

DOING EDUCATION DIFFERENTLY

Proceedings of the
2017 STORIES Conference

Edited by
Kari Coffman Şahan
Marianne Melsen
Alice Tawell
Kaitlyn Newell
Kai Wortmann
Naheed Mukhi



Oxford: STORIES Conference

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Doing Education Differently: Proceedings of the 2017 STORIES Conference
Edited by Kari Coffman Sahan, Marianne Melsen, Alice Tawell, Kaitlyn Newell, Kai Wortmann,
and Naheed Mukhi

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About the STORIES Conference

STORIES (Students' Ongoing Research in Education Studies) is a conference for graduate students and early career researchers to discuss their ongoing research in education and education-related projects in other disciplines, such as linguistics, anthropology, social policy intervention, economics, and the wider social sciences. The conference is organised by graduate students and held annually at the Department of Education, University of Oxford. In 2017, the conference theme was Doing Education Differently. Participants were invited to engage with the concepts of difference and diversity as manifested in areas of education in order to offer new perspectives on what it means to do education and educational research in today's world.

About the Editors

Kari Coffman Sahan is a doctoral student at the University of Oxford, Department of Education. Her research focuses the implementation of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in higher education institutions. She completed her undergraduate studies at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and holds an MA from Bilkent University in Ankara. She is a former Fulbright grantee and worked as the English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) Program Advisor for the Turkish Fulbright Commission.

Marianne Melsen has recently completed her MSc in Education (Higher Education) at the University of Oxford. For her Master's research, she focused on university students' understanding of the concept employability and the perceived importance of employability as an outcome of university education. She also holds a BSc in Education Science from Aarhus University in Denmark. Having completed her Master's course, she now works as Vice-President of Graduates at the Oxford Student Union.

Alice Tawell is an ESRC doctoral student at the Department of Education, University of Oxford. Her research focusses on exclusion from school. Alice completed her BSc in Sociology at the University of Bath and her MSc in Education (Research Training) at the University of Oxford. Alongside her studies, Alice is a Research Officer for the Excluded Lives project at the Department of Education, University of Oxford.

Kaitlyn Newell recently completed an MSc in Education (Research Training) at the University of Oxford and holds an MS in Education from Johns Hopkins, and a BA from Yale University in Religious Studies. She is currently working as a research specialist for an organization which provides early childhood education and family services for children and families in poverty.

Kai Wortmann is currently a researcher and lecturer at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Previously, he studied Education and Philosophy in Heidelberg and Educational Research Methodology in Oxford. His areas of specialisation are postmodern and pragmatist philosophy of education as well as qualitative research methodology. He is particularly interested in the relationship between cultural theory, empirical research and educational practice.

Naheed Mukhi recently completed her MSc. in Child Development and Education from University of Oxford. Her research interest includes development and evaluation of interventions that promote socio-emotional development and diversity in early childhood. Currently, Mukhi is working as an Early Childhood Development (ECD) coordinator and consultant for International ECD projects in Canada, Afghanistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Syria.

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Understanding Entrepreneurialism as Part of Skill Formation Strategies to Diversify the Economy

Issa Al-Shabibi, Cardiff University

This study concerns strategies implemented in Oman for skills formation through the promotion of entrepreneurship. This is to support economic transformation away from rentierism (whereby a state derives most of its national revenues from ‘renting’ natural resources, e.g. oil to external actors) and towards a more diversified economy. The study focuses on one particular higher education initiative, providing a ‘lens’ through which to explore stakeholders’ understanding of entrepreneurship and assess its contribution to broader strategies of economic diversification and ‘Omanisation’ (replacing expatriate workers with Omanis). This paper is limited to discussing initial findings from surveys conducted amongst students only. Further data will be gathered to address the research questions through semi-structured interviews with lecturers, policymakers and students in higher education, as well as with entrepreneurs. The initial findings almost indicate a consensus on the interpretation of “entrepreneurship”, as well as positive attitudes to its potential contribution to economic diversification.

Introduction

Globalisation and Oman’s Skill Formation Strategies

The existing literature reveals differences in the way skills are developed worldwide, with prevailing skill formation strategies reflecting the corresponding political economies (Hall & Gingerich, 2009). Oman is a rentier state, now seeking economic diversification. It could be argued that its skill formation strategies are underpinned by a liberal market approach, due to the predominance of general, rather than industry- or firm-specific skills in its population. It is speculated that this is due to the influence of neoliberalism on Oman’s rentier nature, as with all the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States (Hanieh, 2015). Other areas of activity are subsequently influenced, including education, although many features of this

approach are absent, such as competitive market arrangements based on supply and demand, radical innovation, competitive inter-firm relationships, and deregulation policies (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012). Furthermore, the State possesses full political and economic power over all sectors, comparable with the developmental state approach (Kwon, 2005). Al-Kindi (2007) concedes that Oman resembles the UK in its education, but highlights a recent shift towards the character of the so-called ‘Asian Tigers’ - particularly Singapore - in its approach to skills formation.

Nevertheless, despite Oman sharing some features of its skill formation system with other countries worldwide, it does not conform to any single model. It has instead developed a distinctive strategy; it is attempting to lose its status as a rentier state, and is seeking to re-position itself globally (Ennis, 2015). Entrepreneurship has been identified as a component of this strategy, with a corresponding educational initiative to foster entrepreneurship and innovation. This consists of its Entrepreneurship Programme in higher education, aimed at generating an ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ and changing the prevailing mind-set.

The research works from the following research questions:

1. How is entrepreneurialism understood (by higher education students and other key stakeholders) in Oman?
2. What is the potential of entrepreneurship, as a higher education skill formation strategy, to contribute to the broader strategy of Omanisation and economic diversification of Oman’s (rentier state) economy?
3. To what extent might a newly-introduced, higher education sector Entrepreneurial Education Programme develop knowledge and skills for a more diversified and entrepreneurial economy?

Theoretical Framework

The study considers the general drivers behind entrepreneurial education initiatives in terms of policy direction for skills formation and economic development at global level. It also looks at the underpinning political economy. Here, Oman has instituted a policy of economic diversification and ‘Omanisation’, i.e. replacing expatriate workers with Omanis (Das & Gokhale, 2010). Specific education policies are thus analysed, with a critical review of education and skill formation literature. Crucial to this analysis is Human Capital Theory (HCT), constituting the dominant conceptual

framework for this research area over the past four decades (e.g. Wolf, 2004; Chang, 2012).

HCT presumes that the skills acquired through “investments in schooling, on-the-job training, and other types of experience” will enhance national economic growth (Becker, 1993) and Oman acknowledges this positive relationship in its five-year economic plans and Vision 2020 (Sultanate of Oman Supreme Council for Planning, 2016). With increasing urgency since the beginning of the century, Oman has been attempting to move away from an over-reliance on rentierism towards greater entrepreneurship, via skills formation strategies aimed at economic diversification. This may be observed in the introduction of entrepreneurship into Oman’s higher education institutes (HEIs), with a view to emphasising human capital rather than natural resources for economic development. The expenditure in education accounted for 10.8% of total government spending in 2013, which was 25 per cent more than 2012 (Muscat Daily Staff Writer, 2014). In 2016, the government spent 18% of its total budget on education (Sultanate Ministry of Finance, 2016).

There is indeed a vast body of comparative literature on capitalism, illuminating various approaches to investment in human capital and skills, with evidence of HCT rhetoric in education and skill formation strategies globally. However, the ways in which these strategies are applied can vary.

Methodology

This paper mainly presents survey findings, as part of a larger mixed-method study. The survey was employed to inform the interview schedules, identifying the facts and orienting the research through preliminary background data. The qualitative method for the larger study will use semi-structured interviews to investigate how the stakeholders - students, lecturers and policymakers in higher education, and entrepreneurs in the labour market - understand (and come to understand) the meaning of “entrepreneurship”. Whilst the survey targeted one group (students) within the larger study population, the quantitative data are significant, providing the basis for methodologically robust qualitative data to address the research questions and triangulate the findings.

A review of literature (e.g., Keep, 2014; Kuratko, 2016) led to finalise the three research questions (see above). Survey items/questions were subsequently generated out of these research questions and tested in a pilot

survey. The modified survey was distributed to 57 HEIs, and 726 responses (409 female and 317 male) were recorded. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was then used to run a descriptive analysis.

Initial Survey Findings

Survey Item Responses to Research Question One

To address the first research question (see above), one survey item gathered data on respondents' understanding/interpretation of 'entrepreneurship', as presented in Figure 1:

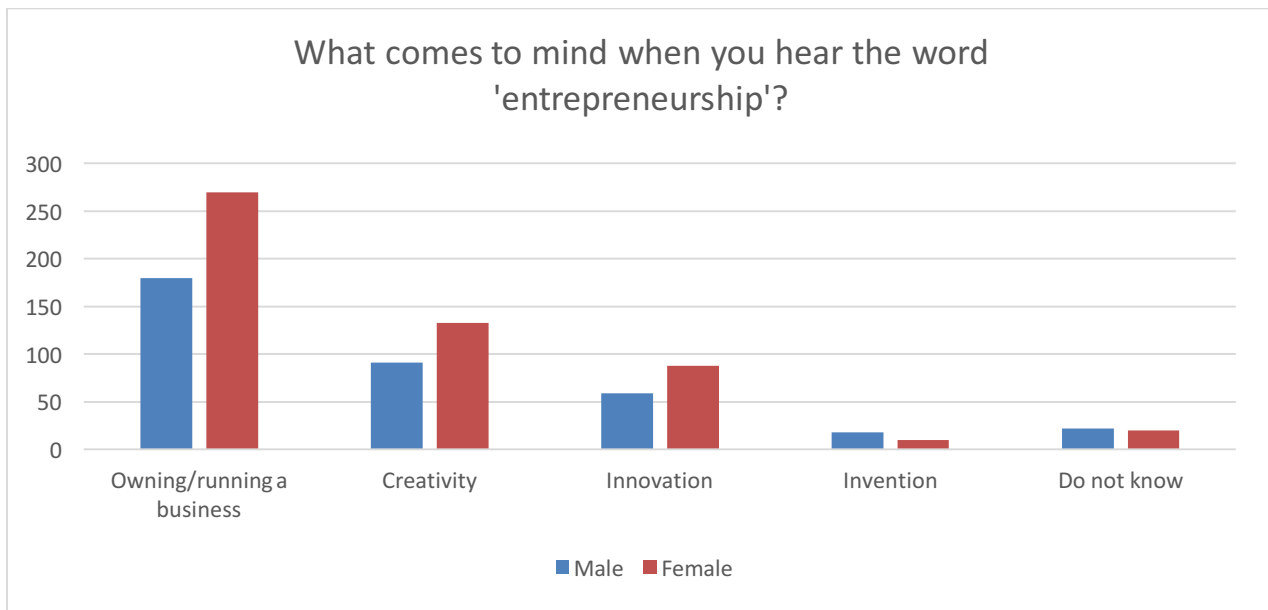


Figure 1: Interpretations of 'entrepreneurship'

The respondents who considered 'entrepreneurship' to mean 'owning/running a business' amounted to 62.1%, while 31% interpreted it as 'creativity' and 20.3% as 'innovation'. Initial observations suggest that gender does not have a major bearing on interpreting entrepreneurship, although female participation was greater, hence the higher columns in Figure 1 registered by the female respondents. Furthermore, the educational level of the students' parents was not found to be influential and this is illustrated in Figure 2:

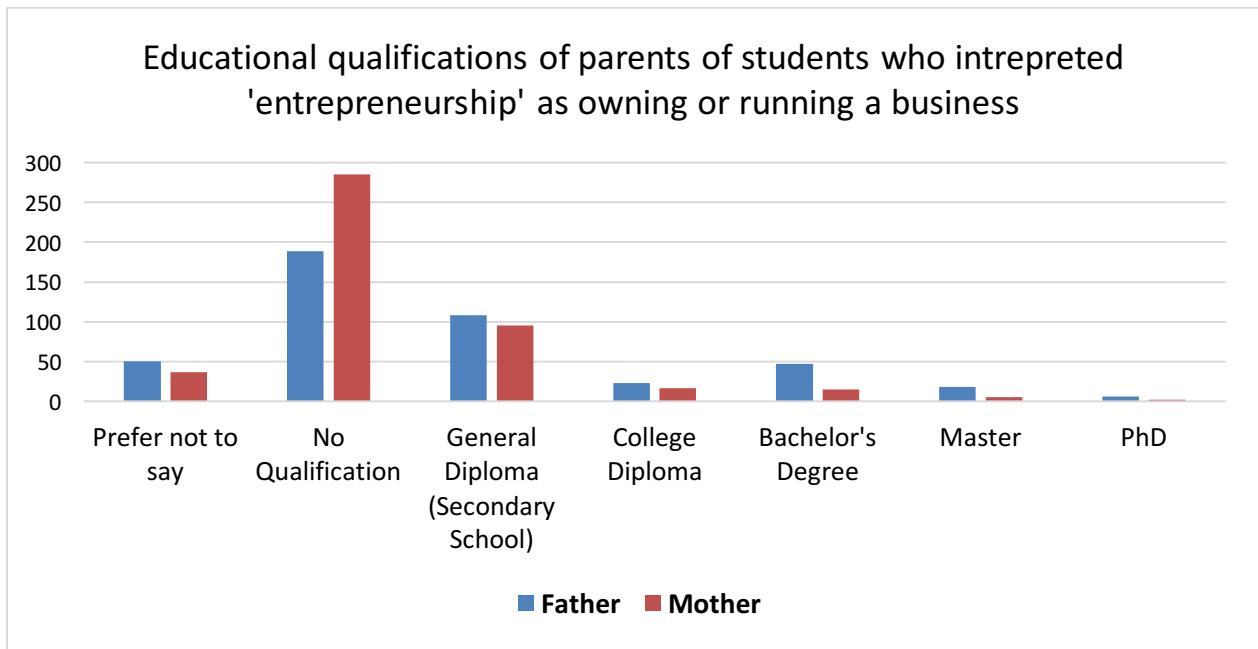


Figure 2: Perceptions of entrepreneurship and educational level of students' parents

Moreover, there was a consensus on interpretations of 'entrepreneurship' across all HEIs, irrespective of sector or ranking, as can be seen for the two most common selections in Figures 3 and 4:

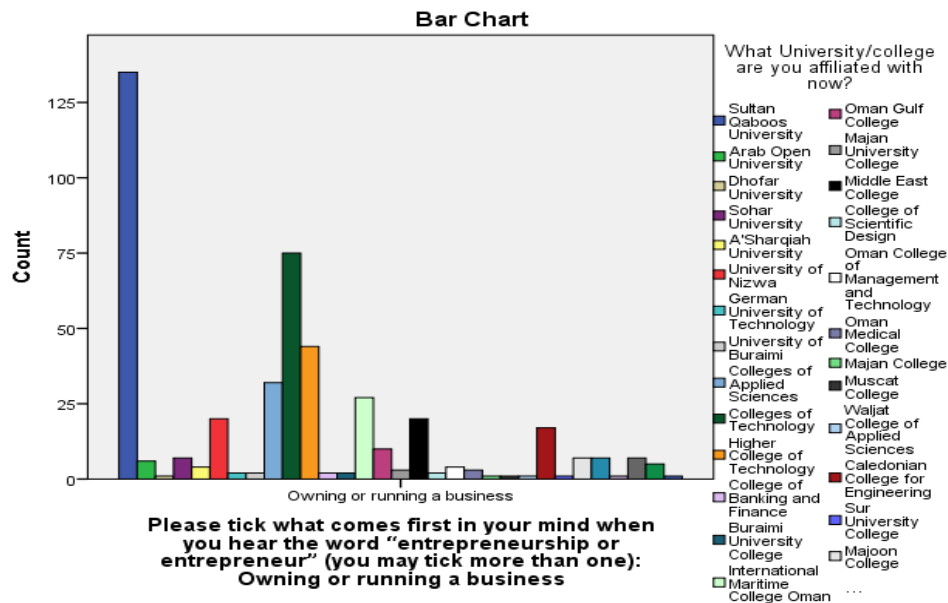


Figure 3: Perception of entrepreneurship as 'owning or running a business', in relation to the HEI attended

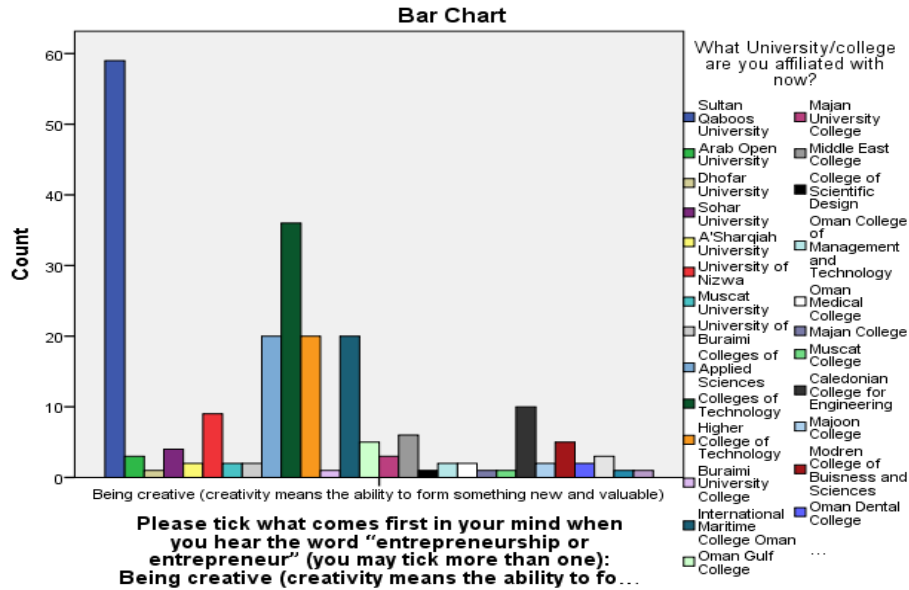


Figure 4: Perception of entrepreneurship as 'creativity', in relation to the HEI attended

'Income' and 'enjoyment' were the most common reasons cited for selecting a course of study, but the students' post-graduation preferences were mainly recorded as public or private sector employment, rather than owning or running a business:

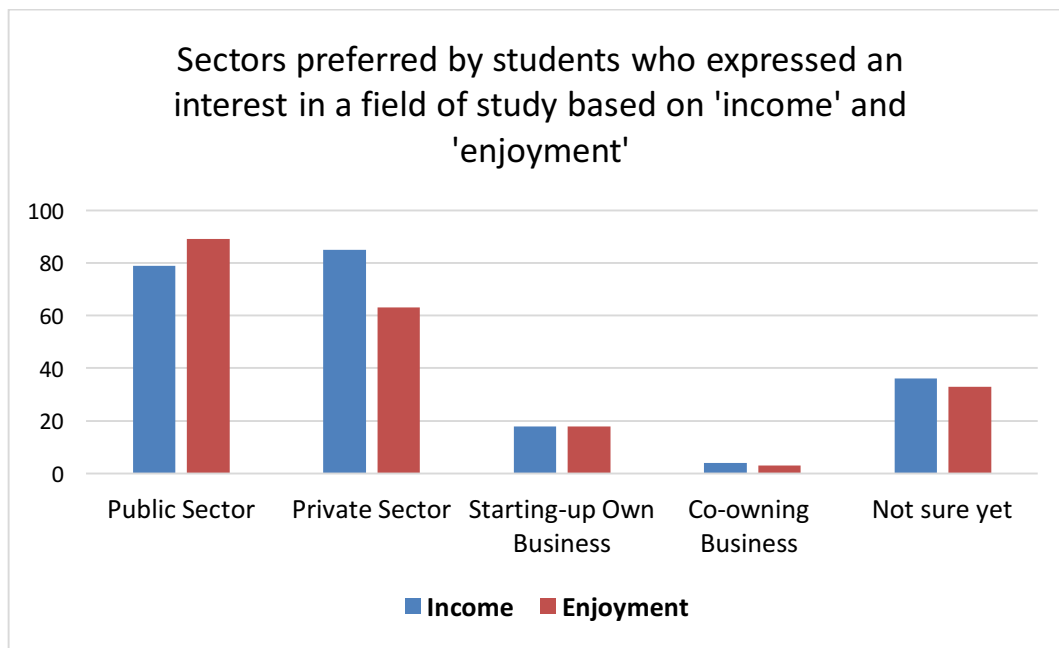


Figure 5: Selecting a field of study based on 'income' and 'enjoyment'

This can be interpreted as students failing to consider owning or running a business as something enjoyable or lucrative. Figure 6, below, shows the preference amongst the majority of students for public- or private-sector employment. This gives rise to the interview question on their reasons for their preference, e.g., asking students why they prefer to work in public, or private sector rather than starting their own business:

