge to our identity in the sense that changing the way we have gotten used to and valued involves uncertainty or the feeling of loss. But if we initiate our reflective efforts in our own ways and take responsibility for our own professional growth as language teachers, the initial fear of exposing ourselves to critical reflection can result in feelings of excitement and empowerment (Edge, 1992), where we can construct our own knowledge base to act upon and also escape from being afraid of others' prescriptive judgments that would hamper our autonomous learning.

As Fanselow (1990, p. 183) clearly notes, "helpful prescriptions" can be more of a hindrance than a real help in developing teacher-learners' exploration and also can

lead to "learned helplessness" (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978) or what Fanselow has called "ours is not to wonder syndrome." That is, teacher-learners, if deprived of their self-initiated developmental opportunities to construct their personalized knowledge (Freire, 1970), may change on the surface level by following what others say to them, but such "superficial" behavioral changes alone do not lead to "empowerment," which would facilitate further development as professional language teachers.

Thus, the traditional role relationships of teacher as deficient, passive, and subordinate to all-knowing teacher trainer is in stark contrast to the current collaborative role relationships, in which the central role of teacher educator is to trigger and facilitate change through the teacher learners' awareness rather than to intervene directly as in training (Freeman, 1989; Nunan, 1992).

The underlying principle of this collaborative model of teacher development is that "the learner needs to own responsibility for the learning processes and outcomes" (Wajnryb 1992, p. 12). This learning principle further suggests that voices of both teacher and teacher learners, reflected in their different learning styles and beliefs, also need to be acknowledged as resources or assets for each other (Kohonen, 1992; Bartlett 1990; Nunan, 1990; Gebhard, 1990). Although our professional development is essentially personal in nature based on self-awareness of our beliefs, assumptions, and values that underlie our practice, such self-awareness processes can be more enhanced when we collaborate with trusted others including teacher educators (Brinton & Holten, 1989, 1993).

Edge (1992, p. 4) describes the need of others in order for us to look closely into ourselves. As she says, "I need someone to work with, but I don't need someone who wants to change me and make me more like the way they think I ought to be. I need someone who will help me see myself clearly." This suggests that our simple, often egocentric subjectivity can be redefined through collaboration, in which our existing constructions of reality or meaning are challenged and reconstructed through negotiations of multiple voices of others. That is the essence of change not necessarily in our behaviors but in our perspectives.

Q.2 What is Teacher Exploration in Relation to Teacher Development?

Gebhard & Oprandy (1999) further expanded the developmental approach to teacher education by proposing an exploratory approach as a liberating tool for teachers from the pressure of finding a better way of teaching. In other words, the

goals of the developmental approach emphasize the concept of seeking better or more effective and improved teaching, while the central aim of an exploratory approach can be seen as simply gaining awareness of teachers' beliefs and practices (See Table 1).

Training

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Development & Exploration
Free to explore teaching Self-responsibility to develop Description & Action: Based on one's own decision making Non-judgmental stance Explore for exploration's sake

As Fanselow notes by referring to Bronowski's (1956) comments on how we construct knowledge, the process of exploration is the "habit of truth," always questioning "Is that so?" (p. 197). In a similar vein, a non-judgmental stance of teachers in looking at their own teaching as well as others' would provide them with more possibilities to explore than being confined to the limited ways of how teaching should be done in the name of "helpful prescriptions" of others (Fanselow, 1990, p. 183). According to Gebhard & Oprandy (1999), ways of being aware of our teaching can be expanded when we go beyond the usual ways of understanding teaching as we first identify a problem area in our teaching and devise ways to deal with it.

Table 1.
Teacher Training vs. Teacher Development and Exploration

Training	Development and Exploration
Looking for better ways to teach	Free to explore teaching
Dependence on experts/models/theories	Self-responsibility to develop
Prescription: A correct/ best way to teach	Description & Action: Based on one's own decision making
Judgmental stance	Non-judgmental stance
Problem solving	Explore for exploration's sake

Certainly such a process of problem solving does make sense and is worth doing as it involves much of our reflective awareness, but there are many other ways of exploring our teaching, such as seeing what happens by trying the opposite or random teaching behaviors, contrasting what we do with what we think we do, considering our beliefs or assumptions that underlie what we do, or inquiring how we feel about what we do in relation to what we value as a teacher, a learner, or as a person (Gebhard, 2005). The last point of exploring the emotional side of ourselves, often neglected as an area of inquiry in the literature on teacher development, can raise our further awareness of how our personal beliefs, assumptions, and values are reflected in our teaching behaviors, as illustrated in such connecting questions, "How does language teaching fit into my vision of who I am (becoming) and how I'd like the world to be?" and "Am I real in and out of school?" (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999, p. 139, 142).