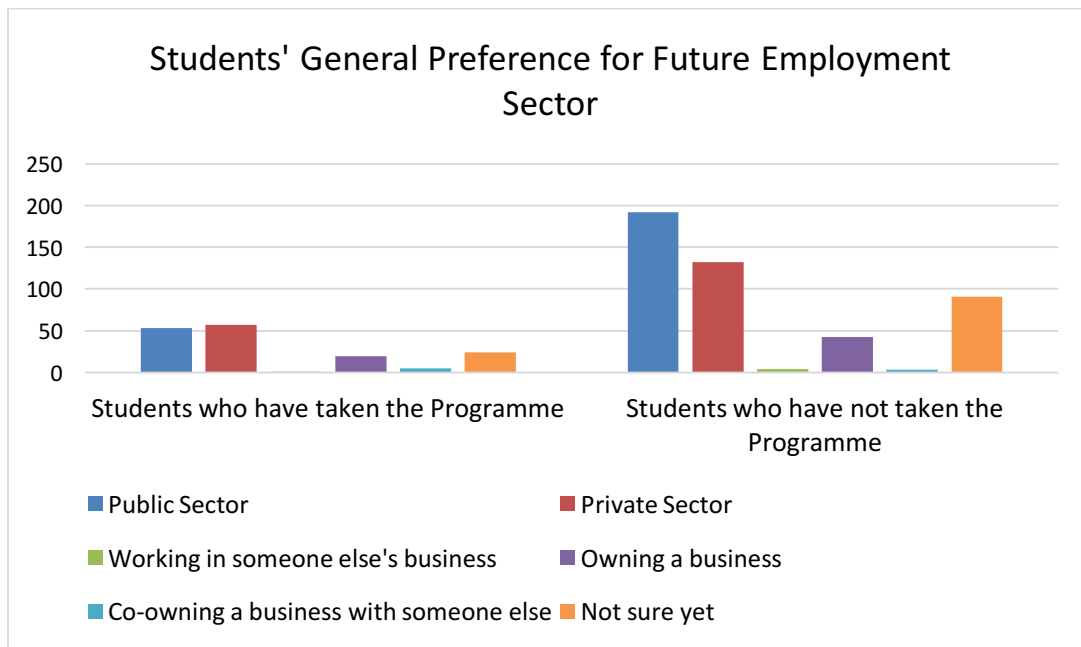


Figure 6: The Students' Preference on future career plans

Survey Item Responses to Research Question Two

In order to answer the second research question on strategy of Oman to use entrepreneurship as one way to diversify the economy, three key points were identified and these are presented below in Figure 7. A Likert scale was applied in each case to reveal the degree of agreement and disagreement with the corresponding item:

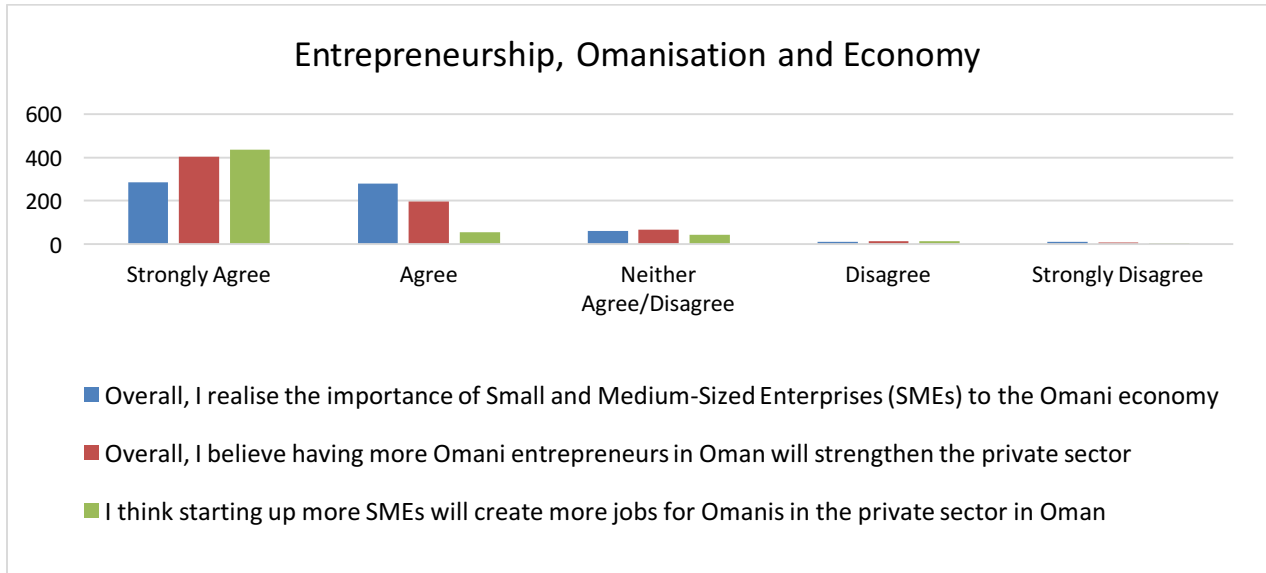


Figure 7: Students' perspectives of the impact of entrepreneurship on Oman's economy and job creation

Overall, Figure 7 illustrates positive attitudes to entrepreneurship as a means of strengthening Oman's private sector and employment opportunities. Interviews would therefore elucidate why and how the respondents think entrepreneurship could strengthen Oman's private sector and job market, thus diversifying its economic base. Identified from the literature (e.g., Burns, 2008; Gartner, 1985), three components were subsequently considered crucial for the entrepreneurial environment: rules and regulations, cultural (including religious) values, and social standing, as shown in Figure 8:

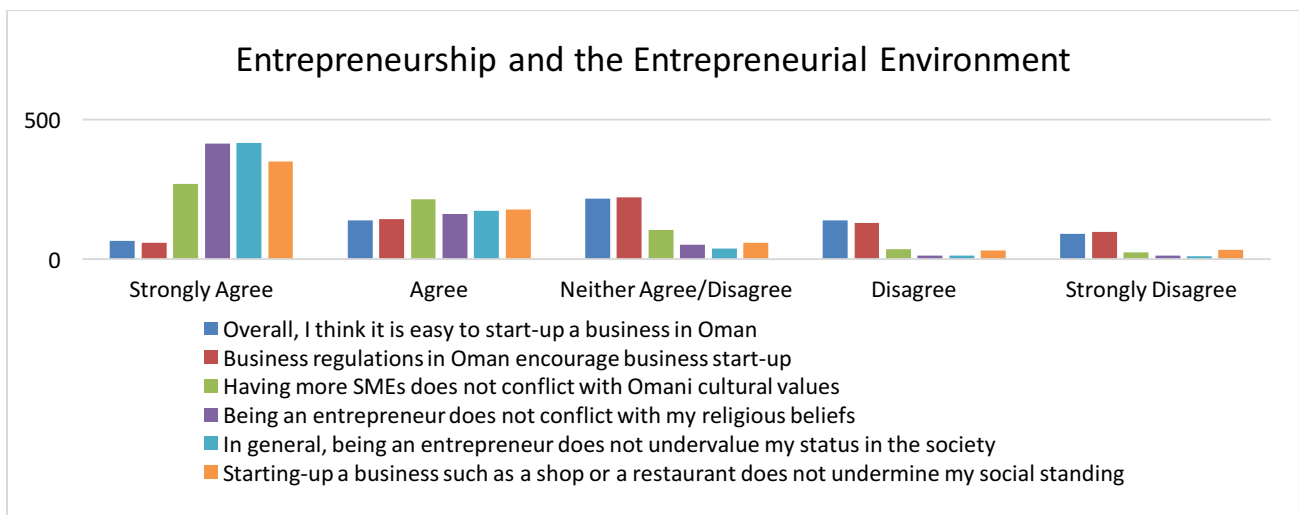


Figure 8: Perceptions of the appropriate entrepreneurial environment

Figure 8 mainly illustrates that the respondents did not perceive any conflict between entrepreneurship, cultural (religious) beliefs and social standing, even in the case of small businesses. However, they expressed negative views of business regulations and generally disagreed that it was ‘easy to start a business’. This could be further explored in the interviews.

Survey Item Responses to Research Question Three

For research question three which seeks to explore the ability of the programme to develop skills, a Likert scale was used to measure how far the respondents agreed that the programme was effective for encouraging, empowering, inspiring and providing first-hand experience. Figure 9, below, reveals the mainly positive view of the programme’s efficacy in terms of these four points, but there was some hesitation over the fifth point, namely whether the programme led to more Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs). Here, the number of respondents ‘neither agreeing nor disagreeing’ was equal to those ‘agreeing’. Therefore, it would be interesting to gather further perspectives on this in interviews.

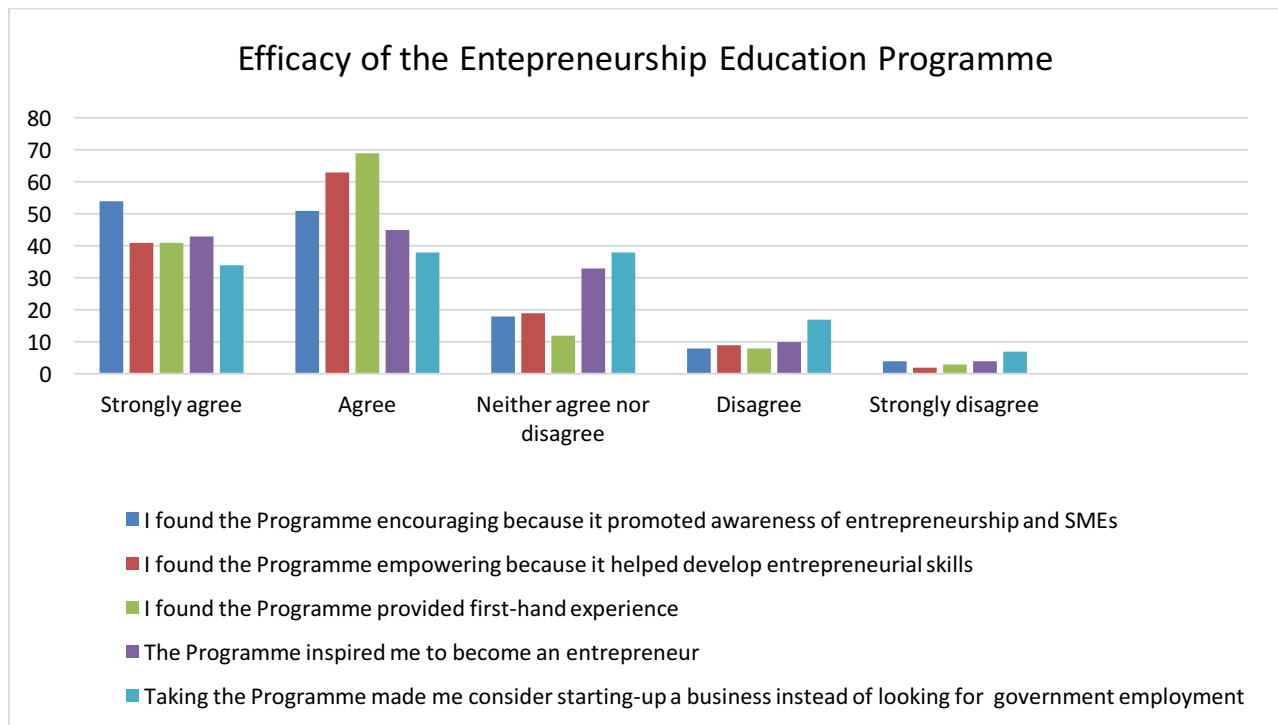


Figure 9: Students’ views of the efficacy of the Entrepreneurship Programme

Conclusion

Oman is currently seeking to develop its economy on its own terms, retaining the existing socio-political hierarchies. There is consequently no attempt to imitate other models, despite certain political and economic parallels with liberal market and developmental state approaches. This study examines skill formation strategies to support economic diversification in Oman, focusing on a recently introduced Entrepreneurship Education Programme. The initial survey findings have set the scene for more in-depth investigation through semi-structured interviews, using the programme as a 'lens' through which to explore stakeholders' understanding of entrepreneurship and its potential to develop skills and knowledge. The subsequent data collection and analysis will answer the 'why' questions and uncover the logic behind the perceptions and attitudes expressed in the students survey. This phase of data collection and analysis will moreover, engage other stakeholders' perspectives.

About the Author

Issa Al-Shabibi studies at Cardiff University under the supervision of Prof. Martin Jephcote and Dr. Dean Stroud, having previously gained a Master's Degree in Urban Education from New Jersey City University in the USA. Before embarking on this current PhD programme, Issa worked for the Research Council in Oman as a research associate in the education and human resources sector. His main area of interest is educational and sociological research.

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Peer Tutoring in University Mathematics Learning: First Insights of a Systematic Literature Review

Lingyue CHEN, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Daniel SOMMERHOFF, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Peer tutoring plays an essential role in the teaching and learning of university mathematics-related subjects. Still, there is few systematic evidence integrating prior and current research on features of successful tutorials. Our literature review examines prior research on peer tutoring in university mathematics to give evidence for its effectiveness, distill features of successful tutorials, and create an empirical basis for future professional development of student tutors, contributing to the innovation of university education. In total, 1346 relevant papers were found and analyzed in three consecutive rounds of coding, each showing a substantial inter-rater reliability with Cohen's kappa $\kappa \geq .730$. Although data is still in analysis, the coding results already show four main research topics, which are developing, evaluating, and improving a tutorial, as well as identifying challenges and shortcomings for a tutorial. Further analyses and the final review will be conducted by applying an inductive framework synthesis procedure.

Introduction

Tutorials accompanying lectures are an integral part of most university mathematics degree programs as they offer the opportunity for students to reflect and deepen the lecture's current mathematical content. Their importance has also been emphasized by research, showing that they facilitate students' learning and enhance their academic performance and attitudes (Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik, 1982; Owston & Murtha, 2013). Further, prior research showed that tutorials led by peer tutors have positive effects on both tutors' and tutees' learning (Cohen et al., 1982; Crouch & Mazur, 2001; Fagen, Crouch, & Mazur, 2002). Still, up to now, a systemic review of the outcomes of university peer tutoring in mathematics-related subjects (e.g., science, technology, or engineering) is missing. To bridge this gap, we

conducted a literature review on research from the past 56 years to distill features of successful tutorials on mathematics-related subjects in a university setting.

The Notion of “Tutorial”

The term *tutorial* covers various lecturing formats. These differ in size, ranging from one-on-one tutoring to tutorials with more than 50 students (De Backer, Van Keer, & Valcke, 2015; Guo, White, & Zanelatto, 2015), have different instructors, for example peer or academic tutors, and involve various instructional strategies, such as direct instruction or problem-based learning (Boelens, De Wever, Rosseel, Verstraete, & Derese, 2015). Furthermore, there are differences in the extent of media- and technology-usage, which enable new features such as simulation-based tasks, collaborative online learning, or intelligent tutoring systems (Ke, 2013; Sing & Fong, 2013; Ma, Adesope, Nesbit, & Liu, 2014).

Accordingly, the term *tutorial* describes a broad set of learning and instruction situations. As these must be assumed to differ substantially regarding their effectiveness and thus also regarding the features driving their success, a narrower operationalization of *tutorial* appears crucial for this review. Thus, the scope of the review was restricted due to several limitations. First, tutorials included are settled in a university context, meaning that the participants (tutees) are university students. Second, the tutorials are given by peer tutors, which is not only common, in particular in undergraduate teaching, but was also emphasized as more effective than tutorials given by academic tutors (Vaughan & Macfarlane, 2015). Third, we disregarded distance tutoring in the review, as local tutoring is more common and is regarded to be of higher quality (Allen & Seaman, 2011; Wang & Woo, 2007). Fourth, we targeted group tutorials rather than one-on-one tutorials in this review as they entail different instruction, cognitive achievements, and attitudes (Bloom, 1984).

Summarizing the above, this review covers tutorials defined as *university* courses given locally by a more advanced *student (peer tutor)* to a *group or a class* of less advanced students. Based on this operationalization, the ongoing review is guided by two questions:

- What are the main research foci of tutorial-related research?
- What features of successful university tutorials have been identified so far?

Method

To address the research questions, this review consists of three main steps: an initial literature search, three rounds of coding with increasing precision, and a final systematic review of the remaining papers (Figure 1).

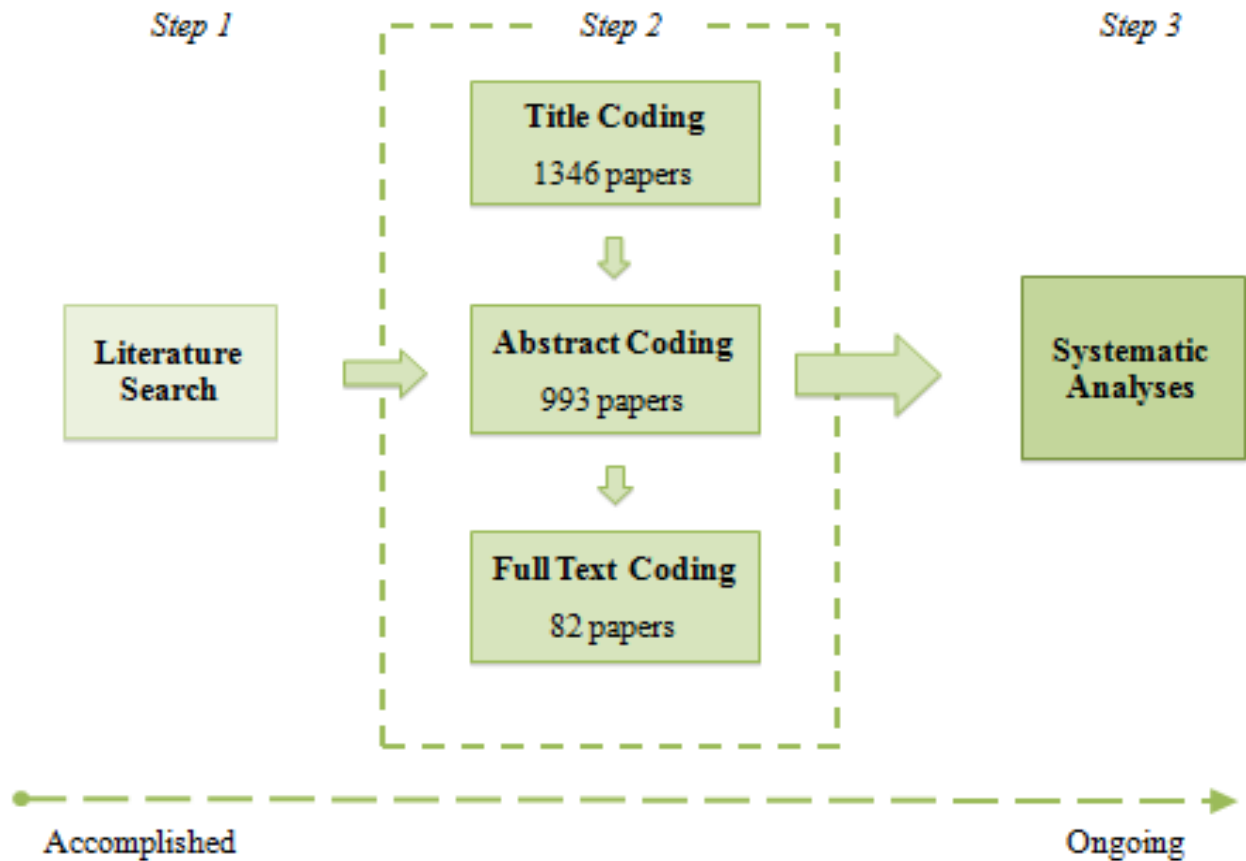


Figure 1: Steps Taken in the Literature Review

Literature Search

The initial search for papers was performed on two scientific search engines, the *Matheduc Database* and *Web of Science*. As most papers in the *Matheduc Database* were in German but not English, the search was limited to the *Web of Science*. The search terms used were *tutor** combined with one of the following words: *higher education*, *peer teaching*, *student teaching*, *tertiary education*, *tertiary teaching*, *university class*, *university course*, *university seminar*, and *university teaching*. In total, 1346 papers from the last 56 years were found.

Coding

To select papers investigating teaching and learning in a tutorial as operationalized above within mathematics-related subjects, six categories were created and used in three consecutive rounds of coding: title coding, abstract coding, and full-text coding. Rater trainings with both authors were conducted before each round of coding to ensure that the inter-rater reliability reached a substantial agreement (Cohen's kappa for each category was $\kappa \geq .730$). The main coding was then done by the first author in consultation with the second author.

Coding Scheme

The categories in the coding scheme are shown in Table 1, giving short definitions of each and a short glimpse on the additional finer coding:

Table 1: Short Definitions for the Categories

No.	Category	Definition
C1	University	The tutorial takes place in a university context with university students as participants.
C2	Peer tutoring	The tutors are university students.
C3	Group Setting	The tutorials are held in a local, collocated group setting. For local tutoring, one-on-one tutoring is left out and only group tutoring is accepted. The levels of group size used are, <i>small</i> (< 10), <i>medium</i> (≥ 10 & < 30), and <i>large</i> (≥ 30).
C4	Learning Aspect	The papers focus on learning aspects (as opposed to other aspects such as politics or economics). There are two main categories of learning aspects, <i>method-orientation</i> and <i>person-orientation</i> . Method-orientation papers focus on instructional methods, for example tutoring methods and strategies. Person-orientation papers focus on tutees' or tutors' aspects such as emotions, or attitudes, as well as the effectiveness of learning.

C5	Mathematics	The tutorials are held for mathematics classes or mathematics-related subjects (STEM).
C6	CSCL	The tutorials involve the Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) or not.

Among the six categories, the first five categories were created for selection purposes. Only those papers fitting all five categories were included. C1-C3 relate to the definition of a tutorial. C4 and C5 limit the papers to those looking at learning aspects and STEM-subjects. C6 has descriptive purposes, distinguishing between tutorials including forms of CSCL and those not.

Title and Abstract Coding

The first round of coding was conducted based on the *titles* of the 1346 papers from the literature search, resulting in the exclusion of 353 papers not conforming to the selection criteria. A second, more detailed round of coding using the *abstracts* was performed on the remaining 993 papers resulting in 82 papers that were included in the final round of coding.

Full-Text Coding

The third round of coding, using the full-text of the papers, was conducted on the remaining 82 papers. In addition to the six categories mentioned above, the answers to three content related questions were coded for each paper:

- Which scientific approach (e.g., empirical, theoretical) was used in the paper?
- What is (are) the main research question(s) / topic(s) of the paper?
- Does the paper suggest a positive or negative impact of tutorials on students' performance?

Preliminary Results

As the last phase of our literature review is still ongoing, only preliminary results can be provided here. In particular, there are so far no results regarding the features of successful tutorials. Instead, we give an overview of current research on tutorials based on the coding.

Abstract Coding

University

The abstract coding revealed that 65.5% of the 993 included papers focused on tutorials conducted in the university context with university students as tutees. Here, first-year-university-students stand out as a special target group (10.4% relative to the 65.5%). School pupils, adults, and tutees, whose identities cannot be identified, were found in 7.5%, 4.0% and 23.0% of the papers, respectively.

Peer Tutoring

Regarding the person conducting the tutorial, student tutors, academic tutors, non-human tutors, and tutors who cannot be identified accounted for 16.4%, 18.8%, 35.4%, and 29.4% of the 993 papers, respectively. The percentages of papers focusing on tutorials with human and non-human tutors were almost equal (35.2% vs. 35.4%). Among papers investigating human tutors, the proportion examining student tutors and academic tutors were close to each other (46.7% vs. 53.3%).

Group Setting

24.6% of the 993 papers were concerned with local group settings. In particular, 71.1% of local tutorials were conducted in group settings (Figure 2), whereas 74.8% of distance tutorials could be coded non-group tutoring (Figure 3).

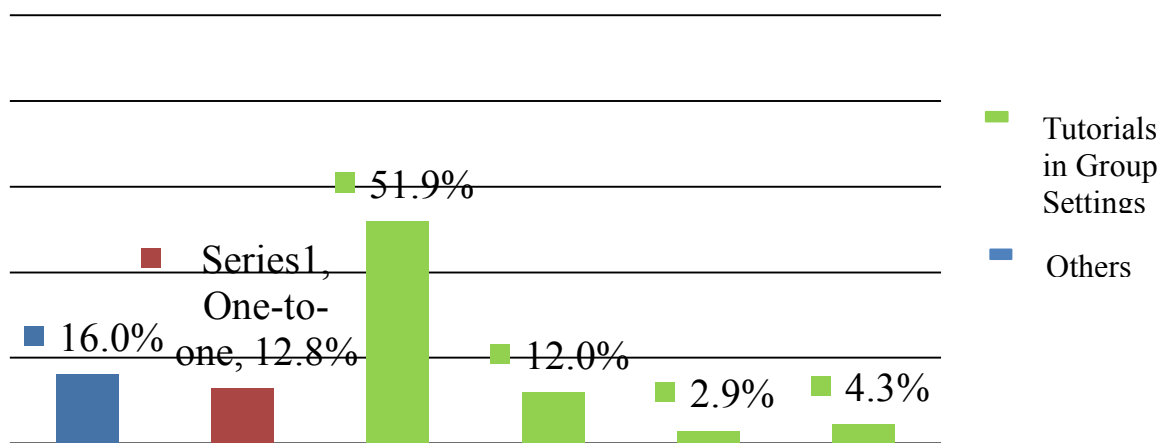


Figure 2: Form of the Local Tutorial

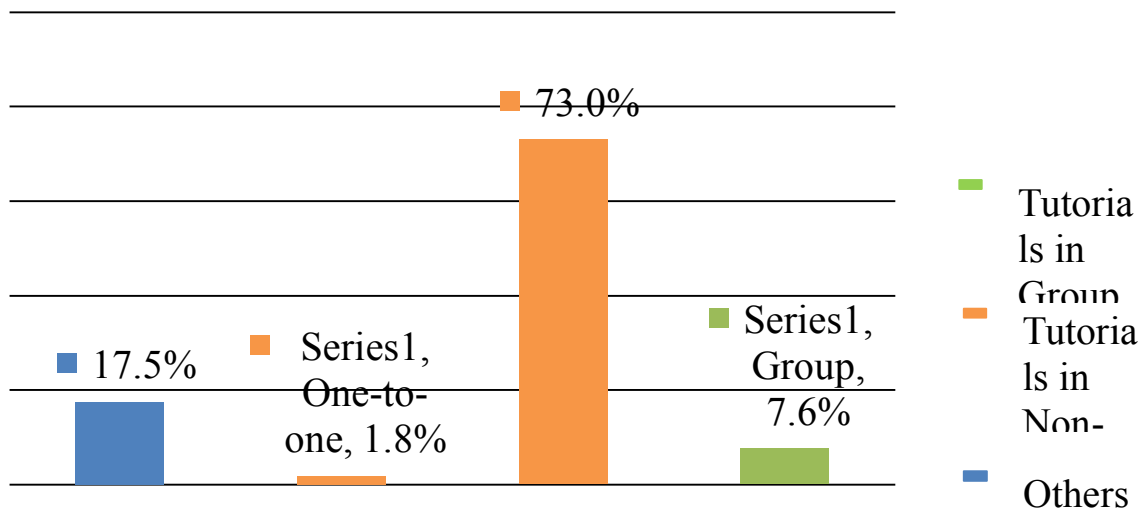


Figure 3: Form of the Distance Tutorial

Learning Aspect

Overall, 25.8% of the papers focused on instructional methods, 20.4% on a tutee perspective, and 28.3% on a tutor perspective. The remaining papers that did not focus on learning aspects, were excluded.

Mathematics and CSCL

Regarding the categories mathematics and CSCL, 28.3% of the papers involved mathematics or STEM-subjects and 51.4% were related to CSCL. Although the number of papers focusing on tutorials with CSCL has been increasing over time (Figure 4), the share of CSCL papers did not increase strictly, but peaked between 1998 and 2003 (Figure 5).

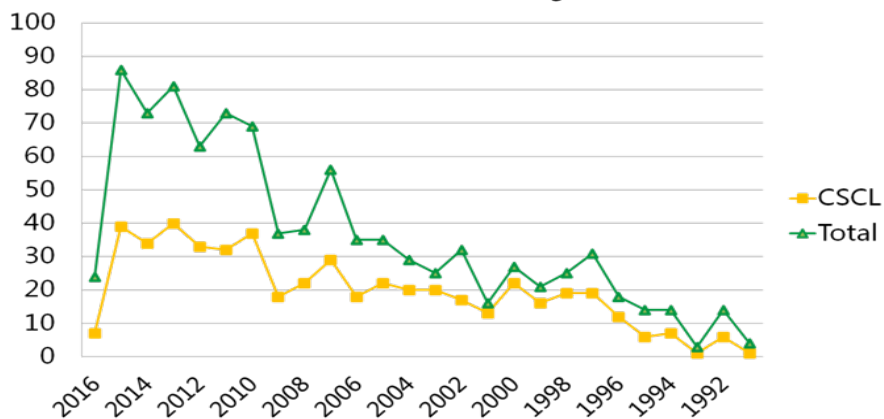


Figure 4: Number of Articles Focusing on CSCL

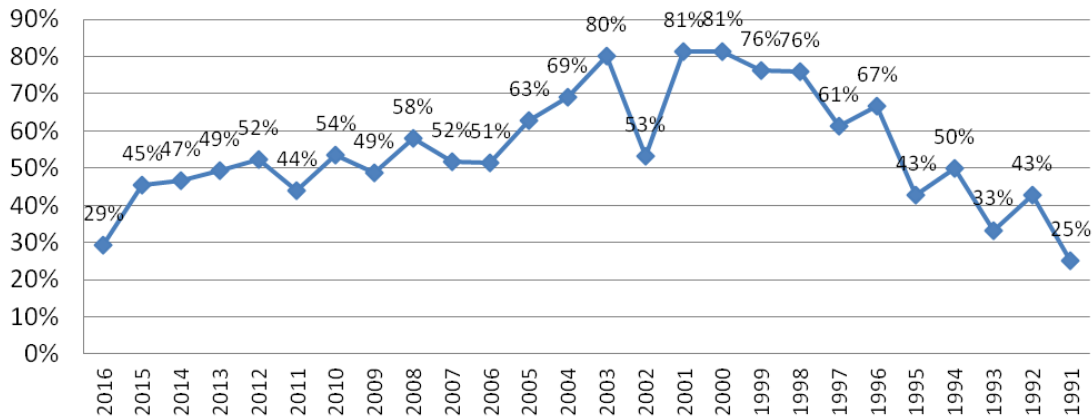


Figure 5: Percentage of Articles Focusing on CSCL

Full-Text Coding

89 papers were selected for full-text coding based on the categories C1-C5. Among these, 82 full-texts could be retrieved through scientific search engines or direct contact with the authors. The main topics of the 82 papers were coded and correspond to four categories:

- *Developing* a new tutorial or tutorial program (35 papers)
- *Evaluating* a tutorial regarding different aspects such as tutor feedback, tutee involvement, or the impact of the tutorial (34 papers)
- *Identifying* challenges or shortcomings for a tutorial (22 papers)
- *Improving* the effectiveness of a tutorial (10 papers)

Most of the 82 papers suggest a positive impact of tutorials on student performance (66.3%), whereas 5.3% of them see a negative impact of tutorials.

Conclusion and Outlook

Based on the described coding, 82 papers were selected for an in-depth review. For this an inductive framework synthesis procedure (Gough, Oliver, & Thomas, 2012), looking to distill features of successful tutorials, will be used. The results will provide a basis for future research on university tutorials and student-tutor training. They will also contribute to future improvement and development of teaching in tutorials for university mathematics courses and thus will help to do education differently, that is hopefully better and more effective.

About the Author

Lingyue Chen is pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Learning Sciences at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München. The presented study was initiated by and conducted together with Daniel Sommerhoff, a mathematics education researcher at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

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Links between Teacher Cognition and practices of integrating Language Arts electives in the New Senior Secondary English Language Curriculum in Hong Kong

Anisa Cheung, University of Hong Kong

Language Arts is a curriculum innovation in the New Senior Secondary English Language Curriculum in Hong Kong, with the aim of enhancing students' exposure to literary language. Teacher cognition is believed to have a profound influence on their classroom practice. An understanding of the relations between teacher cognition and practice is important for the successful implementation of curriculum innovations. However, research exploring teachers' perceptions and practices of integrating LA is scant. The study presented in this paper investigated the relationship between the belief of one experienced teacher and her practices in LA integration through open-ended interview, lesson observations and post-lesson discussions for a whole academic year. The data found that the teacher's practices of integrating LA were mediated by various contextual influences and the exam-oriented education system in Hong Kong.

Introduction

The varying effects of teacher belief on their pedagogical practices have been widely reported (Brumfit et al., 1996; Karaves-Doukas, 1996; Sato and Kleinasser, 1999; Mangubhai et al., 2004). This paper examines the relationship between teacher cognition and practices in integrating Language Arts (LA) electives in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) English Language Curriculum in Hong Kong. The aim of integrating LA was to expose students to the creative and imaginative appeal of language through literary texts (CDC & HKEAA, 2007). While previous studies have demonstrated the paramount role played by teachers in curriculum innovations (Qi, 2005, 2007; Carless, 2007; Deng & Carless, 2010; Watanabe, 1996, 2004), research

on the impact of teacher cognition on their practice remains scant. This paper attempts to bridge this gap.

The relationship between teacher belief and practice in curriculum innovation

Integrating LA is a curriculum innovation which echoes features of Communication Language Teaching (CLT) in highlighting the role of interaction (Nunan, 1991). Similar reform which adopts the principles of CLT in Hong Kong was the Target-oriented curriculum (TOC), in emphasizing students' active involvement in learning through purposeful and contextual tasks (Clark et al., 1994). Differing relationships between teacher belief and practices have been found in the reforms. Carless (1998) reported congruence of a teacher's belief and practice in implementing TOC. Mangubhai et al.'s (2004) study shows the practical consideration of teachers when adopting practices of CLT. Although willing to integrate elements of CLT, some of the teachers' practices are based on the perceived needs in their specific contexts (rather than principles of CLT). One example of this is the switching between English (i.e. the students' first language) and German (i.e. the target language) as a strategy to manage and engage students in the lessons. This points to the role of contextual realities in shaping teacher cognition. Teacher cognition is formed in response to various classroom events (Borg, 2006). This paper adopts Zembylas' (2005) three levels of teacher emotion (i.e. intrapersonal in terms of personal characteristics, interpersonal in terms of interactions with others, and intergroup in terms of features of the larger system) to explore teacher cognition on the integration of LA.

Methodology

This paper was set within a qualitative case study paradigm to explore one teacher's perceptions and practices of LA integration. Betty (a pseudonym) was purposively sampled to be a participant in the study due to her relatively strong academic background and having a decade of experience in teaching English in Hong Kong, which sheds light on various factors mediating teacher cognition on the integration of LA. The author was Betty's colleague before the commencement of the research project. A case study approach was adopted as it allows the generation of detailed accounts in natural contexts, which reveal the experiences and feelings of the participants (Duff, 1990). This paper aims to present an in-depth analysis of various facets of one

experienced teacher's cognition on LA integration and its influence on her teaching practices.

Data collection and analysis

Betty initially participated in an exploratory open-ended interview (lasting about 30-45 minutes and audio recorded) which elicited her perceptions of LA integration. This was followed by observations of ten of her lessons, which took place in one academic year. Each lesson lasted for around 40 minutes and was video-recorded. Post-lesson interviews were conducted after each lesson to explore the aims of the lessons, problems encountered and the underlying reasons behind several pedagogical decisions.

The data analysis presented in this paper involved firstly developing theory-generated codes from the theoretical framework which suggest categories of data to be coded for later analysis (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Patton, 2002, Marshall, 2011). This progressive focusing strategy tries to gather data from a wide perspective before focusing on the salient features for further analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Parlett and Hamilton, 1976). The theory-generated codes were deductively derived from the theoretical framework. This aligns with the process of categorization of meaning (i.e. coding data into inductive or deductive categories) in analyzing qualitative data (Kvale, 1996).

Results and Discussion

The following sections will present Betty's beliefs of LA integration and the extent to which she realized these beliefs in her pedagogical practices. Adopting Zembylas' (2005) three levels of teacher emotion to explore teacher cognition, Betty's intrapersonal knowledge of LA will be presented. This is followed by an exploration of the influence of interpersonal interaction with students and the intergroup features of the Hong Kong education system on her cognition on and practices of integrating LA.

Practices of LA integration reflect intrapersonal views and knowledge

Betty started one of the lessons by explaining the difference between various types of poems (e.g. limerick, haiku, sonnet, etc.) and asking students to complete an exercise on poetic elements (e.g. alliteration, personification, rhyming words). When going over the answers of the exercise with students, Betty focused on explaining different poetic elements. She explained her

focus on poetic elements:

‘Students should learn the poetic devices when reading a poem so they will have the feeling that, oh, I am learning a poem. If I just ask them to read and understand the meaning of different vocabulary, this is not reading a poem. You can use the same strategy to read a news article, an advertisement, and a drama script’. (Post-lesson interview)

The quote reveals Betty’s knowledge on one of the differences between reading in the LA lessons (which focus on exploring literary elements) and the traditional language lessons (which mainly focus on vocabulary learning). Betty’s knowledge of LA displayed in the lessons was a stark contrast with findings from other studies which indicated teachers’ lack of confidence in own knowledge of LA (McManus, 2008; Mok et al, 2006; Carless& Harfitt, 2013). The contrast in terms of confidence in the knowledge of LA between Betty and other English teachers could be due to her knowledge of literature learnt in her undergraduate and MPhil degree. This not only demonstrates the intrapersonal aspect of teacher cognition (Zemblyas, 2005) but also echoes the positive influence of teachers’ subject matter knowledge on the content presented in the lessons (Hashweh, 1987; Wilson and Wineburg, 1988; Stein, Baxter and Leinhardt, 1990).

Practices of LA integration as affected by students’ behaviour

Betty expressed her views on the superficial nature of LA integration:

‘The study of LA is rather different from my perception of literature. Literature is something sophisticated. It requires critical thinking. It requires ability to comprehend the reading and the environment. But what you need to do (related to LA) in the public exam is something superficial in fact’ (Open-ended interview)

This quote reflects a strong discrepancy between Betty’s perception of literature and the way LA is assessed in the public exams. The word “superficial” implies that the assessment of LA could be more comprehensive in terms of letting students experience the sophistication of literary texts. Even though she complained about the superficial nature of LA, her practices of LA integration in the lessons observed also remained at a very superficial level, focusing on the features of various types of poems and literary devices. The gap between Betty’s ideal of LA integration and her observed practices

could be due to the emergence of students' discipline problems. In one of the lessons observed, nearly one third of the lesson time was spent on managing students' discipline. Betty's comment on students' discipline problems in the lessons suggests a link between the nature of LA activities and discipline problems:

'The discipline problem is more serious because students can talk to themselves and answer the questions themselves. Compared with the previous lesson of pre-exam writing, students got more freedom.'
(Post-lesson interview)

Betty's comments suggest that the open-ended nature of LA activities (involving discussion about the multiple meanings of texts) are more likely to generate disruption. Therefore, the higher possibility of students' off-task behavior in LA lessons led to Betty's practices of LA integration remaining at a relatively "superficial" level, confined to the close-ended tasks of exploring the language features of literary devices instead of discussing the creative and imaginative elements inherent in literary texts. This is an example of the interpersonal aspect of teacher cognition mentioned by Zembylas (2005), which is influenced by interactions with students.

Practices of LA integration being affected by the relevance of LA to the school exams

Betty's practices of LA were significantly affected by the relevance of LA to the school exams. With the emphasis on assessing students' mastery of traditional language skills in the exams, Betty tended to adopt a teacher-centred pedagogy in the process of integrating LA. Betty admitted the shortcoming of teacher-centred instruction:

'I might have given too many guidelines to students. I don't think this is a good practice because they need to tackle the exam questions without guidance. But if I don't give them guidance, they will write something even more terrible in the exam' (Post-lesson interview)

This reflection points to the influence of the exam-oriented education system on Betty's pedagogical practices. While the creative and imaginative appeal of LA enhances students' freedom in the learning process, the pressure of helping students get good results in the exams leads to Betty's focus on the

transmission of knowledge in the process of LA integration. This points to the intergroup factor in shaping teacher cognition (Zembylas, 2005).

Summary

In sum, Betty's practices of LA reflected her knowledge of literature learnt in her university education. Although she intended to engage students in discussions about the multiple meanings of literary texts, the emergence of students' discipline problems was an important interpersonal context which led to her practices of LA integration remaining at a relatively superficial level. More importantly, she cannot ignore the exam-oriented education systems prevalent in Hong Kong schools. This led her to adopt a product-based approach in her practices of LA integration. Based on the findings of this study, it can be inferred that various contextual factors and features of the education system led to the gap between the teacher's beliefs and practices in the process of curriculum innovation.

About the author

Anisa Cheung is an EdD candidate with research interests in Language Arts and English Language Studies. She obtained her Master of Education in English Language Studies, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education (Language Education-English) from the University of Hong Kong.

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International students as curriculum advisers for academic writing courses: staff-student partnerships in English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Terri Edwards, Durham University

Despite the financial benefits that international students bring to the UK economy as well as to the institutions at which they study, HE institutions currently take little or no account of the “cultural capital” (Bourdieu, 1986) that international students also bring to the academy. Many international students come from a position of prior disciplinary and/or professional knowledge. Many also go on to develop disciplinary, writing and/or teaching expertise during their studies in the UK. This makes them invaluable informants for academic writing curriculum developers and teachers. This paper argues that international students can actively contribute to academic writing curriculum development by critiquing lesson materials and suggesting alternative content and teaching strategies. Preliminary findings of the research, which is currently funded by UKCISA as a pilot project, suggest that international students can indeed make valuable contributions to academic writing course planning and materials writing.

Introduction

This paper describes research undertaken for a pilot project funded by the UKCISA organisation¹. The aim of the project was to investigate the feasibility of involving international students directly in curriculum design for academic writing courses at an English Language Centre (ELC). The project is focused on enhancing the curriculum of a 25-session in-session course, the Academic Writing Workshop.

The majority of students who take the Workshop are international students. Over the years, course feedback has been collected in a variety of

¹ <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk>

ways, mostly written and mostly post-course. However, the researcher, who is also the curriculum designer and teacher of the Workshop, feels that current feedback mechanisms focus mainly on holistic issues such as student satisfaction and are therefore insufficiently fine-grained to assist with curriculum development.

Traditionally, university students have not been included in curriculum decision-making (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Hughes, 2005; Johns, 2008). This is beginning to change: indeed, some researchers argue that students can be agents of change in curriculum design (Kay, Dunne and Hutchinson, 2010; Dunne & Zandstra, 2011; Healey, 2012). There are also clarion calls for greater student involvement in curriculum design by higher education interest groups such as the Higher Education Academy (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2014) and the National Union of Students (NUS, 2016). However, the “cultural capital” that international students bring to the host institution in the form of disciplinary knowledge, work experience, technical expertise, linguistic expertise, and so on (Bourdieu, 1986; Tran, 2010) tends to be overlooked in this literature.

In fact, international students are invaluable sources of disciplinary and institutional information for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) practitioners: a point overlooked, for example, in Ding and Champion’s (2016) account of *ad hoc* EAP teacher development enablers. In the researcher’s experience, many international students develop disciplinary and genre writing expertise during their studies at the UK institution, though they may initially struggle with the norms of Anglophone academic literacy (Wingate, 2015). Moreover, international students are often generous with their time and with their contributions of writing samples. These samples of what Swales (1990; 2004) calls “occluded genres” would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, for EAP practitioners to obtain in sufficient quantity for genre analysis.

Exploratory study: methods and findings

In order to demonstrate ways in which the cultural capital of the international students could be harnessed, a small exploratory study was developed in 2015-2016. Three undergraduate third-years were invited to critique the main handout and slides from the first session of the Academic Writing Workshop. The three students were given the title of “Student Adviser”, which they could add to their CVs. They were asked to assess and annotate the materials

(in hard or soft copy as they preferred), and discuss their reactions with the curriculum designer.