If we become more aware of ourselves in terms of our preconceived ideas that guide our ways of seeing the world around us and then challenge such value-laden world views, we would become more open-minded, reminding ourselves of the need to go back to the "beginner's mind" (Suzuki, 1970) and to "start from a base of ignorance" (Fanselow, as quoted in Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999).

Q.3 What Activities Can Teachers Use to Work on their Development and to Explore their Teaching?

Before we examine specific activities or procedures for our professional development, we need to acknowledge the underlying premise that guides our professional development activities, that "self-awareness and self-observation are the cornerstones of all professional development" (Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 2001, p. 22). According to the "Johari Window" described by Luft and Ingram (1969), which captures the idea that things are either known or not known to us, and also known or not known to others, self-awareness means making things previously unknown to ourselves known, or to use Shulman's (1989) words, "making the tacit explicit."

The process of making the tacit explicit, thus, involves conscious awareness of our de facto conceptions of practice in the professional discourse contexts of the teacher education community (Freeman, 1991) and also critical awareness of our reflection on the gap between what we do and what we think we do (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). In order to make the most out of such a reflective or awareness raising process, it is necessary for us to have an idea of what we are looking for or what we are interested in learning more about (i.e., systematicity), by keeping our mind open to unexpected discoveries that will arise before, after and during the process (i.e., exploration) (Richards, 1990).

In other words, our self-awareness or self-observation can be more facilitated when we approach it in a systematic and objective manner as illustrated in Schon's (1983) ideas of "reflection-in-action" (during our teaching) and "reflection-on-action" (before and after our teaching). The former includes our online and spontaneous decision-making in the midst of our teaching, while the latter refers to more systematic and focused reflection on particular issues or interests over time. Thus, the goals of our reflective activities are not only to describe and articulate what decisions we are making while we teach but also to challenge and explore how or why our actions or behaviors in the classroom are influenced by our previous experiences as both a learner and a teacher, which interact with our personal assumptions or beliefs on what teachers should be like (Freeman, 1992; Kennedy, 1990).

Specific Activities: Observation

Traditional views of observation often emphasize how to do things, that is, the mastery of specific types of teaching behaviors or techniques that experienced teachers employ, so that novice teachers can apply them in their own teaching (Richards, 1998; Day, 1990). It should be noted, however, that such a prescriptive approach does not take into account the fact that those techniques or strategies that would appear to be quite effective in one context cannot always be so in another context. That is because the same classroom event or behavior can be seen differently when observers hold different views of teaching (Fanselow, 1977).

In contrast to the technical view of classroom observation, Gebhard (1999, p. 35) defines it as "nonjudgmental description of classroom events that can be analyzed and given interpretation." According to Gebhard, the central aim of classroom observation is to develop our self-awareness by seeing ourselves in others' teaching (Fanselow, 1990). The shift of focus from identifying techniques or skills employed by other teachers to describing and interpreting the complex meanings that underlie the observable behaviors can provide more opportunities for us to explore how and why we teach the way we do.

We can collect and analyze the teaching we observe through the use of different observation instruments, such as checklists, tally sheets, pictures, sketches, coding (e.g. COLT by Allen, Frohlich, & Spada, 1984 or FOCUS by Fanselow, 1987), video-taping or audio taping. In the participant observation, the observer sometimes takes the role of "ethnographer" in which he/she needs to understand and describe the classroom community from the perspective of its members (i.e., students) (Watson-Gegeo, 1988)

Whether classroom observation takes the forms of a novice teacher observing an experienced teacher or colleagues joining each other's classes as in the case of peer observation, the essential processes of observation, collecting, describing, analyzing, and interpreting need to be understood as cyclical in nature, allowing our observations to retain the possibility of multiple interpretations. In other words, observation, when linked to critical reflection, can become a powerful exploratory tool for us to develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and help us make informed teaching decisions or activate "action-system knowledge" (Day, 1990) rather than "blindly follow what others say and do" (Gebhard, 1999, p. 37).