By asking the students to critique the same set of materials, it was hypothesized that it would be possible to evaluate the suitability of international students as curriculum advisers. The research questions were fourfold. Firstly, would all of the students be able to articulate their ideas for improving the materials? Secondly, would they be able to critique the materials in a constructive manner? Thirdly, would their disciplinary knowledge enhance the materials, or would their requests for change prove to be too specific for a multi-disciplinary class? Finally, would their views conflict with each other or with the views of the curriculum designer?

The exploratory study demonstrated that all three students could easily articulate their ideas for curriculum change. Their critiques were both constructive and insightful, and there were no conflicts between the three points of view, or between the students and the curriculum designer. In fact, their “talk around text” (Lillis, 2009) allowed the curriculum designer to add discipline-specific comments to the lecture slides, and also made it possible to evaluate the suitability of the text samples used in the materials, some of which had been problematic in the previous course rollout.

Pilot project: aims and methods

Realizing, in the light of the staff-student partnership literature (e.g. Little, 2011; Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint and Harrington, 2014), that curriculum development with international students was viable but needed to be formalised, a pilot project was then designed. Funding was obtained from the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) for the year 2016-17. The main aim of the pilot project was to develop a procedure for partnership: in other words, setup and implementation were seen as equally important to the data collected and to the curriculum improvements.

Purposive sampling was used to invite international students to take part in the pilot project. At the first project meeting, unstructured interviews were conducted with each participant. Ethnographic field notes were taken and later transcribed to see what skillsets and areas of expertise emerged. At the first meeting, each Curriculum Adviser was also given the full first session set of Academic Writing Workshop materials (1 main handout, 4 supplementary handouts and 1 set of slides) to critique. The Advisers were

asked where they would prefer to work (a workstation is available in the researcher's office) and how long they would need to complete their critiques: the same courtesies that would be extended to staff members. The Advisers were also asked if they would prefer materials in hard copy, soft copy or both. The remaining interview time was then used to explain the aims and stages of the project.

In order to establish the “trust, reciprocity and mutual respect” needed for successful staff-student partnerships (Cook-Sather, Felten & Bovill, 2014), two more steps were taken. Firstly, all project participants were given full access to key project documents (except confidential student data) via Dropbox and were copied in to all relevant e-mail correspondence. Secondly, the title given to the student participants was changed from “Student Adviser” to “Curriculum Adviser”: it was agreed that the latter sounds more professional. When the Curriculum Advisers returned with the materials at a time of their own choosing, they were asked to discuss them in any preferred order. Their reactions to the materials were noted, collated in a single document, and used to rewrite the materials. As Advisers were working at different speeds, an interim task was devised: a commercially-produced academic writing book was given to be critiqued. It was stressed that the whole book did not need to be read, that reactions to the book could be recorded in any way that the Advisers preferred, and that we would discuss the book during a semi-structured recorded interview.

In the next step of the pilot project, a second round of materials was chosen by the Curriculum Advisers. The Advisers could choose lessons they had taken or might wish to take. Reactions were recorded in the same way as in the first round. Finally, a focus group was audio-recorded to discover the Advisers' reactions to the materials and to the project as a whole. The recording was transcribed in full and is currently being thematically coded.

Pilot project: preliminary findings

The initial interviews showed that the skill-sets of the six Curriculum Advisers (one PhD candidate and five Taught Master's students) were far more impressive than the researcher had anticipated. All six had prior disciplinary knowledge, three had cross-disciplinary knowledge and five had professional knowledge from jobs and/or internships. The PhD candidate was already teaching undergraduate classes and taking in-house teaching qualifications; she and one other Master's student also had experience of

teaching in developing countries. One Master's student had professional expertise as a translator and interpreter in her home country and as an inspirational speaker for a UK-based charity. Another Master's student had designed and built an educational website and a mobile phone app during her undergraduate studies in Educational Technology. All the students from the taught Master's courses had received consistently high grades from Term 2 onwards (above 70%) and the PhD candidate was publishing her first peer-reviewed journal paper. It was clear that international students can indeed be "expert knowers" (Maton, 2014) as well as "expert learners" (Stobart, 2014).

Several key concerns emerged from the Curriculum Adviser's materials critiques. The main concern was that there needed to be a wider variety of text types in the materials. A lesser concern was that the Workshop slides were visually unattractive and did not always match the handouts. Critiquing of commercially-produced academic writing books was also a valuable exercise, enabling the researcher to recommend these works to other students.

Dissemination of the project via conferences and published papers formed one of the planned outcomes of the project. So far, the research has been disseminated via in-house forums, and at conferences in the UK and Norway. Four Curriculum Advisers have presented: three with staff members, and two by themselves. Three conference papers are now underway, with three Curriculum Advisers as co-authors. All four Advisers mentioned at the focus group how much they valued the opportunity to participate in presenting and publishing.

Conclusion

This study has shown how partnerships with international students can be of value in the development of EAP courses. Many cultural insights emerged into matters such as source use and referencing: the researcher now has much more understanding of the reasons why international students struggle so much with this aspect of academic writing. The presence of two STEM students in the project team also allowed the scope of the Academic Writing Workshop materials to be broadened. One of the STEM students is now helping the researcher to develop materials for a "*Writing for Engineers*" course covering academic and professional writing, both of which are required elements of her Master's programme.

The Curriculum Advisers have suggested ways of taking the project forward, including live critiquing of Academic Writing Workshop sessions:

this will be done in 2017-18. They have also proposed a video project in which Curriculum Advisers will talk about their deepened understanding of academic cultural differences. It is clear that the international students involved in this project do not wish to be passive recipients of curriculum but want to be, and are capable of being, dynamic agents of change (Dunne & Zandstra, 2011; Healey, 2012). As the study presented in this paper is a pilot project, further research is planned.

About the Author

Terri Edwards studies part-time at Durham University School of Education under the supervision of Dr Nicola Reimann, Dr Catherine Marshall, and Professor Douglas Newton. She is currently in the first year of the thesis phase of her EdD. She is also a full-time teacher at an English Language Centre, where she teaches academic writing and study skills to anybody of any level or nationality who needs her help.

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Promoting children's perspective taking and understanding of individual differences through shared-reading activities in an early years setting

Courtney Froehlig, University of Cambridge

Early childhood educators help young children to develop a strong foundation of social understanding and related skills, including the ability to adopt other perspectives and have empathy for others' situations. This paper draws on the findings from a case study examining a nursery teacher's efforts to promote her students' capacity for perspective taking and relating to peers by guiding group dialogue around stories with themes around characters' individual differences. Utilising grounded thematic analysis and Conversation Analysis of these discussions, I identified the teaching strategies that supported dialogic processes of learning related to these goals. In general, the most effectual strategies involved following the children's lead, clarifying ideas, and asking open-ended questions. The findings provide a useful, albeit limited, starting point for how teachers in similar settings can also prepare to carry out shared-reading activities to promote perspective taking and open-mindedness towards different ways of appearing, behaving, and interacting with others.

Introduction

From about three years of age, children begin to explicitly reason about others' beliefs, mental states, intentions, and motivations for behaviour. Further, throughout the early preschool years, they continue to connect experiences and create increasingly detailed and coherent accounts of the social world around them (Carpendale & Lewis, 2006). However, between the ages of four and six years, children develop what has been termed 'social attribution bias', in which they tend to infer individual dispositions from behaviour that could be explained primarily in terms of compelling situational factors. One prominent explanation for this increasing social attribution bias is that with growing social experience, children begin to utilise conceptual prototypes of intentional action, becoming less sensitive to

the covariation of data within a given social situation (Seiver, Gopnik, & Goodman, 2013).

Specific differences related to children's appearance, ability, or behaviour can cause young children to be either socially neglected or rejected by their peers (Killen, Melanie, & Rutland, 2011). While researchers have attempted to promote inclusion by educating children about the specific differences that exist within a classroom, there is a sense that these efforts may promote further exclusion by emphasizing labels or singling out certain children. A more prudent approach is to promote a broader capacity to take others' perspectives, helping children to openly acknowledge salient individual differences, while paying close attention to the context and factors of the situation at hand in explaining social behaviour. In lessening the emphasis on traits or dispositions, it becomes less likely that children will begin to categorically associate specific individual differences with certain types of behaviour (Killen, Rutland, & Ruck, 2011).

Importantly, styles of talk and patterns of narration that parents and teachers demonstrate in their storytelling and shared-reading with children guide development of social cognition (Hughes, 2011) and can contribute to or reduce these tendencies towards social attribution bias. Thus, the power of storytelling can be harnessed to deliberately guide children's social thinking in a way that supports perspective taking and open-mindedness towards individual differences. There have been many attempts to design prescriptive intervention protocols around shared-reading activities within early education settings to promote children's social understanding, often with external personnel leading the intervention implementation. However, there have been few attempts to examine how early educators can guide dialogue around stories to promote children's social reasoning and shared thinking processes. Further, this approach has not been applied with the aims of expanding children's perspective taking and general awareness of individual differences.

Project Aims

This project aimed to begin to fill this gap by exploring children's learning and participation within a thematic shared-reading unit, led by a teacher in an early-years setting devoted to principles of classroom inclusion. Specifically, my research questions were as follows:

1. How do children respond to stories that are chosen to present themes of individual differences?
2. How does the teacher support the children's responses with regard to perspective taking and participation in shared thinking related to the story themes of individual differences?

Methodology

Research Design

I employed an exploratory, case study research design to examine the relationship between one teacher's dialogic approach and the associated processes of learning and participation within the shared-reading activities. Within this design, I utilised thematic analysis based on Grounded Theory (Glaser, 2017; Glaser & Strauss, 1971) and Conversation Analysis (CA) framed within an ethnomethodological lens (Sacks, Schegloff & Gail, 1974; Ten Have, 2007), in order to capture the individual and group learning within the activities. More specifically, by examining the themes that emerged from children's contributions and the sequences of discussion between teacher and students, I aimed to uncover the apparent teaching and learning processes that served to expand children's awareness of individual differences, promote perspective taking, and reduce social biases within children's explanations for behaviour.

Setting

The project took place in a nursery school located in the south of Cambridge in a residential neighbourhood. The centre is committed to values of inclusion and diversity, as evident in their mission statement, school policies, teacher development and training efforts, and in my observations of daily teaching practices.

Participants

Participants included five children (2 female, 3 male, M=4.2 Y/O) with varying backgrounds and language abilities, and their teacher, who is also the centre's head of diversity and inclusion.

Procedures

The teacher and researcher collaboratively chose three books, selected based on the emphasis on characters' individual differences and the ways in which

these differences play out within social interactions. Over the course of three weeks, the teacher read each chosen story aloud to the group, encouraging and guiding children's dialogue around the characters' differences and social interactions.

I observed the shared-reading activities, taking constant field notes, and paying special attention to the processes of meaning making within the dialogue. Building on these activities and observations, I conducted thematic analysis of the transcripts of children's contributions and CA of the transcripts of all talk within the shared-activities. The CA process was guided by: (a) preliminary grounded thematic analysis of children's talk and (b) schematic behavioural coding of frequency of children's participation and mental state language. Finally, I referred back to my ethnographic observations and verified the themes with the teacher to ensure continuity and validity in my findings.

Through this process, I examined how children understood and responded to the teacher and to one another in their turns at talk and how sequences of children's contributions unfolded. Additionally, I supported my assertions about learning processes with concrete examples of how individual children responded to the themes and how the teacher scaffolded each child's thinking processes and participation within the activities.

Results

Within the shared-reading activities, eight themes emerged from children's dialogue around the stories through open coding of the transcripts of children's contributions within the story discussions.

Table 1 Themes in children's responses to stories

With the shared-reading discussions, the children displayed:

1. Interest and curiosity in the stories as soon as they were introduced
 2. Egocentrism in their observations of story events
 3. Speculative assertions about story characters
 4. Reliance on illustrations to speculate about characters' mental states
 5. Assuming characters' perspectives and making predictions about future events
 6. Active engagement in dialogue with peers
 7. Engagement in lively reflection and deliberation about the story after the teacher finished reading
-

8. Use of generic terms and phrases to explain behaviour (e.g. “He’s a big boy”)

To begin my analysis of the ways in which the teacher supported the children’s responses with regard to perspective taking and participation in shared thinking around individual differences, I initially homed in on instances of the above themes. Then, within these excerpts, I chose episodes with 1) balanced participation in the group, in which all children consistently contributed to one topic of discussion, and 2) high levels of perspective taking, identified by coding children’s mental state language. Then, I identified the strategies that appeared to promote these instances of engagement, highlighting specific examples of children’s learning about characters’ individual differences and social behaviours.

Table 2 Strategies to promote shared thinking about characters’ individual differences within shared-reading activities

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Key features</u>
Pre-reading activity	Helps the children calm down, tune in, be reminded of any ground rules for conversation or rules for listening
Making the story come alive	Teacher acts the scenes out, uses sound effects and onomatopoeia, creates concern for characters, sparks understanding and empathy using targeted questions (e.g. how do you think this character feels?)
Following the children’s lead	The conversation flows from children’s ideas; the teacher notices when children’s tangential interests or personal experiences could be connected back to the story or to a specific theme; teacher reinforces inquisitive thinking
Clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions to promote thinking	Teacher asks open-ended questions to promote thinking, clarifies ideas, synthesizes children’s contributions,

The teacher employed strategies which helped children listen carefully and become completely immersed in the story's plotline. This engagement compelled them to actively share and discuss their impressions, providing many opportunities for the teacher to guide the group's thinking, specifically related to the characters' mental states and behaviours.

It was particularly useful for the teacher to emphasize the use of mental state language concerning the characters in the stories to increase children's propensity towards thinking about characters' differing perspectives and the relevant situational influences. However, this became problematic when emphasis on characters' internal states led children to overemphasize dispositions in their explanations. While bias was not directly measured in the current project, there were instances in which children made unwarranted evaluative comments about the story characters (e.g. 'she's a cry baby') in response to the teachers' questions about characters' mental states. In these cases, the teacher encouraged children to refer back to the illustrations in order to help children consider the possible influences of contextual factors on characters' intentions and motivations for behaviour, rather than relying on simplistic, categorical explanations. She also responded to their egocentric comments by encouraging them to make comparisons to the characters and to make predictions based on what they might do in similar situations. The teacher also helped to connect children's individual responses, encouraging them to consider their peers' understandings in order to take into consideration other possible reasons for the characters' behaviours and question any inaccurate assumptions.

These strategies employed by the teacher in this project worked together: the first two strategies laid the foundation for children's continued engagement in the dialogue, and the latter two strategies promoted children's thinking around the characters' individual differences. In helping children to engage deeply in the story plot and then to make more accurate inferences and explanations about story characters, teachers can play an important role in expanding children's awareness of the factors that influence social behaviour, promoting students' understanding of characters who may initially come across as 'atypical' in their behaviour.

Conclusion

This project looked in detail at one specific classroom in which a teacher sought to promote children's perspective taking and understanding of individual differences through dialogic, shared-reading activities. In general, the framework generated from this project is a useful starting point, however it will need to be further developed to help guide teachers in similar settings to carry out shared-reading activities involving discussions around stories with goals of promoting understanding of individual differences.

About the Author

Courtney Froehlig is a first year doctoral student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, supervised by Dr. Ruth Kershner. She holds an MPhil in Psychology and Education (Cantab) and Bachelors of Arts (BA) in Psychology and Human Development from the University of California, San Diego. Before coming to Cambridge, she worked as a research coordinator with professor Wendy Stone at the University of Washington, where she supervised the implementation of two national multi-site studies investigating children's early social development and the effective screening and intervention for autism. Through her undergraduate, post baccalaureate, and recent graduate research, she has cultivated a passion for promoting children's social understanding in early education settings and working with teachers to develop inclusive, dialogic, and values-based pedagogical practices. She is committed to establishing collaborative research partnerships with educators and other key stakeholders within her doctoral research and beyond, and hopes to contribute to the enhancement of evidence-informed policy and practice around children's social-emotional learning and well-being. She is an ESRC policy fellow, an affiliate of both the Cambridge Educational Dialogue and Psychology & Education Research Groups, and a member of Gonville and Caius College.

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Preventing radicalisation through education: A discourse analysis

Emma Louise Hindle, University of Aarhus

Within the past couple of years, prevention of radicalisation has become of great importance for both EU-policy and national education policies. This paper investigates how EU-policy and national education policies frame education as a political domain that is able to prevent radicalisation. Discourse theory and qualitative document analysis are used to analyse how education is articulated as a political domain within the EU-regime. Thereafter, an outline of how the European discourse is rearticulated, through the national education policies, is presented. By applying discourse theory, this paper concludes that members of the European Union have a common agenda of preventing radicalisation through democratic education. However, national educational traditions determine how the democratic education of pupils is articulated at a national policy level.

Context

This paper is based on my Master's Thesis, which was conducted after a six-month internship at The Danish Teacher Trade Unions in Brussels, Belgium. As an intern, I participated and reported on meetings concerning European education policy, which took place in the European Parliament's Culture and Education Committee.

One recurring aspect of these discussions caught my attention: all discussions concerning education were ultimately linked to concerns of radicalisation of European children and youth.

Initial observations clarified that all members of the committee understood radicalisation as a European problem, which must be prevented through education. Furthermore, there was a broad consensus that radicalisation refers to “what goes on before the bomb goes off” (Sedgwick, 2010). However, observations also suggested that there were different perceptions and understandings of *how* education can help to prevent radicalisation: what would be acceptable in one Member State would not necessarily be so in another.

Prevention of radicalisation is not only limited to security policy, but now concerns education policy too. Teachers, social workers, psychologists and other educational practitioners have been highlighted as key to the prevention of radicalisation (Kundnani, 2012). Sukarien and Tannock (2015) state that these professions have the skills to anticipate and avert worrying behaviour, actions and emotions, thus making it possible to monitor and prevent radicalisation through educational practice.

In the 1960s and 1970s the concept of radicalisation was a positive and desirable aim of education (Darder, 2015). It is a relatively new tendency that radicalisation is articulated as a negative phenomenon that education should prevent (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). This article, therefore, investigates how EU-policy and national education policy documents articulate education as a preventive domain.

Methods and Theory

Discourse theory (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) offers a conceptual framework that is used to ‘de-mask’ how the use of language establishes education as a unique political domain. The discourse theory operates with multiple concepts, which makes the theory very complex. However, it is essential to elaborate on the concepts discourse and hegemonic intervention.

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe define a discourse as an “articulatory practice which constitutes and organizes social relations” (ibid.). A discourse can thus be understood as a reduction of opportunities and strives to restrict the scope of action in society (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999).

A discourse that is maintained and accepted as dominant undergoes a “process of making, maintaining and reproducing (...) authoritative sets of meaning and practices” (Barker, 2012). This process is called a hegemonic intervention.

The concepts discourse and hegemonic intervention are operationalised on two policy levels, first at EU-level and then at national level with cases from English and Danish education policy concerning primary and lower-secondary education used to examine how European prevention discourses have developed.

The purpose of the examination of EU-level education policy is to identify articulations that create a dominant discourse that the Member States construct as hegemonic through their unity. In doing so, the Paris Declaration has been selected as the analysis object. The Council of the European Union

and the European Commission adopted the Paris Declaration in March 2015 and commits the Member States to implement the declaration (Paris Dec., 2015).

The adoption of the declaration is an example of the Europeanisation of education, which means the harmonisation of education policy and an establishment of a policy structure for Member States (Lawn & Grek, 2012). However, this policy structure does not determine national educational practice, but instead goes into dialogue with practice. Member States will translate the declaration through their cultural and historical differences (Stromquist, 2013).

The purpose of examining Danish and English education policies is to explore in which ways the discourse in the Paris Declaration intervenes hegemonic at a national level. This is done by identifying the connection between articulations in the policy documents. English and Danish policies are particularly interesting to compare in relation to European policy because the countries' policies are embedded in two different educational traditions which influences how the Paris Declaration is implemented.

According to Møller (2011, 23-24), English educational policy is inspired by the Anglo-Saxon curriculum-tradition. In contrast, Danish policy is based on the continental European didactics tradition.

The following documents have been selected as analysis objects by applying the “snowball method” (Lynggaard, 2010), and assessment criteria such as the credibility and representation of the documents.

Table 1: Documents selection for analysis

EU	- The Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and common values of freedom, tolerance and non - discrimination through education, the Council of the European Union & the European Commission (2015)
England	- The Department for education: The Prevent Duty (2015) - Departmental advice for maintained schools: Promoting fundamental British Values as a part of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in schools (2014) - National Curriculum: Citizenship education (2013)
Denmark	- Regeringen: Forebyggelse og bekæmpelse af ekstremisme og radikaliserings – National handlingsplan

	<p>(2016)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling: 'Læreplan for historie og samfundsfag' (2016) - Pressemeddelelse: Forsøg med nye prøveformer i folkeskolen (2012) - Rambøll: Litteraturstudiet, Forebyggelse af radikaliserings i skoleregi (2016)
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Findings

The Paris Declaration: Preventing radicalisation through democratic education

The Paris Declaration articulates that education can prevent radicalisation through the democratic education of children and youth. The declaration articulates that democratic education comprises teaching political literacy and also facilitating pedagogical efforts concerning participation in society. This articulation creates a democratic preventive discourse that highlights a classical pedagogical theme dating back to The Enlightenment concerning the socialisation of the child on the one hand and the freedom to act in society on the other (Andersen, 2007). Democratic education recognises to educate children with free judgement (the education that concerns politics), and also recognises that this judgement is the result of a political socialisation process, which takes place in school and society (the politics that concern education) (Bruun, 2011). When the declaration articulates a focus on political literacy and participation of children, this reveals the ambiguous structure of EU-policy.

The establishment of an ambiguous structure is due to the inclusion of three discourses. These discourses have been established as hegemonic through periods of time in Western society and are called the discourse of discipline, the discourse of participation and the discourse of skills (Pedersen, 2011). These discourses contain different meanings that the democratic preventive discourse operates to create a culture of education that all the Member States agree on. The declaration seeks to intervene hegemonic in national education policy through articulations that construct an ambiguous structure.

Across the pond: The democratic preventive discourse in England and Denmark

The analysis of English education policy documents show that primary and lower-secondary schools must prevent radicalisation through a democratic preventive discourse that focuses upon pupils' acquisition of fundamental British values. These values must be acquired through the character building of the pupil, which must then be operationalised through political literacy. Furthermore, the articulation of fundamental British values can be analysed as representing a communitarian political view, which promotes English culture as unique in comparison to other cultures (Lundbak, 2001).

In the English education policies, the European policies are adapted to the traditional Anglo-Saxon curriculum approach. The National Curriculum has a decisive impact on the way schools aim to prevent radicalisation in an English context. The discourse of participation and the discourse of skills, which appear in the Paris Declaration, are evident in the English policy documents. However, these two discourses are strongly influenced by the discourse of discipline, which in an English context comprises conservative nationalism that can be traced back to the 1980s' Thatcher government (Ball, 1998).

In contrast, the Danish education policies show that schools should prevent radicalisation through a democratic preventive discourse focusing upon the development of pupils' democratic, social and critical competencies. These competencies must be promoted through pupils' political literacy, which presupposes that schools' education also promote students' participation and empowerment.

In conjunction with the English policies, it is apparent that the Danish education policies embrace democratic values, but that these values are not articulated as a tool to be used to prevent radicalisation. This indicates that Danish policy is established on a freedom-based political view focusing on promoting the individual's desire and self-determination through competencies where democratic values can be upheld.

Furthermore, the continental European didactic tradition influences the Danish education policy. The development of pupils' democratic, social and critical competences is linked to an overall educational perspective also called "*Bildung*"². Here the Danish policy operationalises the Paris Declaration's discourse of participation and discourse of skills which can be traced back to the post-war era and to the 1990s. Personal development and

²This word is difficult to translate into English, but refers to the process of both personal and cultural development (Bruford, 1975).

engagement and the individual's connection to employment and the labour market are integrated as two sides of the same coin.

The discourse of discipline is also present, but as a latent liberal nationalism, seeking to create an idea of a national identity - an identity that has to be created through the individual's voluntary participation in society (Lægaard, 2003).

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to provide a glimpse of how EU-policy and national education policies articulate education as a domain that must prevent radicalisation.

The Paris Declaration exemplifies that Member States fundamentally agree that education should prevent radicalisation through democratic preventive discourse. English and Danish policies exemplify two different approaches in translating this discourse at a national level.

In England the democratic preventive discourse appears in policy focussing upon the political literacy of pupils, which is to be obtained through character building. In Denmark, on the other hand, policy focuses upon democratic, social and critical competences, which are to be obtained through political literacy, but has the pupils' democratic participation as its main endpoint.

Policy is important to examine because policy not only describes, but also influences attitudes, understandings and rationales that dominate in an area such as education, and thus the ways in which practice unfolds (Ball, 1998).

About the Author

Emma Louise Hindle holds a Master's degree in Social Sciences in Education Science from The Danish School of Education, Aarhus University in Denmark. During her studies and while working for The Danish Teacher Trade Unions in Brussels, Belgium, she developed a broad interest in the Europeanisation of education policy. This includes the process of translating policy as ideas into concrete pedagogical practices.

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Islamic Studies Teachers' Perceptions of Using a Blended Learning Approach for Teaching the Islamic Education Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

Maram Jannah, Durham University

Steve Higgins, Durham University

This study examines the effectiveness of using a blended learning approach, in teaching students Islamic education modules. Blended learning is an approach, which combines more traditional or face-to-face learning with digital technologies. A mixed-methods approach was used for data collection, including qualitative (lesson observations and interviews) and quantitative (online questionnaire) methods. This paper focuses on the on the questionnaire and its analysis, but refers to the qualitative findings in interpreting these results. In the data analysis phase, both a thematic analysis and a descriptive statistics analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed to facilitate the interpretation of the data. This study found that Islamic studies teachers believe that using a blended approach increases their productivity when preparing for their lessons. Moreover, they believe the blended approach helps them to achieve curriculum objectives and offers interactivity that cannot be gained by using traditional learning methods alone. Finally, the blended learning model may be considered a contribution to research in pedagogy, and future researchers may further develop or evaluate the effectiveness of the blended learning model for use in teaching other subjects.

Introduction

The world has seen massive changes in many different areas as a result of the development of new technologies, this is has even been described as the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' (Baller, Dutta and Lanvin, 2016). As part of this process of rapid change, the education sector has adopted new digital technologies for the delivery and development of education (Ponnusamy, Subramaniam, and Murugiah, 2009). As a result of the escalating use of

technology, some of the methods of teaching have changed from basic to not only sophisticated, but more interactive approaches (Allan, 2007). However, due to the social isolation associated with online learning environments, where students are working on their own, this form of technology may be insufficient to impart knowledge and develop understanding of students (Smyth, Houghton, Cooney, and Casey, 2012; Al-Qahtani and Higgins, 2012). For instance, teaching students to recite the Qur'an in the absence of physical interaction with an instructor may be more difficult if students are in an online virtual environment and may not be able to interact effectively with a teacher who can monitor their learning and give feedback to improve their performance in reciting and memorising the Qur'an verses. Moreover, Islamic studies teachers in Saudi Arabia are required by the government to ensure that their students learn from and understand the lessons in religious subjects (Kurdi, 2007). A solution to this challenge can be perhaps using blended learning in the teaching of RE subjects (Luca, 2006; Alshathri, 2016). Blended learning can be defined as the combination of some forms of new technology such as interactive whiteboards and new teaching methods, such as collaborative learning, with face-to-face interaction (Sharpe, Benfield, Roberts, and Francis, 2006; Collis, 2003). This study investigates Islamic studies teachers' perceptions of using a blended learning approach (see figure 1) in teaching Islamic education modules (see figure 2).

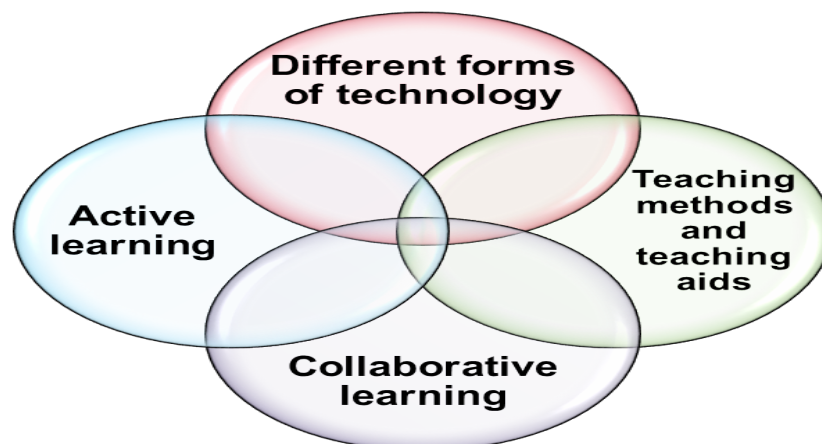


Figure 1: Dimensions of a Blended learning Model

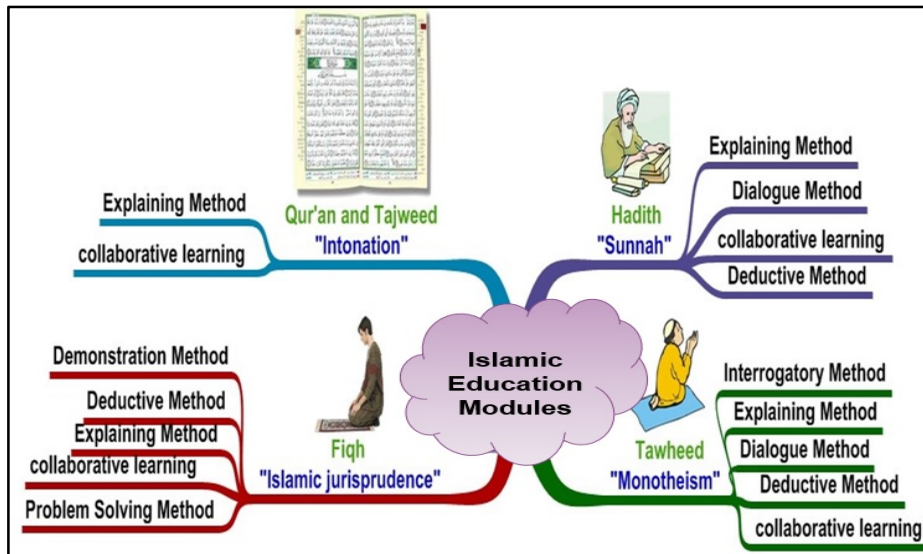


Figure 2: Islamic Education Modules

Methodology

A mixed method approach was used for data collection in this study, as this reflected the different sources of evidence and maintained the focus on participants' perceptions of using a blended learning approach in teaching Islamic education modules (Creswell, 2003). Semi-structured and focus group interviews were conducted with Islamic studies teachers to understand their views about the current methods of teaching Islamic education modules and to explore how they assessed students' learning outcomes and to elicit their opinions about using a blended approach. Classroom observation was used to find out what forms of technology Islamic studies teachers used when teaching Islamic lessons. The questionnaire was used as an instrument to support and extend the information gathered through interviews.

A total of 129 teachers responded to an online survey. In addition, eleven Islamic studies teachers were interviewed and six were observed when teaching aspects of the Islamic education modules.

In analysing the data, principal component analysis (PCA) was used as this is recommended when no prior theory or model exists (Williams, Onsmann, and Brown, 2010). PCA reduces a certain number of items in a questionnaire to a smaller component, was used as a factor extraction method to summarise key themes quantitatively.

Results

This section presents the findings from the exploratory factor analysis using respondents' data regarding their utilisation of a blended learning approach in teaching aspects of Islamic education curriculum.

Table 1: Component Matrix

<u>Statements</u>	<u>Component</u>	
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Helps achieve curriculum objectives	.656	-.450
Increases my productivity when preparing the lesson	.783	-.316
Increases the flexibility of my teaching time	.332	.721
Facilitates interaction between student and me	.799	.232
Simplifies the lesson's content in student's textbook	.683	-.327
Eases linking the lesson contents to the student's lives	.797	-.286
Suits both high and low ability student	.689	.434
Helps students exchange knowledge	.783	.130
Helps students develop new skills	.806	.209

The Component Matrix table shows how each individual variable is related to each component and how strong the relation is between the variable and the component it loads to. All nine variables correlated highly with Component One, with the highest loading for 'Helps students develop new skills' at 0.806. The relationship between variable 3, about flexibility of teaching time, and the components reflects teachers' scepticism about this dimension. The table also shows the nine variables reduced under these two factors.

Selecting a rotational method

According to Taherdoost, Sahibuddin, and Jalaliyoon (2014), rotation helps maximize high item loadings and minimize low item loadings, thus producing a more interpretable and simple solution (Taherdoost et al., 2014). The varimax rotation was used in this study as a rotational method.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix using (Varimax) Rotation

<u>Statements</u>	<u>Item Loadings</u>	
	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Increases my productivity when preparing the lesson	.814	

Eases linking the lesson contents to the student's lives	.807
Helps achieve curriculum objectives	.794
Simplifies the lesson's content in student's textbook	.741
Increases the flexibility of my teaching time	.774
Suits both high and low ability student	.763
Facilitates interaction between student and me	.670
Helps students develop new skills	.655
Helps students exchange knowledge	.579

As seen in the table above, the result of factor analysis suggests that nine variables can be loaded under two factors. The first factor includes four items, and the second factor includes five items.

The next section provides further analysis and interpretation of the exploratory factor analysis results using frequency, means and standard deviations.

Interpretation and labelling

According to Taherdoost et al., (2014) the interpretation step in a factor analysis is the process of examining the selected variables, which are attributable to a factor and giving a name to that factor. Moreover, two or three variables must be loaded on a factor to provide a meaningful interpretation (Williams et al., 2010).

Two factors were extracted which met the extraction criteria. The first factor includes four items labelled as *Teachers' Needs*. The eigenvalue of this factor is 4.63 and explains 51.5% of the variance. The second factor includes five items labelled as *Students' Needs*. The eigenvalue of this factor is 1.31 and explains 14.6% of the variance.

Table 3: Factor One: Teachers' Needs.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev</u>
Increases my productivity when preparing the lesson	0	5	38	86	3.63	.56

Simplifies the lesson's content in student's textbook	0	3	47	97	3.59	.54
Helps achieve curriculum objectives	0	9	49	71	3.48	.63
Eases linking the lesson contents to the student's lives	0	7	55	67	3.47	.60

Table 3 shows a descriptive statistical analysis including frequency and mean score in descending order. It is clear that most respondents either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the four statements. 'Increases my productivity in delivering the lesson' has the highest mean at 3.63, and 66.7% of participants strongly agree. The mean of 'Helps achieve curriculum objectives' and 'Eases linking the lesson contents to students' lives' are 3.48, 3.47 respectively.

Table 4: Factor Two: Students' Needs

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev</u>
Increases the flexibility of my teaching time	5	51	42	31	2.77	.86
Suits both high and low ability student	1	14	53	61	3.35	.70
Facilitates interaction between student and me	0	10	44	64	3.42	.63
Helps students develop new skills	0	7	59	63	3.43	.50
Helps students exchange knowledge	0	6	53	70	3.50	.59

Table 4 shows a descriptive statistical analysis that includes frequency and mean score in descending order. 'Increases the flexibility of my teaching

time' has the lowest mean at 2.77; 51 participants 'disagree' and five 'strongly disagree'. This could indicate that applying a blended learning approach takes more time than using traditional methods. Moreover, many teachers may not finish the unit in one lesson as a result of implementing a blended approach. As teachers stated in the interviews, dividing students into groups and explaining active learning strategies such as 'think-pair-share' requires a lot of the lesson time.

Discussion

The results showed that more than 90% of Islamic studies teachers in this simple believe that using a blended approach facilitates the process of delivering information to students and helps students exchange knowledge and develop new skills. This finding is in line with a study undertaken by Chen and Looi (2007), who showed that blended learning promotes cognitive thinking skills and in-depth information processing. Furthermore, Islamic studies teachers believe that a blended approach suits both high- and low-ability students. This is an implication that considering the different levels of learning ability among students and their requirements while developing a blended learning model or selecting learning activities is a crucial aspect, which teachers need to consider during preparation of the learning material. That is because doing so may help the teacher to achieve a meaningful learning. This may also help teacher in delivering a lesson that suits learners' ability and meet their needs, (Ainsworth, 2004). Chen and Huang (2009) went further and affirmed that the acceptance of blended learning methods by low-attaining students is greater than that of high- and middle-range students. This might be due to the lower motivation and engagement of low-attaining students or that they perceive that a blended environment offers them new opportunities to succeed: Higgins, Xiao and Katsipataki (2012) though this factor would be worth further study.

Additionally, 124 Islamic studies teachers agreed that a blended approach increases their productivity when preparing lessons and they believe that using different teaching methods may help the teacher achieve specific curriculum objectives. One could argue that this is due to the uniqueness of the blended learning model which consisted of four dimensions: 1) the use of different forms of technology; 2) teaching methods and teaching aids; 3) collaborative learning; and 4) active learning. Furthermore, as a result of increasing teachers' productivity when preparing

for a lesson, their productivity when delivering the lesson could increase accordingly. Consequently, the teacher provides a lesson using various teaching methods and learning activities (Mayer, 2003; Mayer, 2009). This may help in delivering a lesson that suits learner preferences and needs (Ainsworth, 2004).

Conclusions

The blended learning model is not a choice between digital technology or traditional methods, but rather a mixture of the four elements in Figure 1. The aim is to improve the method of teaching Islamic education curriculum and to help teacher achieve specific curriculum objectives such as enable students to understand new knowledge as well as reflect on such a learning and apply it correspondingly in their daily life.

The findings of the study indicated that both teachers and students benefited from using a blended approach. Islamic studies teachers thought that using a blended learning approach increased their productivity when preparing their lessons. Furthermore, they believed the blended approach helped them to achieve curriculum objectives.

The sample size was relatively small (129 Islamic studies teachers). Future researchers may wish to consider having a larger sample of Islamic studies teachers or one which is stratified to increase the likelihood of generalisability. Also, further research may add students to the study sample to examine learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of using a blended approach, as student's perceptions may provide useful insights about the advantages and disadvantages of applying a blended approach. Finally, this study contributes to an understanding of the role of technology in teaching Islamic studies and the potential benefits of a blended approach. The blended learning model may be considered a contribution to research in pedagogy, and future researchers may further develop or evaluate the effectiveness of the blended learning model and its use in teaching other subjects.

About the Author

Maram Jannah holds a BA (Hons) degree in Islamic Studies from King Abdulaziz University, and completed a Masters in Technology for Teaching and Learning (merit) at University of Glamorgan. She is currently studying

for a PhD at the School of Education at Durham University under the supervision of Professor Steve Higgins and Dr Vanessa Kind.

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The Use of Therapeutic Storytelling in Primary School Settings in China

Xi Liu, University of Sheffield

In the UK and other western countries, educational psychologists have adopted storytelling as a therapeutic technique with children for decades. However, although therapeutic storytelling has been introduced to China, little research has been done on the application of this therapeutic technique in Chinese primary school settings. The current study addresses this gap by using a constructivist grounded theory analysis of semi-structured interviews to explore how Chinese primary school psychological counsellors understand and use therapeutic storytelling. The data collection was based on a small purposive sample that includes twelve psychological counsellors. The findings indicate that storytelling can be used to facilitate the establishment of a therapeutic relationship and is compatible with a wide range of therapeutic approaches.

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that story has a quality which could provide people with comfort, encouragement and inspiration. It is well supported in literature that storytelling can be used as a therapeutic technique, especially when working with children and young people (Gardner, 1971, 1993; Cook, Taylor & Silverman, 2004, Friedberg & Wilt, 2010). Over decades, researchers in western countries have developed a range of approaches of using stories and storytelling for therapeutic purposes based on different theoretical foundations (Gardner, 1971, 1993; Bettelheim, 2010; Carlson & Arthur, 1999; Cook, Taylor & Silverman, 2004; Erickson & Rossi, 2012). In recent years, an increasing body of research on using therapeutic storytelling in a Chinese context has been published. However, there is a dearth of studies on using this therapeutic technique in Chinese primary school settings. The present study addresses this research gap by exploring how Chinese primary school psychological counsellors understand and use therapeutic storytelling. A constructivist grounded theory methodology underpins the research design, research questions, data collection, analysis and interpretation. The main research questions are:

1. What are Chinese primary school psychological counsellor's viewpoints on the therapeutic use of stories and storytelling?
2. What are the implications of these viewpoints for the future practice of Chinese primary school psychological counsellors?

Method

Participants

The participants in this study (n=12) were certified psychological counsellors working full time or part time in primary schools. The participants were recruited from a psychological counsellor community established by a psychological counselling training school in a city located on the east coast of China. Eight of the participants were purposively recruited at the beginning of the study. I engaged in theoretical sampling following the seventh interview in order to develop emerging categories. At the stage of theoretical sampling, another four participants were recruited. The participants' number of years of practice ranged from 1 to 17 years with a mean of 6.6 years.

Data collection and analysis

Based on the guidelines for creating therapeutic stories proposed by Sunderland (2001), I developed four therapeutic stories targeting Chinese primary school students' common mental health problems, including examination anxiety, social withdrawal, separation/loss, and adaptation problems. Generally, therapeutic storytelling was a new technique for the participants involved in this study. Hence, I delivered an online presentation to each participant to introduce the basic concept of therapeutic storytelling and present the stories devised by me. The participants were encouraged to use the stories in their practice, and eight of the participants found the opportunity to deliver the stories. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the participants' viewpoints and experiences regarding the therapeutic use of stories and storytelling. I was aware that the online presentation might somehow influence the participants' views of therapeutic storytelling. Therefore, during the interviews, I guided the participants to focus on their own experience and understanding and discuss this therapeutic technique critically.

In Charmaz's (2014) constructivist grounded theory approach, data collection and analysis should be carried out simultaneously. Therefore, the data analysis in this study started following the completion of the first

interview. The data analysis methods employed include: initial coding, focused coding, theoretical coding, constant comparison, and memoing.

Findings and Discussion

Two core categories congruent to the research questions emerged from the analysis of the data gathered. The following table illustrates the core categories and corresponding subcategories.

Table I. Main Findings

Core Categories	Subcategories
Facilitating therapeutic relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishing therapeutic alliance through storytelling ● Adopting storytelling as a way of communication
Integrating therapeutic story into existing therapeutic approaches and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the rationale and impact of therapeutic story from diverse perspectives ● Incorporating therapeutic story as an adjunct therapeutic tool

The section below further discusses the core categories, and several responses from the participants have been extracted from the interview transcripts in order to provide examples.