Teaching Journals

One of the strengths that teaching journals inherently possess is that they involve the act of writing in which reflection comes naturally. According to Bartlett (1990, p. 209), although we can record our practice by using audio-visual instruments,

"the best means would seem to involve some form of writing." According to Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (2001), a teaching journal can provide a) a place for us to articulate our concerns or problems encountered during our teaching as well as "the everyday working experience that might otherwise be lost" (McDonough, 1994, p. 64), b) a safe environment in which we can explore our doubts or frustrations that might potentially lead to the loss of face when shared with others in public, c) helpful distancing, which is similar to Van Lier's (1988, p. 33) idea of "estrangement device," that allows us to see our teaching from a more detached or objective viewpoint, d) an introspective case that reveals hidden aspects of language teaching normally unknown to an outside observer (Bailey, 1991), e) a place for us to uncover our own assumptions and beliefs, shaped by our previous experiences both as a learner and teacher, or what Kennedy (1990) has called "apprenticeship of observation" that guides our teaching practices, and f) a data collection device in conducting action research or as the data base for a diary study (Wallace, 1996). Although keeping a private, unanalyzed teaching journal can still be very informative, when analyzed, looking for patterns over time it turns into a diary study (Ho & Richards, 1993).

Furthermore, when collaborative elements are added (e.g., coupled with written peer responses and group discussions), our journal writings would create a professional discourse community in which our opportunities to explore are multiplied through the effects of "triangulation" (Dong, 1997; Brinton, Holten, & Goodwin, 1993).

As Ho and Richards clearly point out (1993), "the mere fact of writing about teaching does not necessarily involve critical reflection" (p. 162), if we focus only on describing trivial details (Jarvis, 1992). Thus, we need to go beyond mere description into a more reflective mode of writing, so that our awareness of why we teach the way we do in the classroom and what consequences our actions have on students can be further cultivated (Bailey, 1996).

Action Research

As Cohen and Manion (1985) point out, action research is "a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention" (p. 174). In other words, action research involves teachers systematically changing some aspect of their teaching practice in response to some issue or concern that would pose as a problem to be addressed, collecting relevant data on the effects of changed practice, and interpreting and analyzing the

findings in order to determine whether another intervention would be necessary (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001, p. 134).

Such processes of action research, according to Nunan (1992) and Burns (1996), can be better understood as critical self-reflection or inquiry carried out by teachers themselves with the aims of enhancing their understanding of the assumptions, values, or theories that underlie their teaching practice as well as improving their practice by solving problems. Crookes (1993) further notes that action research can serve as a means of critical reflection not only on the immediate context of teaching but also on the sociopolitical contexts that go beyond the classroom. One distinguishing characteristic between action research and other more conventional or traditional types of research is that action research has its primary focus on "individual or small-group professional practice" (Wallace, 1998, p. 18), not on "the generalizability of the findings to other contexts" (p. 18).

From an exploratory approach, Gebhard and Oprandy (1999) further note the potential benefits of action research as an exploratory tool to investigate our teaching behavior and beliefs, not just as a means to identify and solve problems (p. 62). For example, by contrasting what we believe we do with what we actually do in the classroom or considering what we believe about teaching and learning in relation to what students do in response, action research can provide opportunities for us to bridge the gap between theoretical and practical aspects of language teaching (Van Lier, 1988, p. 3).

Buckheister & Fanselow (1984) also argue that our continual reflective efforts to understand what we do in the classroom and what consequences our actions bring about for students need to be emphasized for us to develop as professional teachers, and they conclude that "ultimately the process of searching for the key may be more important than finding it because the search shows how normal misses, as well as hits, really are" (p. 225).

Conclusion

Although an underlying theme of reflection and reflective teaching is the teachers' rather solitary process of introspection and retrospection in response to what they did and thought before, during and after lessons (Bartlett, 1990, Richards & Lockhart, 1994), some other definitions take a broader stance incorporating the concept of reflection within the social and political contexts in which teachers work (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). This latter view of reflection with its emphasis on the social contexts, thus, clearly suggests that teacher learners and their learning processes cannot be adequately described or understood without taking into full

account the sociocultural contexts in which their learning takes place (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 408).

Similarly, Zeichner and Liston (1996) note that reflective teaching practice does not necessarily occur simply by thinking about teaching (e.g. carefully planning lesson plans or recording what happened in the classroom), but rather it involves questioning the assumptions and values he/she brings to the classroom and critical examinations of the institutional and cultural contexts in which teaching occurs. That is, the process of our reflective practice can be viewed as a process of reframing our own already existing perceptions of reality and constructing new meanings in our own ways (Stanley, 1998). Although such a reflective process does imply some form of "change" when we develop as professional teachers, the "change" cannot necessarily be limited to our teaching behaviors or actions in the classroom, but rather it means more changes in our attitude and awareness which can be fostered through our self-initiated reflective processes.

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