Facilitating therapeutic relationship

Establishing therapeutic alliance through storytelling

There was a consensus amongst the participants that storytelling could be used to facilitate the establishment of an effective therapeutic relationship. For psychological counsellors working in Chinese school settings, it is common to work with students who show resistance. This might be because sometimes teachers and parents would ‘send’ a student to see a psychological counsellor. In this study, many participants were concerned about establishing an effective therapeutic relationship with the children they worked with, and believed that storytelling was helpful. For example:

‘Telling a story was definitely a better strategy compared to explaining something directly. The child was encouraged to engage in the counselling. According to my own experience, usually it is pretty difficult for a child to engage actively.’ (Participant 4)

‘Storytelling might make the counselling less like a counselling...it is something that children are already familiar with. This activity may help to prevent children labelling themselves as ‘problematic student being told to see a psychological counsellor’. (Participant 9)

In Chinese primary schools, usually the psychological counsellor is also responsible for teaching mental health lessons. Therefore, it is likely for the students to perceive the psychological counsellor as a teacher, which might hinder the communication process in the consultation. According to the participants, storytelling is an effective technique to help students recognise them as professional psychological counsellors and talk more openly. Some participants also noted that children’s stage of development needs to be taken into account when analysing the reason of their resistance.

Adopting storytelling as a way of communication

Many participants described storytelling as an effective ‘communication strategy’ or ‘communication tool’ that can be used to communicate with children. This effect of storytelling was much appreciated by the participants because many students they worked with were unwilling or unable to articulate their thoughts and feelings. The participants believed that storytelling can be used to help children express themselves and understand what is being said by the counsellor. For example:

‘I would say therapeutic story is more like a communication tool. In other words, if you want to say something, say it with a story.’ (Participant 2)

‘It makes what you would like to say less abstract. Vivid and concrete information attracts more attention, and is easier for children, especially young children to understand.’ (Participant 8)

It can be seen that the effectiveness and efficiency of the communication between the child and the counsellor were enhanced by using storytelling. Storytelling, as a non-threatening communication strategy, allows

children to experience and express emotions vicariously and to develop insights about themselves.

Integrating therapeutic story into existing therapeutic approaches and procedures

Understanding the rationale and impact of therapeutic story from diverse perspectives

The participants interpreted the effects of therapeutic storytelling from different theoretical perspectives, including cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic, child-centred, etc. Some participants viewed therapeutic story through more than one theoretical lenses. The participants believed that therapeutic storytelling is compatible with a wide range of therapeutic approaches. For example:

‘When using stories in teaching, usually we would teach a moral or lesson to children. We can do the similar thing with stories in counselling, maybe in CBT.’ (Participant 12)

‘I believe therapeutic stories could be used as a projective and expressive tool for children in counselling, just like music, painting and playing.’ (Participant 6)

In the interviews, most participants defined therapeutic story broadly, and they were aware that there are many different types of therapeutic stories. Therapeutic storytelling was used by the participants in a variety ways, illustrating that storytelling can be used as a trans-theoretical therapeutic technique.

Incorporating therapeutic story as an adjunct therapeutic tool

In this study, none of the participants used therapeutic storytelling as the only approach to address the children’s mental health problems. According to the interviews, the participants advocated using storytelling as an auxiliary therapeutic technique. For example:

‘I intended to use storytelling to support my main approach... Storytelling has the potential to contribute to achieving therapeutic goals by helping children change their beliefs and evaluations.’ (Participant 1)

‘In the training, we were told that we do not have to stick with one therapeutic approach when conducting counselling. We can use

multiple approaches as long as they are useful...so storytelling can be used for different purposes.’ (Participant 2)

There was a wide consensus among the participants that the timing of delivering therapeutic story should be determined based on children’s responses to other therapeutic approaches used in the consultation. The participants had a tendency to use storytelling to support the implementation of other therapeutic approaches. A possible reason is that they were not familiar with or proficient in using this therapeutic technique.

Based on the findings of the current study and a review of literature, I identify some differences in using therapeutic storytelling to help children and young people with mental health problems in China and western countries. The participants in this study tended to use therapeutic storytelling as an adjunct technique. However, researchers in western countries have developed systematic approaches of using storytelling as the main technique in psychological counselling (Gardner, 1971, 1993; Sunderland, 2001; Pomerantz, 2007). For Chinese psychological counsellors, resources on the therapeutic use of stories and storytelling are insufficient. There are various therapeutic story collections published in English, but there is not yet a professional therapeutic story collection book developed by Chinese authors. Some western studies have developed therapeutic storytelling approaches that incorporate multimedia (Brosnan et al., 2006; Matthews and Doherty, 2011), but such work has not been performed in China.

Conclusion

This study explores Chinese primary school psychological counsellors’ understanding and experiences of the therapeutic use of stories and storytelling. According to the participants’ reports, storytelling is especially useful for establishing an effective therapeutic relationship when working therapeutically with Chinese primary school students. The participants also confirmed that therapeutic storytelling is compatible with a wide range of therapeutic approaches. These findings conform to previous studies suggesting that therapeutic storytelling is a trans-theoretical technique that can be used to integrate different therapeutic approaches (Long, 2013; Sunderland, 2001; Prochaska & Norcross, 2007). The differences in therapeutic storytelling in China and western countries indicate that more resources need to be developed to support Chinese primary school

psychological counsellors in using this therapeutic technique. Overall, the findings of this study may help to inform the future implementation of therapeutic storytelling in primary school settings in China. This study is limited by its sample size, therefore future research may include a larger and more diverse sample of psychological counsellors. Moreover, future research is needed to explore the experiences of children who are involved in therapeutic storytelling.

About the Author

Xi Liu is a PhD researcher and Graduate Teaching Assistant at the School of Education at University of Sheffield, where he completed a master's degree in Psychology and Education in 2013. He works as a part-time tutor at Sheffield Confucius Institute and Lifelong Learning, Skills & Communities in Sheffield City Council, teaching Taichi and Chinese calligraphy with a particular focus on promoting mental health wellbeing. Before coming to England, Xi was a certificated psychological counsellor in China and had one year experience of working as a psychological teacher in a local primary school. Since 2011, Xi regularly writes short stories for several Chinese children and teenager magazines and his first children's book has been published.

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There and Back Again: An Engineers (Autoethnographic) Tale

Kenneth Moffat, University of Edinburgh

As a factory worker, who became a motor mechanic, an electronics technician, process engineer, university course director, associate dean and more recently a PhD student in education, I have an extremely varied experience of education and lifelong learning. As my research aim was to bring a different perspective to education, I also needed to take a different approach to research. So I began my PhD with a grounded theory style approach, and a reflexive autoethnography of my life of learning. An autoethnography exploring thirty years of my life was bound to uncover many themes, but one that stood out was my experience of a significant disconnect between engineering education and practice. This paper discusses the autoethnographic journey that concluded with me questioning how this disconnect is maintained. I conclude by briefly summarising how intend to explore this question in the latter stages of my PhD.

Tell me a story...

It has been said that autoethnography is about telling stories, connecting the personal to the cultural (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2010). A lot has been written about autoethnography in recent years, so much so that I have questioned whether there have been more papers written *about* autoethnography, than actual autoethnographies. As an engineer, new to social science, one of the biggest problems was that there appeared to be no clear agreement on what autoethnography actually *is*, and according to Denzin (2014, p. 20) the aspirations of leading autoethnographers differ like “Apples and Oranges”. I was first attracted to autoethnography through the evocative approach championed by Ellis et al. (2010), and its ability to draw the reader into the world of the other. I read autoethnographies about a female professional golfer tiring of the locker room antics of older male golfers on the pro-am circuit (Douglas & Carless, 2008), and a teacher struggling with the dilemma of applying academic standards to people whose lives are so bad already, that to fail them could seem unthinkable (Wilson,

2011). These evocatively written stories demonstrated a powerful ability to communicate experiences that would have been otherwise impossible for me to understand. However, it was important to me that I didn't just tell a story, but that I connected this to the lives of others, and to academic literature, and the closest match that I could find to this aim was in the Grounded theory based analytical approach proposed by Pace (2012), building on an earlier proposal by Anderson (2006). The approach I have taken combines evocative autoethnography, interviews to gain multiple perspectives (Santoro, 2014), grounded theory approaches to thematic analysis and the literature, and it is my intention to later use a Bourdieusian analysis to explore the key themes. My experience so far, has convinced me that autoethnography has great potential as a key part of a methodology, rather than standing alone.

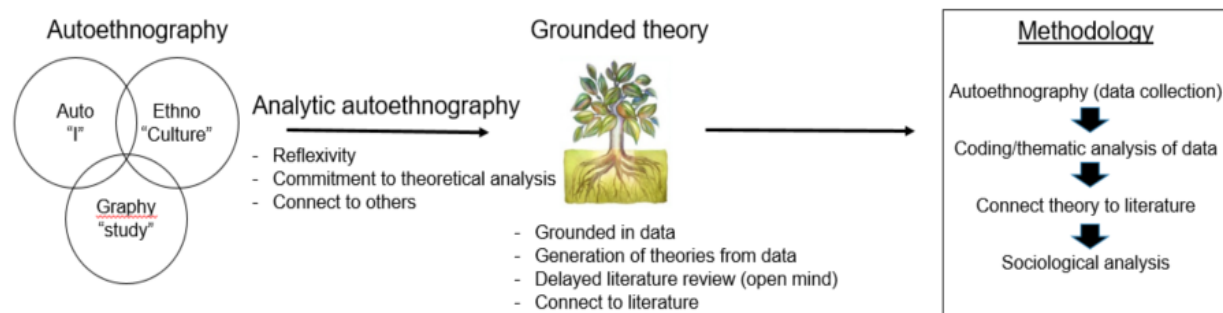


Figure 1: Methodology used in this study

So, I started to write, and when I finally stopped I had produced an autoethnography of lifelong learning spanning nearly thirty years. My story began with a bad experience at the end of primary school, my subsequent disengagement in high school, and culminated in my entry to academia and initial exposure to education as a sociological discipline. However, one of the problems with such a long and broad story was that when it came to analysis, it became very difficult to identify a key theme to explore in the depth required of a PhD. Was the key theme the events at high school that led to my disengagement and disinterest in formal education? Was it the question of why I was not motivated to learn at high school, yet I found the motivation for fairly high levels of academic achievement as an adult? I had recounted how I did the minimum required at school and left with grades well below that required for higher education, although at the same time I was actively learning about things that interested me, mostly from library books. Despite

my recollections of antipathy for high school, barely a year went by after leaving that I wasn't enrolled in a formal educational programme of some form or another. Alternatively, was the key theme my experience as an apprentice motor mechanic? I had written about an exclusively male working environment, but certainly not a privileged one, where unions had been effectively outlawed, working conditions were decades behind other industries, and some apprentices were subjected to punishment/initiation that can only be described as physical/sexual assault. An initial literature review had made it clear that the world I was describing there was completely unexplored in academic literature, and therefore was it a story about social class or hidden lives?

There were clearly many varied themes that I could focus on, but as Denzin has stated "A story told is never the same as a story heard" (2014, p. 55), and I found that the story being reflected back to me through interviews with those who read the autoethnography, and the supervisory process, was quite different from the one that I thought I was writing. I had initially thought I was writing a story that would explore how people learned, or what motivated them to learn, but I started to realise that the story being reflected back to me had a destination in engineering practice. Although the culmination of my story was a career in professional engineering, as a high school student my indifference to mathematics, and my qualitative and creative interests would not have marked me out for a career in this field, and I started to wonder whether I had entered the wrong career. However, as I wrote about the later stages of my career I realised that I had been reasonably successful as an engineer. On reflection, it became apparent that taking a creative or qualitative approach was never a problem during my career as an engineer, only in my engineering education. In my career as a practicing engineer I never used the classical mathematics that I had to spend so much time struggling through in my degree, and I had started to note how my experience of engineering education, was markedly different from my experience of engineering practice.

A disconnect between engineering education and practice

I effectively wrote two autoethnographies, although that wasn't my original intention. The unintentional autoethnography was my methodology which I had only intended to write in an autoethnographic style, but later I realised that this was also autoethnographic data. That turned out to be key because it

captured my epistemological journey from engineering to social science, and it highlighted the epistemological differences between my experiences of the practice of engineering, and the content of engineering education. As I wrote about social science methods and concepts, I noticed how similar some of these were to my experience of engineering. I noted that the vast majority of my experience of engineering practice was subjective and qualitative, while engineering education seems to be almost exclusively objective and quantitative. I wondered about how many potential engineering students were being discouraged by the association with mathematics, when in my experience I never used anything more complex than I had learned in high school.

My initial literature review found that while engineering education was initially based on practice, an *engineering science* paradigm that prioritised mathematics and scientific theory had later risen to dominance (Crawley, Malmqvist, Östlund, Brodeur, & Edström, 2014, p. 3; McMahon, 1984, p. 238). Given the dominance of the “engineering science paradigm of education” (Johnston & King, 2008, p. 76), I had not expected to find very much in the literature to support my argument that engineering practice was largely qualitative and subjective, with minimal use of mathematics. I was surprised to find that similar issues had long since been highlighted by mathematics researchers, such as Kent and Noss who chose to research what they thought would be a “mathematically-rich professional practice”, but instead found engineers stating that “‘squared’ or ‘cubed’ is the most complex thing you do” (2002, p. 39/1). Other mathematics researchers argued that the level of mathematics that students were being required to obtain for their engineering degree was “completely unnecessary” (Berry & Whitworth, 1989, p. 28) and out of step with the way that engineers use mathematics in practice, and challenged the “mismatch” between the “primacy of mathematical theory” in education and engineering “as practiced in the field” (Gainsburg, 2007, p. 481). The stark contrast between the views of academics and practitioners is evident in an Australian government commissioned report, where “several practising engineers asserted that their university mathematics was a “waste of time”, while academics stressed its “absolute importance”, ‘with the implicit meaning that this competence is necessary for students to succeed in their particular advanced course” (Johnston & King, 2008, p. 76). It seemed that many of the things I had established through my

autoethnography were already known, and I started to ask, why, if this is already known, does it not change?

Where is this going?

I had initially considered the question of why engineering education exists in the form that it does, from the perspective of the arguments made by Shulman (2005) and Haggis (2003). In different ways both these papers had influenced me to think about the potentially cyclic nature of education, where a student who responds to a dominant pedagogy within a discipline, is more likely to later become the educator and repeat that pedagogy. However, the concepts of signature pedagogies and constructing images discussed by Shulman and Haggis seemed insufficient to describe the influence of wider society on education. I started to think about my journey of lifelong learning and how it differed from most of my industrial and academic colleagues and this is represented in figure 2. I was drawn back to the social theory literature that I had explored when, as discussed earlier, I considered that the main theme of my autoethnography might be related to social class. I reconsidered the concept of Habitus, or the “embodied history” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56) of an individual, and how my “window to the world” (Zembylas, 2007, p. 447) might differ from others who had entered engineering and engineering academia through more traditional routes. A more complete discussion on Habitus and the related Bourdieusian concepts are beyond the scope of this paper, but the second half of my PhD has become focussed on developing a Bourdieusian framework to analyse the field of engineering education and the disconnect that I have highlighted through my autoethnography.

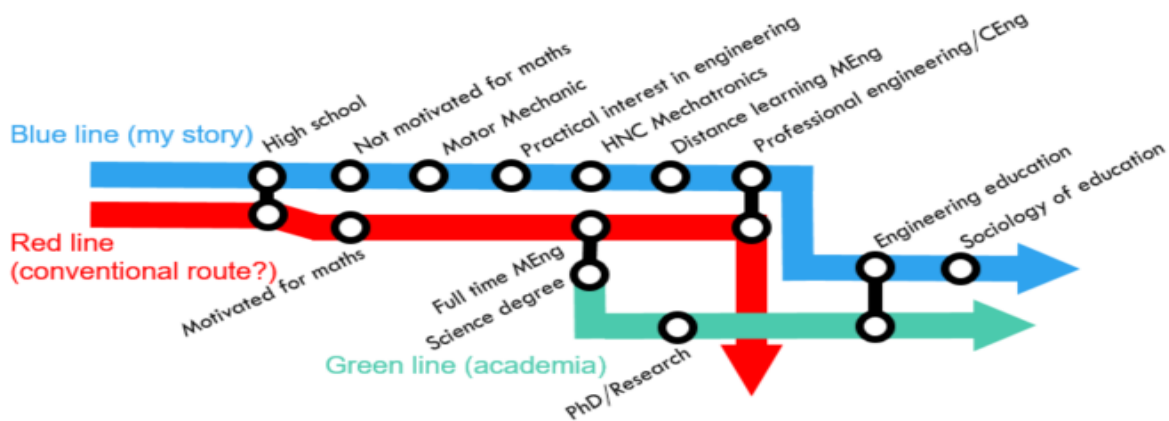


Figure 2: A journey of lifelong learning

Summary

This paper has discussed autoethnography as both a method and a process. I have discussed how taking an autoethnographic approach to capturing both my experience of lifelong learning, and my epistemological journey from engineering to social science, has allowed me to analyse these chapters as data, and view engineering through the lenses of personal experience and epistemology. Although I encountered issues in narrowing the scope from such a broad autoethnography, I would argue that the grounded autoethnographic approach I have taken to both my methodology and data, has raised questions and uncovered themes that might not have been explored in a more conventional study. As for the Bourdieusian analysis, well that's another story...

About the Author

Kenneth Moffat studies at University of Edinburgh, school of education under the supervision of Dr Aileen Kennedy and Dr Gillian Robinson. He is also a Chartered Engineer with the Institute of Engineering and Technology, and a member of staff in the Faculty of Engineering, at the University of Strathclyde.

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Translanguaging, a different pedagogy for language education at a Japanese as a Heritage Language (JHL) School in England

Nahoko Mulvey, University of Birmingham

Japanese as a heritage language (JHL) schools are weekend schools run by Japanese UK immigrants for their children. This paper, from my doctoral research project, explores translanguaging in one JHL school. Translanguaging is the use of different linguistic features or modes across language boundaries, embedded in ideological beliefs about languages. The research is a linguistic ethnography (Copland & Creese, 2015), looking for emic perspectives of research participants. This paper emerges from participant observation in a class at one JHL school. It charts the views of teachers to show that code-switching or translanguaging are viewed negatively. While such practices may be tolerated at home, the school is viewed as an undesirable place to allow language overlap. However, during the observed class, the teacher translanguaged intentionally to engage students in learning, resulting in a successful pedagogy. The paper argues that intentional translanguaging can offer a different pedagogy.

JHL schools in England

Heritage language schools have existed in Britain since the mid-1800s (Minty, Maylor, Issa, Kuyok, & Ross, 2008; Wei, 2011), but there are no records of such Japanese schools in Britain before World War II (Ito, 2001). Since the 1960s, the teaching of Japanese to children with Japanese background in the UK has been led by *hoshuko*, Japanese supplementary schools supported by the Japanese government. *Hoshuko* is a type of schooling designed for Japanese temporary residents' children to prepare for their return to Japan by teaching the Japanese national curriculum under government guidance (Doerr & Lee, 2009; MEXT). With continuing migration to the UK, parent-run weekend schools are becoming increasingly common. These non-*hoshuko* schools are often referred to as Japanese as a heritage language (JHL) schools (Douglas, 2005; Kondo-Brown & Brown, 2008). Unlike *hoshuko*, JHL schools' programmes are made locally without

the Japanese government's support or guidance. Although substantial literature exists on *hoshuko*, especially in the US context (Douglas, Kataoka, & Kishimoto, 2003; Kataoka, Koshiyama, & Shibata, 2008), much less research exists on JHL schools. My project investigates the programme of JHL schools in England.

Language separation ideology in language education

Named languages, such as English or Japanese, are constructed socially and politically (García & Wei, 2014; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). Traditionally in educational settings, code-switching or moving between languages has been condemned and language teachers tend to feel guilty about these practices, believing languages should be kept separate in learning and teaching (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Faltis & Jacobson, 1990). Two-way bilingual immersion programmes in the US adopt monolingual instructional approaches, where instruction should be conducted exclusively in the target language without using translation or language mixing (Cummins, 2005). There exists an assumption that keeping languages separate helps students learn the target language (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). The language learning classroom contexts in heritage language schools in the UK are described as 'separate bilingualism' (Creese & Blackledge, 2011), where teachers insist on using only the target language. These views and boundaries created around languages show that bilingual people are considered as "two monolinguals in one body" (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Gravelle, 1996). Teachers at the JHL schools I observed are influenced by this language separation ideology and tried hard to keep Japanese and English separate at JHL schools.

Translanguaging

Alongside language separation ideology, this paper also shows translanguaging action, which is more open to flexible bilingualism and practices. Translanguaging "goes beyond the notion of two autonomous languages" of English and Japanese, and instead, "it connotes one linguistic system that has features that are most often practised according to societally constructed and controlled 'languages', but other times producing new practices" (García & Wei, 2014, pp. 13-14). It is the use of semiotic resources across language boundaries. Along with others (García & Wei, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015), I argue that the term translanguaging offers ways to

capture the expanded complex practices of Japanese/English bilinguals, where the two separate named languages are used. I show how at a JHL school two contradictory sets of beliefs and practices circulate – language separation ideology valued by teachers, and translanguaging practised by both teachers and students (Blackledge & Creese, 2010).

Methodology

This paper aims to explore translanguaging action at one JHL school. My whole project adopts linguistic ethnography (Copland & Creese, 2015; Creese, 2008; Tusting & Maybin, 2007), using discourse analysis to focus on pedagogy and the languages used for teaching and learning in the classroom. It uses participant observation as the leading method to understand subjective perspectives of participants. In 2015, I visited 10 JHL schools in England and between January and July 2016, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork at two JHL schools. This paper arises from fieldnotes and audio recordings made in one class, where the teacher used translanguaging intentionally as pedagogy, and an interview with the class teacher from one of the two schools. The class was an upper level primary school class with 1 boy and 3 girls aged 10, 11 and 12. One of the mothers teaches the class using a textbook used at schools in Japan.

Discussion

During the interview, the teacher talked about the use of English during the class, saying:

‘Theoretically, we use Japanese and don’t use English during the class. When I have to explain a difficult word, I try my best not to translate it into English but to explain it in easier Japanese. But when I’m in a hurry, I cannot help giving the English word in haste, since it’s quick. When children speak in English, I tell them to speak in Japanese and the children in my class can then switch to Japanese. Of course, sometimes they cannot, but we must persist. That’s the only way.’ (Translated by the researcher).

She clearly believes that keeping Japanese and English separate helps students learn Japanese and wants to impose Japanese language in the class. She rarely used English during classes when using the textbook. However, my observations show that students often spoke English and it was not

possible to maintain a Japanese-only ideology in practice. During the class, she often asked students to speak in Japanese, demonstrating ‘separate bilingualism’ at heritage language schools as described by Creese and Blackledge (2011). While such practices may be tolerated at home, the school is viewed as an undesirable place to allow language overlap.

In an observed class, after studying a chapter on signs in the textbook, the teacher and the students talked about signs collected by the students and the teacher. This extract started when the teacher showed the following sign:



1. GS: **disabled!**
2. Teacher: **disabled** だね、日本語でわかる？ <that's **disabled**, isn't it? do you know how we say that in Japanese?>
3. GS: ディスエイブルド [di-su-ei-bu-ru-do] (English word 'disabled' said in Japanese pronunciation)
4. Teacher: (笑う) うまいけど、ちょっと違うな。[...] なんの絵だと思う？ (laughing) <that's great, but not really correct. [...] what is it a picture of, do you think?> [...]
5. GS: えっと、うごかない…人 <er, let's see … [ugoku-nai hito] gloss: a person who cannot move>
6. Teacher: だから、うん、これ、何使ってるの？ <yes, therefore, what's this, what is the person using?>
7. BS: **wheelchair**
8. Teacher: **wheelchair**は日本語でなんていうか知ってる？ <what do we call a **wheelchair** in Japanese? do you know?>
9. GS: ウィールチェアー [uii-ru- che- aa] (English word 'wheelchair' said in Japanese pronunciation)
10. Teacher: うん、**wheel**は… **wheel**じゃない、じゃあ **chair**は <yeah, what is **wheel**, ah no not **wheel**, what is **chair**?>
11. BS: いす [isu] <chair >
12. Teacher: そう、いすでしょ <that's it. It's [isu] chair, isn't it?>
13. GS: ウィール椅子の人たちだけ <only people with [uii-ru] (English word 'wheel' said in Japanese pronunciation) [isu] chair>
14. Teacher: それで**wheel**は？ <then what is **wheel**?>
15. BS: 車椅子 <[kuruma isu] wheelchair> (he could guess the correct Japanese word for wheelchair)

16. Teacher: 車椅子なの 車椅子! <yes, it's [kuruma isu] wheelchair. [kuruma isu] wheelchair!>
 17. BS: えっ、あつてた!?! <really? am I right!?!> (crying out in surprise.)

bold: utterance in English []: phonetic utterance
 < >: English translation, (): stage direction
 GS: girl student BS: boy student

In this lesson about signs collected from their everyday environment there was a freer atmosphere than in ordinary lessons based on the textbook. In this lesson, in spite of her belief, she translanguaged without hesitation, going beyond the notion of two autonomous languages, Japanese and English. In other lessons, when she spoke only Japanese and told the students to speak in Japanese too, two of them often did not bother to do so. However, once she ignored the notion of the two languages, she could guide all four students effectively and enhance their engagement. This could well be because, as a mother, she was familiar with their everyday spontaneous translanguaging. I argue that they were all more engaged and willing to speak Japanese when translanguaging was used as opposed to Japanese-only lessons.

Through translanguaging, students came up with creative words making use of their knowledge of Japanese morphology (lines 5, 13 and 15), and finally the boy student could guess the correct Japanese word for wheelchair in line 15, which encouraged them all to try harder in the rest of the lesson. They also came up with creative words through translanguaging and their knowledge of Japanese phonology (lines 3, 9 and 13), since they knew that there are many Japanese words which are originally foreign words but pronounced in a Japanese way. They were all fully engaged in the discussion and tried hard to make words creatively through translanguaging. They were most active and engaged during this class among the ten classes I observed.

Conclusion

In this class, the teacher translanguaged intentionally, ignoring the boundaries between languages, which enhanced students' engagement. As she is well aware of students' everyday spontaneous translanguaging as a mother, she could use translanguaging intentionally as a pedagogic technique. As the result of this choice, students expanded their Japanese creatively by making use of their full linguistic repertoire across boundaries between English and Japanese.

Although the teacher had an ideological belief that Japanese and English should be kept separate during classes at JHL school, seeing spontaneous translanguaging in class as negative, I found that intentional translanguaging as pedagogy helped to enhance students' engagement and achievement. It can offer a different pedagogy for language education for those living their life in bilingual/multilingual settings, such as students at heritage language schools.

About the Author

Nahoko Mulvey has been involved in language education for many years at schools and universities in Japan, Australia and the UK. Her research interest in Japanese as a heritage language arose while working for a Japanese ethnic school in Brisbane, attended by children with Japanese heritage. She is currently a PhD student in education at the University of Birmingham and teaches Japanese at the Oxford University Language Centre.

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Exploring the implementation of employment preparation programmes for special needs learners in five integrated secondary schools in Malaysia

Kumudthaa Muniandy, Liverpool John Moores University

Employment Preparation Programmes (EPP) are not part of the Special Education Integrated Programme (SEIP) curriculum in Malaysia, and there is no specific operational guidance provided to schools. As a result, EPPs are currently performed in a non-uniform way. This study aims to explore the implementation of EPPs, delineate the challenges faced by educators; teachers and head of department, and identify the areas of improvement needed. Semi-structured of teachers and department heads interviews were carried out to elicit data from a purposive sample of fifteen EPP participants. Data was also collected about special needs learners' activities using an observational method, in a real-life setting, over twenty observations: four observations in each of the five schools. Relevant documents; module and annual report were then be collected from the respective schools. This paper is concerned with one example of data analysis from a broader piece of ongoing research.

Background to the study

According to United Nation statistics, around 10% of the world's population are classified as disabled (United Nations, 2017). In Malaysia, there are 20,296 students with disabilities aged between 13 and 19 years old, who have been enrolled on the Secondary School SEIP out of a National Secondary School population of 2,344,891 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017). Specially tailored EPPs to prepare special needs learners are currently being provided with increased levels of attention globally (Johnson, 2017; Hussain, 2017). However, in Malaysia, the application of EPPs is highly dependent on the initiative of the teachers, as the programme does not form part of the curriculum (Cheong et al, 2013).

Research focus

One of the objectives of this study is to identify the factors that pose challenges and hindrances to teachers in the effective implementation of employment preparation programmes in schools. In order to examine this aim, the researcher describes how interview and observational data were analysed to explore the challenges faced by the special education teachers who undertake EPP in five selected schools.

Methodology

A qualitative approach was adopted to evaluate the data from observations which comprises in-depth, open-ended interviews and document analysis, to generate rich narrative descriptions and outcomes (Patton, 2002). The interviews were semi-structured and used open-ended questions to elicit data from participants; five of whom are Heads of Special Education Departments (HOD), along with ten SETs. The participant observation method was used to collect data regarding special needs learners' practical task-related performance: with four observations taking place at each of the five schools included in the study. Each observation monitored a class of special needs learners who were undertaking EPP in their school's SEIP. Whilst non-participant observations may not present the opportunity to interact with the participants during the activities and learn the significance of the activities as how participant observation would allow, the researcher gain understanding of the activities through the interviews sessions with the participants. Further, it may be regarded that being a participant observant would generally make it easier to ask for clarifications of actions during an activity rather than before or after it (Robson, 2016). Classes comprise learners aged between 16 and 19 with a range of learning disabilities, both physical and mental. Each interview was recorded and the audio files created were transcribed and verbatim using the QSR Nvivo11 software.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select interview participants because of the limited number of people involved in the delivery of employment preparation programmes in Malaysia. Each interviewee was required to have held the position of SET or HOD for a minimum of one year. The research population of the study was delimited as one class in each

of five SEIP Secondary Schools that are conducting special needs EPPs, in two States in Malaysia, Melaka and Perak.

In terms of ethics, apart from obtaining consent from gatekeepers and parents or guardians the participants (special needs students) the researcher consider special needs students' as vulnerable adult within classes need to be informed that the study is happening and they could be observed in the setting.

The researcher also changed the participant's name by giving them pseudonym to protect their identities and maintaining the integrity of the data.

Preliminary data analysis

Interview data was analysed using the thematic analysis method (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Relevant segments of the interview text were selected and subsequently coded to facilitate thematic analysis; firstly by importing the interview transcription into Nvivo 11 software to explore the content of the interview document, then by identifying the most frequently occurring themes and patterns; finally, a node was then created to collect all related references (coding). A text search was run to determine if other participants had identified the same issues (query). The results of the query were gathered in the node, and the material refined through a process of ongoing review and revision (reflection). Commonly occurring words and phrases were visualised in a word tree. The findings were recorded in a memo, and the elements derived from this process were used to verify the subthemes with other method; observation report and document analysis before finalized the themes identified from the literature review.

Observation data will be in the form of description content, physical setting, social environment, patterns of specific behavioural patterns, and impact that the researcher have had on the activities observed and reflection content, reflection upon the activity observed were noted. A preliminary analysis which helps identify emergent themes during observation which then facilitates a more developed exploration during observation promotes self-reflection which is crucial in understanding and meaning-making in the study (Emerson, 1987).

Knowledge, Vocational Skills and Attitudes of Educators

Interview transcripts analysis

The above element is derived from interview quotes taken from Special Education Teachers among five selected schools:

‘Knowledge of how best to work with the passive Special needs learners is important in conducting EPP’ (Sarah).

‘I attended 2 weeks of special education courses which I felt were not sufficient in order for me to gain a better understanding of special needs learners’ (Helena).

‘I was not provided with any comprehensive syllabus to conduct the EPP’ (Louise).

‘I do not know how to conduct the EPP as I didn’t major in that field. How do I teach my special needs learners systematically? Recently, I attended skills related courses on my own but my school didn’t support me financially’ (Dervla).

The above participants highlighted that not all SETs are specialised in delivering vocational education and training in schools. Moreover, according to the participants, some of the special education teachers are from a mainstream teaching background and by receiving just two weeks of training were unable to effectively teach students with learning disabilities. Some participants stated that they found it difficult to apply their knowledge to students with special needs due to insufficient training and guidance, especially for those participants coming from mainstream education.

Observation analysis

A summary of the observation analysis of elements related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators is presented in Table 1.

Based on the above interview quotes and the observation reflections, it is apparent that a substantial portion of the SETs do not have the relevant vocational skills; in fact, these are experienced mainstream teachers who have attended a short programme of study to learn how to teach students with disabilities, and who do not understand the complex characteristics of special needs learners. This lack of knowledge, vocational skills and attitudes therefore results in failure to achieve the objective of the EPP. This statement

by the researcher is supported by a conceptual framework regarding effective teaching, which comprises knowledge of curriculum content, and knowledge of teaching (Darling et al., 2007).

Table 1: Elements: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of educators

Description content	Reflection content
<p>School 1: SET 1</p> <p>1. Module used in this setting</p> <p>2. Task divided fit the capabilities of the students</p>	<p><u>Attitudes</u></p> <p>Initiatives of the teacher to create own module to conduct EPP creatively.</p> <p><u>Vocational Skills</u></p> <p>Vocational Training and education session is very smooth with simple instruction which enable the students to follow the lesson effectively.</p> <p><u>Knowledge of Special Education</u></p> <p>It evidenced of teacher's knowledge regarding special education background understand the students capabilities which enables all students to integrate in the programme activities</p>

<p>School 2: SET 4</p> <p>1. No Module used in this setting</p> <p>2. Task divided fit the capabilities of the students</p>	<p><u>Vocational Skills</u></p> <p>Vocational Training and education session seems to be disorganized in terms of documentation; module.</p> <p><u>Knowledge of Special Education</u></p> <p>Teachers divide the same task for all the student. This indicate that teacher do not understand the nature of the students with disabilities and their level of receiving and following the lesson which leads to have passive students in the setting.</p>
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Preliminary discussion

The initial findings based on the above subtheme support the assertion that the implementation of EPPs is compromised in various ways. Using the above Thematic Analysis Method, the researcher was able to elicit one of the element by analysing participants' responses and observational reflection by the researcher.

This report is concerned with the perception of 10 teachers and 5 heads of department engaged in the delivery of EPPs. For this paper, the researcher has reviewed partially from the interview from five schools, and has drawn meaning from it without looking for multiple instances (Creswell, 2013). The data from this analysis has been used to develop themes by inductively moving from data to theory and back again, until the themes are verified and

validated the findings (Basit, 2010; Chenail, 2012; Golafshani, 2003). The researcher intends to critically analyse the challenges faced by educators in the effective implementation of EPPs in schools, and ascertain the areas of these programmes which require improvement.

In other research, Pantic and Wubbels (2010) stated that a better understanding of the education system, in terms of subject knowledge, pedagogy and curriculum, leads to an effective and organised programme of education. Similarly, Malle et al (2015) underlined the need for staff to be trained in special needs education, to conduct more effective vocational education and training for special needs learners. In terms of theory, Bandura's Social Learning theory supported the notion that special needs learners develop their skills by observing their teachers who, as a role model to their students, should master the necessary knowledge and vocational skills for their EPP to be effective (McLeod, 2011).

Preliminary conclusions

This study provides an analysis of educators' perceptions of EPPs, based on their own experiences. It also reveals the importance of the knowledge and skills of educators in improving the performance of EPPs. In order to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators, EPPs need to become established as a fundamental part of the curriculum, enabling access to financial support to allow educators to acquire the necessary skills needed for the successful implementation of the programme. In summary, the issues of lack of knowledge and skills among the educators can be overcome by preparing them with necessary qualifications and support. Another obstacle affecting successful implementation of EPPs is its exclusion from the curriculum, which means typically means that there is a lack of financial support allocated to either the programme itself, or to the teachers who require the necessary skills.

Next Phase

The researcher will repeat the process of analysing and interpreting the findings in order to finalise the themes.

About the Author

Kumudthaa Muniandy is a PhD candidate and researcher at Liverpool John Moores University under the supervision of Prof. Philip Vickerman, Dr. Amy Whitehead and Prof. Mark Brundrett. The researcher has 12 years teaching experience in the field of Special Education in the Special Education Integrated Programme in Malaysia. Currently, she is working part-time in a vocational support service in Liverpool, United Kingdom. Her research interests are vocational education and training in Special Education.

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Global Citizenship, Intercultural Experiential Learning and Critical Reflection

Xin Shao, Durham University

Accelerating globalisation and cultural diversity make global citizenship education increasingly important. This education equips individuals with cosmopolitan awareness, leading them to regard themselves as citizens of a global community. Based on a review of the literature, including numerous existing case studies, this theoretical study probes into the cultivation, construction and development of global citizenship in higher education in terms of intercultural experiential learning and critical reflection. Taking a social constructivist perspective, it explores: (1) intercultural and cosmopolitan awareness; (2) intercultural experience and identity expansion; and (3) critical reflection and intercultural communicative competence. It argues that for effective global citizenship education, intercultural learning needs to be experiential, to enrich not only cosmopolitan awareness but also intercultural experience and participation. It concludes that, combined with critical reflection on cultural diversity, intercultural experiential learning can lead university students towards responsible global citizenship and active participation in today's interconnected society.

Introduction

Increasing globalisation enhances the interdependence of human societies, allowing for inevitably stronger intercultural social fabrics and the construction of a global community, which makes global citizenship a potentially powerful way to create a unified harmonious society.

This paper examines the importance of intercultural experiential learning and critical perspectives on cultural diversity and global citizenship education in the context of higher education. Taking a social constructivist perspective, it explores intercultural and cosmopolitan awareness, intercultural experience and participation, critical reflection and intercultural communicative competence, and argues that to cultivate mature global citizenship, intercultural learning needs to be experiential and critical.

Conceptualising global citizenship, intercultural communicative competence, and social constructivism

This paper argues that intercultural communicative competence is a core skill for the development of global citizenship, a process which is closely related to social constructivism. The three concepts are explained below.

Global citizenship

Globalisation, which is related to worldwide migration and enhanced communication between various cultures, has the potential to strengthen interconnections among people from different communities and has made cultural diversity within nation-states a common phenomenon. Increased globalisation has led to renewed attention to the concept of global citizenship (Banks, 2012). At the most basic level, global citizenship implies that the citizens of every nation-state also belong to – and participate in – the world community. Moreover, global citizenship brings larger numbers of people into the global conversation about human rights and the performance of duties for the wellbeing of humanity. In fact, documents such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) already target individuals regardless of their nationality status (Banks, 2007).

Education for global citizenship aims to form a unified world while maintaining diversity. This vision mirrors Marshall's conception of citizenship as developmental, evolutionary and expanding (1964). However, Palaiologou & Dietz (2012) caution that the slow but persistent progress of heterogeneity represents a challenge for education in global citizenship, because of constantly evolving intercultural contexts in communities and educational settings.

Global citizenship positively responds to cultural diversity by promoting “a common set of shared values” and reconstruction of the world for the “good of humanity” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 9). This inspiring phenomenon can be cultivated, socially constructed and developed through effective experiential learning.

Intercultural communicative competence

Meyer (1991) defines intercultural communicative competence (ICC) as “the ability to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures” (p. 137). Given that ICC is largely “dependent on context” (Byram, 1997, p. 22),

it needs to be put in an intercultural context. Not only does it need the same intercultural context as global citizenship, but it also helps global citizens acquire similar necessary basic characteristics. For Byram (2008), the development of attitudes, knowledge and skills can make ICC a core element in the development of global citizenship.

Social constructivism

Social constructivism (Vygotsky 1962, 1978) emphasises the importance of social interaction and the cultural context of learning. Learners construct knowledge through social interaction in cultural settings and through reflection on the experience. In terms of constructing and co-constructing global citizenship, it means acquiring knowledge about different cultures, experiencing intercultural interaction and critically reflecting thereupon.

Cultivating global citizenship through intercultural and cosmopolitan awareness

Intercultural awareness means being aware of the attitudes, values and behaviours of people from other cultural communities, and being willing to understand the reasons for different cultural beliefs and behaviours (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Cosmopolitan awareness means seeing the world as a harmonious global community and valuing joint efforts made by the human race as a whole. Equipping students with intercultural and cosmopolitan awareness is the first step towards cultivating global citizenship, as the acquisition of basic values is a necessary prerequisite for further developing and exercising citizenship. Students in higher education can gain this awareness in several ways. For example, according to Brewer and Leask (2012), an internationalised curriculum is “the primary means by which all undergraduate students can be encouraged to expand their horizons beyond traditional, national focused boundaries and concerns” (p. 246).

Perhaps one of the most common and effective ways of cultivating intercultural and cosmopolitan awareness is through language learning, including learning the culture embedded in languages. One example is that English is used as a global lingua franca in intercultural communication contexts, which requires such awareness (Baker, 2012). This is consistent with one of UNESCO’s main objectives for intercultural education: “the learner needs to acquire knowledge, skills and values that contribute to a spirit of solidarity and co-operation among diverse individuals and groups in

society” (UNESCO, 2006, p. 20). A positive attitude to a “peaceful coexistence of cultures” (Portera, 2011, p. 19) and a willingness for intercultural communication should be encouraged. With these basic values, citizens can take further steps towards democracy in a global society.

Education aimed at intercultural knowledge and cosmopolitan awareness should focus not only on cultural diversity but also on the interdependence of the global community and “shared responsibility” for human society (Frey & Whitehead, 2009, p. 286). Frey & Whitehead (2009) provide examples of global citizenship education in the US, including a lesson on environmental problems in Indonesia expanding from the local agricultural situation to the global demand for wood products, which shows the necessity of cultivating a sense of global responsibility. Global citizens with intercultural and cosmopolitan perspectives should consciously respect cultural diversity, value “harmony across national and cultural frontiers” (Beck, 2004, p. 132), and take responsibility for global development.

Constructing global citizenship through intercultural experience and identity expansion

Citizenship – individuals’ legal relationship with the polity – has much to do with identity (Sassen, 2006). While the concept is usually embedded in a particular nation-state, global citizenship means “an identity and attachment to the global community and a human connection to people around the world” (Banks, 2012, p. 31). This identity expansion to the supranational level can be a further step towards developing “universal compassion” (Hayden et al., 2007, p. 77). One successful example of this is the European Union (EU), which provides a positive environment for “European Citizenship” (Byram, 1997, p. 25).

According to Osler and Starkey (2003), individuals’ citizenship development mostly takes place through social activities in communities. Fairclough, Pardoe and Szerszynski (2006) take citizenship education a step further by regarding citizenship as a “communicative achievement” (p. 98). and speak of “exercising citizenship via participation in activities bringing citizenship status to life” (Block, 2011, p. 162). Forming and developing a global identity also requires an environment for intercultural experience and active individual participation in social activities. As individuals gradually gain intercultural exposure, their sense of self-identity will broaden to an international level. The idea that the construction of global citizenship is

facilitated by intercultural experience is consistent with Isin's (2009) view that citizenship is achieved through individuals' actions and that "acts of citizenship" (p. 371) should be understood on a global scale.

Since citizenship, in terms of identity, can be seen as "a duty, a necessary part of being a member of a community" (Ross, 2007, p. 293), a global identity means that global citizens need to perform their duty to contribute to social benefits for a global world. In a case study by Jackson (2011), a Chinese university student named Mira gradually shaped her self-identity as a "responsible member of the global, multicultural community" (p. 92) during a 5-week sojourn in England. Through this deep intercultural experience, during which Mira communicated with the local people, participated in volunteering work, and even signed a petition about animal rights, she became more aware of global issues and gained a global identity through selectively adopting both traditional Chinese and Western values. Importantly, she developed a full awareness of her responsibility to care about broader issues such as social justice.

Developing global citizenship through critical reflection and promoting intercultural communicative competence

Byram (1997) defines "critical intercultural awareness" as "an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (p. 53). Specifically, during the process of developing a sense of global citizenship individuals need to independently analyse the intercultural knowledge they acquire and critically evaluate the different cultures they encounter. In this way, individuals gain a clear idea of their rights and duties and of values such as "a concern for social justice and a desire to improve the society" (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 84). Encouraging critical reflection mirrors Johnson & Morris' core conception of "critical citizenship education" (2010, p. 77), which emphasises "critical and structural social analysis," a "critical interest in society and public affairs," and "independent critical thinking (2010, p. 90). Critical reflection, paying much attention to independent judgement of various aspects of social structure, contributes to individuals developing into mature responsible global citizens.

Global citizenship development requires the acquisition and development of ICC. This paper suggests that this can be gained through personal experience and critical reflection. ICC is closely related to global

citizenship, and in two ways especially to human rights. First, “a global culture of human rights requires competence in holding intercultural dialogues” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 8), implying a need for ICC in citizenship education. Second, it can “complement human rights as a catalyst for promoting a culture of peaceful and harmonious coexistence” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 8).

ICC can be developed by designing systematic and structured curricula about the cultures, social norms and histories of different societies, by providing more opportunities for intercultural interaction, and by participating in international institutions. Moreover, Byram (2008) considers Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) to be a key to improving the effectiveness of intercultural communication.

Conclusion

Intercultural education, fostering intercultural awareness, cosmopolitan identity-building, intercultural experience and critical reflection, plays a vital role in the cultivation, construction and development of global citizenship. This paper suggests that global citizenship, not only as a cosmopolitan value but also as a practice, can be cultivated through intercultural experiential learning and critical reflection. The social constructivist view penetrates the whole process of global citizenship development: based on an essential intercultural awareness, students construct their knowledge of global citizenship and reconstruct their existing ideas through intercultural experiential learning and critical reflection upon the experience. Through this valuable learning process, university students should develop effective intercultural communicative competence and gradually grow into mature and responsible global citizens.

About the Author

Xin Shao is a PhD student from School of Education, Durham University, under the supervision of Professor Stephen Gorard and Dr. Nadia Siddiqui.

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Cultural Identity and Thai PhD Students' Psychosocial Adaptation and Academic Acculturation

Nasatorn Witayarat, University of Glasgow

Doing a PhD can be fraught with unanticipated challenges and can even intensify among international PhD students as they may have to face challenges such as language difficulties and different learning styles as part of their sojourn. This research aims to investigate Thai PhD students' perceptions of their cultural identity and how this influences their psychosocial adaptation and academic acculturation while studying in the UK. Participants were 15 Thai doctoral students of varying fields and duration of study in Scottish universities. A photo elicitation technique, which involves employing photographs in a research interview to acquire more reflective views, was used. The findings show the crucial role of understanding Thai culture and greater awareness of cultural differences when providing support to Thai students. The results offer a greater understanding of participants' overall experience during their studies in the United Kingdom (UK).

Introduction

Doing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is likely to be a challenging journey since the process may demand tremendous effort for doctoral students to sustain their passion during the course of the study (Brydon & Fleming, 2011). On the contrary, doing a PhD can encourage and strengthen autonomous learning and self-reliance (Elliot, Baumfield, Reid, & Makara, 2016). It was also reported that international students tend to successfully adapt to the host country and subsequently experience personal development as well as gain improved intercultural and social interaction (Gu, Schweisfurth, & Day, 2010). Regarding academic challenges, international PhD students may need to adapt themselves to new academic conventions (Elliot, Baumfield, & Reid, 2016). This learning process was called acculturation – “the process of change in a person as a result of extended

contact with another cultural group” (*The Cambridge dictionary of psychology*, 2009, p. 8). Despite these challenges, living abroad might increase individuals’ awareness of their cultural identity (Lustig & Koester, 2006) since living in another country allows individuals to see the differences between them and people in the host country (Sorrells, 2013). In this context, my research attempts to explore Thai PhD students’ perceptions of their cultural identity and how this influences their psychosocial adaptation and academic acculturation during their studies in the UK.

Theoretical Framework

The social identity theory was employed as an underpinning theory in this study. The theory posits that individuals tend to identify themselves as part of a group and behave in a similar way of the norms of the group (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Individuals can become a member of more than one social group, which requires adaptation to conform with the norms of each social group (Byram, 2003). This theory is relevant in the context of international student research as sojourners are inclined to continue practising their own cultural norms and tradition (Patron, 2007). I contend that, despite strong connection with home culture, students living abroad and interacting with those from different culture lead to their negotiation between their home culture and host culture. Consequently, it enables them to understand better those from other cultures. Other research on doctoral students in the US and Canada demonstrate that they face challenges such as family responsibilities (Baird, 1993), insufficient funding (Acker & Haque, 2015) and difficult relationships with supervisors (Lovitts, 2001).

Research Method

Taking a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted to seek in-depth answers from participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Fifteen Thai PhD participants of varying ages, fields and lengths of study were recruited via the Facebook website for Glasgow Thai Students Community. Photo-elicitation technique was used for semi-structured interviews. Participants were asked to select four photographs from their existing photos and/or to take new photographs of items by using their mobile phones. Prior to analysis of data, transcribed interviews were returned to participants for validation purposes. Each transcript was read several times and data were systematically and inductively analysed by following

guidelines on thematic analysis proposed by Clarke, Braun and Hayfield (2015). Thematic analysis was chosen due to its flexibility, in which "a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Primary consideration was also given to the extensiveness of the themes that were repeatedly brought up by different participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000)

Results

From the data, the following themes and sub-themes were found:

1. Thai cultural identity

1.1 Hierarchy – cultural value of status and respect

One of the characteristics of Thai cultural identity is the high regard placed on the cultural value of status and respect as shown in the photograph below.



Figure 1: Traditional Thai garland of flowers

This photograph was selected by Nong (Female, 4th year) showing a garland of flowers typically given by Thais to those whom they respect. Nong brought it when she went back to Thailand and gave it to her supervisor. Such practice showed that Nong tended to cling to Thai norms and applied this idea to a different cultural context. However, living in the UK enables participants to see a different perspective of this Thai trait as reflected by Tor

(Male, 3rd year):

‘...my working environment in Thailand takes the concept of seniority very much into account ... However, people here are not like that...’

1.2 Buddhist practices as a way of life

The following photograph selected by Nong (Female, 4th year) shows how Thais living abroad congregated to make merit at a Buddhist ceremony in Edinburgh.



Figure 2: A Buddhist festival

This Buddhist practice reminded Nong of Thai way of life that is linked with Buddhist practices, i.e. going to the temple, offering lunch and giving offerings to monks. These religious practices helped Nong feel better when she heard that someone whom she knew fell ill in Thailand. It is believed that the person would receive her doing good deeds and recover from the illness.

2. Academic writing – a major challenge

The challenges of academic writing were expressed to be a major issue raised during the interview. As a case in point, thirteen out of fifteen participants mentioned experiencing difficulties in academic writing due to their limited

English vocabulary. As Phan (Male, 1st year) reflected:

‘... I will think about the word ‘money’, but there are additional English words ... like “financial,” “fiscal.”’

Further, participants discussed different learning and teaching styles between UK and Thailand, i.e. Western lecturers encouraged students to participate verbally in classrooms. Consequently, this practice forced Toei (Female, 2nd year) to participate verbally during her research group meeting. This finding shows that Toei had to learn to adapt herself to the new academic culture.

3. Understanding cultural norms via social relationships

Participants highlighted that making friends with others from different countries contributes to learning about new cultures. For Jum (Female, 4th year), she invited her supervisor and friends from other countries, and they brought their dishes to have dinner in her flat, which is regarded as an uncommon practice among Thais. The following photograph was selected by Toei (Female, 2nd year) when she attended a social event. This illustrates that Toei had to learn to adapt herself to other cultural norms when socialising with people from other cultural backgrounds.



Figure 3: In a party with other PhD friends

These findings point to the interlinks between Thai cultural identity, academic challenges and social relationships. Whereas staying connected with home culture can provide participants with emotional support, it seems mandatory for them to learn to adapt themselves to the new setting.

Following social identity theory, Thai PhD students now have more than a single group to which they belong. This, in turn, can create challenges and prompt adjustments, but it is also likely to give Thai participants the opportunity to experience new cultures and to meet new people during their sojourn in the UK.

Discussion and conclusions

The findings of this study demonstrate three significant aspects. Firstly, affinity to home culture is likely to provide participants with emotional support. Adhering to Thai cultural norms in the UK echoes the idea of social identity theory: participants tend to define themselves as a member of their group and act to conform with the norms of the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In a related study of Winkle-Wagner and her colleagues (2010), feeling connected to Hispanic community enabled a group of Hispanic students in the US to identify with others from similar cultural background. Winkle-Wagner's study supports the idea of staying connected with participants' home culture as it gives them emotional support from their community. Secondly, the result of this study shows that living abroad creates greater awareness of the differences between Thai culture and the host culture. For instance, some participants noticed the different academic cultural practices and less emphasis on the importance of seniority in Western culture. This notion is in accordance with the idea that individuals are prone to have more awareness of their cultural identity when they are in another culture (Sorrells, 2013). Thirdly, living abroad at a certain time generates the impact of Western lifestyle on Thai participants' lives in the UK. This demonstrates that culture as a concept is dynamic and it becomes more visible and noticeable when individuals move to a new setting (Montgomery, 2010). Finally, despite facing different academic literacy conventions, it can be argued that doctoral education in the UK offers participants an opportunity to develop their academic literacy due to a longer study time than a master's degree. As Elliot et al. (2016) assert, international PhD students have more time than a one-year programme of postgraduate students to learn and to gain academic competencies.

Although the social identity is used as an underpinning theory in this study, it is recognised that certain individuals may not identify themselves as part of a group (Huddy, 2001). Notwithstanding this limitation, this study

shows that, though Thai cultural identity has an impact on participants' lives in a new setting, they are prompted to adapt themselves to conform to the norms of the different social groups to which they belong. The norms of some social groups differ from the norms of a Thai group, and despite associated challenges, this offers a valuable opportunity to learn about other cultures. This valuable experience not only enhances their social skills but also promotes a sense of mutual understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds. This study demonstrates the impact of Thai cultural identity on Thai PhD students' lives in the UK which differs from other research which tend to focus solely on academic and societal challenges of international PhD students. Moreover, the focus of this study can contribute to knowledge in terms of Thai PhD students' adaptation since previous studies aim for the experience of Thai postgraduate taught students in the UK (e.g. Buddhichiwin, 2013; Cleary, 2016).

About the Author

Nasatorn Witayarat studies at University of Glasgow under the supervision of Dr Dely Elliot and Dr Kate Reid. Her research interests include intercultural education, intercultural communication, intercultural conflict management and migration identity.

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Exploring Chinese International Students' Transitional Experience in a Creative Way

Jie Zhang, University of Glasgow

The aim of this research is to explore Chinese postgraduate taught students' adaptation to a new academic and social culture during the transition process, and the influence of their social networks on transitional experiences in the UK. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as part of a longitudinal study. A photo-elicitation technique and a social network diagram were employed as innovative methods to facilitate in-depth interviews. Forty interviews were conducted and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used as an inductive data analysis approach. Emergent findings from interviews at the beginning of study programmes include: a) Chinese students have a great passion to make friends with non-Chinese people; but they lack opportunities for interaction, b) Chinese students have difficulties in presentations, group discussions and assignments; and c) it is an unexpected challenge for Chinese students to live independently.

Introduction

International students account for one-fifth of all higher education (HE) students in the UK in 2015/16. Within this international cohort, Chinese students, numbering 91,215 accounting to 2015/16 enrolments, are the largest group of international students (HESA, 2017). Although Chinese international students have been benefiting from gaining knowledge and expanding their worldview, they also face adjustment challenges (Liao & Wei, 2014). Difficulties include acculturative stressors such as language, educational, and sociocultural stressors (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Chinese international students, for example, have sociocultural concerns on language deficiency and superficial interactions with native English speakers. Communication and interaction with native English speakers may be affected by possible difficulties in English comprehension and oral communication (Yan & Berliner, 2013). As Chinese international students increase in number and face challenges in the UK, this study is part of a larger study

investigating Chinese postgraduate taught (PgT) students' transitional experiences and the role of social networks in the UK.

Coping strategies are identified to have an impact on the adaptation of international students (e.g. Berry, 1997; Ward et al., 2001) and this also applies to Chinese students. The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) is a theoretical framework on how individuals cope with stressors. According to this model, coping can be categorised as problem-focused coping, i.e., managing or changing a stressful situation, or emotion-focused coping, i.e., changing or regulating the emotional response to a stressful situation. It has been suggested that these coping strategies can either facilitate or impede each other. Coping is determined by one's resources, e.g. beliefs, problem-solving skills, social support, and the limitation of using these resources, e.g. personal and cultural values and demands to compete for the same resources (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, p. 179). Interestingly, research suggests that Chinese students prefer using emotion-focused coping strategies to reduce stress in the adaptation (Yan & Berliner, 2011).

Methodology

Chinese PgT students studying at the University of Glasgow were recruited via the university postmaster, leaflets and online groups such as WeChat. Forty semi-structured interviews, with maximum of an hour each, were conducted at the beginning of the study programme.

Creative methods, i.e. a photo-elicitation technique and a social network diagram were employed to facilitate in-depth interviews. Photo-elicitation interviews refer to research participants producing and using photographs alongside interviews (Harper, 2002). In this study, participants were asked to provide ten photographs for each of the ten interview topics, which helped acquire the 'story' behind the photos as well as participants' depth of reflection, particularly when using 'symbolic photographs' (Elliot et al., 2016, p. 10).

Another creative method called a social network diagram, was adapted from the Network Plot previously used by Sala-Bubaré & Castelló (2016). Participants were asked to draw different sizes of circles to represent how they value their current social connections. It prompted students' reflection and detailed description of network and their relationships with different

networks (Golden, 1992), helping them to explain how their social networks have affected their transitional experience.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in Mandarin (n=39) and English (n=1) depending on participants' preferences. Participants were assigned pseudonyms unless they preferred their real names to be used. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse textual data inductively. IPA, with its' phenomenological aspect, is particularly suitable for exploring Chinese students' 'lived experiences' and how they make sense of their experiences (Smith and Osborn, 2015, p. 25). Superordinate and subordinate themes from IPA inform the selection and interpretation of photographs and social network diagrams.

Preliminary Findings

According to preliminary findings based on the use of IPA, several themes were identified from Chinese PgT students' social, academic and lifestyle adaptation in the UK.

Social adaptation – difficulties in making friends with non-Chinese people

Chinese PgT students endeavour to make friends with non-Chinese people, but they claimed to have limited interaction opportunities. In the case of Yi (female, Business student), she expressed her passion to interact with non-Chinese. But she explained through her social network diagram (see *Figure 1* below) that she frequently contacted her family and friends in China and had very few friends in the UK, especially non-Chinese friends because of low English language proficiency.

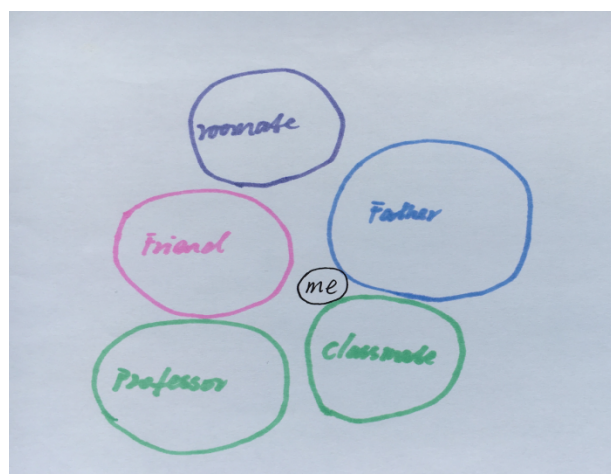


Figure 1 Social network diagram

Despite having limited interacting opportunities, some Chinese students proactively created opportunities for social interaction through church, accommodation, activities and extra classes. Lydia (female, Education student), for instance, stated that she was surrounded with Chinese classmates in Education course and a Spanish course gave her an opportunity to make friends with non-Chinese people. Although Chinese students made efforts for social interaction, they still face challenges concerning language, culture and attitude from non-Chinese people. For example, Chinese students may have misunderstandings when talking to non-Chinese people in English, may be unfamiliar with certain local culture norms and non-Chinese people might have less patience during conversations.

It could be primarily caused by having many Chinese classmates, which may encourage Chinese students to stay in their 'comfort zone' rather than actively participate in activities with non-Chinese people. The longer the Chinese students stay in their 'comfort zone' means the fewer interactions they pursue with non-Chinese people, and as a result, fewer possibilities to develop a close relationship with non-Chinese people.

Academic adaptation – difficulties in academic study

Apart from difficulties with social connections in the host country, Chinese PgT students also experience academic challenges when doing presentations, group discussions and assignments. He (female, Business student), for instance, felt very stressed when doing an assignment (see *Figure 2* below). She reflected how she had difficulties in finding relevant literature for the task. Moreover, it was a challenge to include her own ideas and engage in critical evaluation via writing. Likewise, Ashley (female, Education student) had trouble in preparing for a presentation. Reading in another language, i.e. English rather than Chinese, and in another format, i.e. journal articles rather than books, cost her plenty of time. It can be argued that Chinese students struggle to understand and adapt to the UK academic culture at the beginning of their studies.

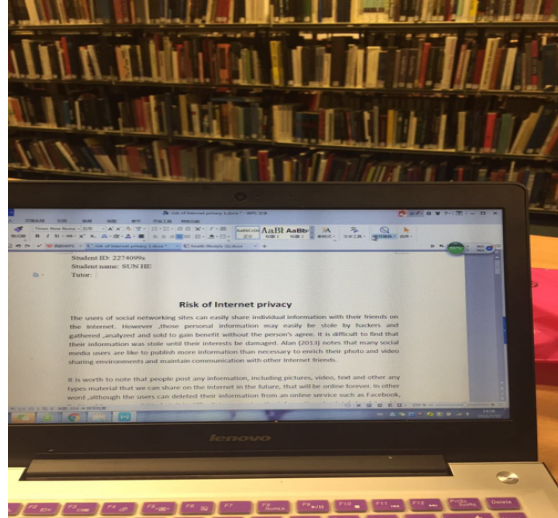


Figure 2. Difficulties in writing assignments

Lifestyle adaptation - difficulties to live away from families

Findings indicate that Chinese students do not only have difficulties in social and academic adaptation, but also face unexpected challenges living in the UK. Meng (female, Education student), for example, mentioned it was a big challenge to take care of herself especially making breakfast, lunch and dinner by herself. This is because Chinese parents, generally take care of everything for their children. Additionally, Lydia (female, Education student) mentioned her trouble with her flatmates (see *figure 3* below) who had the tendency not to clean the kitchen. The problem remained unresolved, although it was raised in flat meetings. The unexpected challenge to live independently is also a beneficial opportunity for Chinese students to mature and improve their ability to adapt in new environments in the future.



Figure 3. Dormitory life

Discussion

According to preliminary findings, Chinese PgT students face challenges from social, academic and life dimensions of their adaptation and adjustment. It is therefore necessary to have a better understanding of what challenges they are facing to identify appropriate support to help them cope with difficulties, improve their overall transitional experiences and thrive in their international education.

As Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argue, coping serves two overriding functions, i.e., problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. Thus, it would be helpful if institutions and support teams can provide support with respect to actual problems as well as helping students in managing their emotions when facing challenges. Since coping is determined by personal and environmental constraints (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984), it can be argued that both students and institutions may have an important role to play. At the institutional level, more activities can be organised for students with different cultural backgrounds, which may solve the social-related problems of Chinese students having limited chance to interact with non-Chinese people. In terms of academic difficulties, it might be helpful to support these students in organising their study groups, which offers Chinese students a better chance to discuss their problems and potential solutions. Moreover, giving further advice on how to deal with non-academic challenges, e.g. how to open a new bank account, how to make friends in different backgrounds and how to seek help when in need might help students in resolving problems directly while providing emotional support to Chinese students. Apart from institutional support, the results also suggest that Chinese students could be more open and confident, be more engaged in activities and proactively seek help from their peers, lecturers and institutions. Chinese students can learn to make use of resources and opportunities within the university. Short courses from the language centre, for instance, can be beneficial to improve English language proficiency and confidence. Joining competitions on presentations and writing can also motivate Chinese students to have more practice, as they learn through practical experience and through other students.

Conclusion

Chinese PgT students studying in the UK generally face social, academic and life challenges during their transition. The photo-elicitation technique and

social network diagram helped participants to express their perceptions and feelings about their experiences. Study findings suggest that institutions and support teams may need to provide other practical suggestions as well as offer further emotional support to Chinese students. Nevertheless, Chinese students may need to recognise that they themselves play an important role and that they should be proactive when facing challenges. This paper, however, only presents preliminary results from the first phase of the research. Follow-up interviews at the end of the programme will also be analysed and linked to the initial findings. This research was conducted at one university and participants were mainly Chinese students, thus the study findings may not be generalisable to the experiences of all international PgT students in the UK. Still, this paper may serve to provide a better understanding of the challenges that international Chinese students are facing; this can lead to providing effective interventions to improve students' overall transitional experience in the UK.

About the Author

Jie Zhang is a PhD student at the University of Glasgow in receipt of a full scholarship from the China Scholarship Council. Her areas of research interest include international students, higher education, transitional experience, social networks and creative methods.

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