APPROPRIATING PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF JAPANESE SECONDARY SCHOOL EFL TEACHERS RETURNING FROM THE OVERSEAS IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

There are a growing number of teachers from English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings who participate in L2 teacher education programs in North American universities and then return to teach in their home countries. Given the circumstances, it is important to understand the nature of EFL teachers’ learning to teach, in particular, how they appropriate pedagogical tools presented in their programs into their own teaching contexts when they make a transition between the two settings. In the contexts of Japan, for example, to promote communicative-oriented pedagogy in English education, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) has currently provided the government-sponsored overseas in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs for Japanese secondary school EFL teachers. However, little research has been conducted to examine their experiences of learning to teach. Therefore, this study explores Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation processes when they shift from the overseas programs to their teaching sites in Japan. By using “activity theory” as a main theoretical framework, this study aims to illuminate sources and settings that shaped the processes (Grossman, et al., 1999; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

A combined quantitative and qualitative methods approach was employed in this study. The participants of the quantitative method based on questionnaires, were sixty-six Japanese secondary school EFL teachers who participated in the U.S. MEXT programs
from 1998-2003. To gain a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in their learning to teach, a qualitative case study was subsequently conducted with three teachers from the questionnaire respondents. Furthermore, I triangulated not only data collection methods (questionnaires; interviews; classroom observations; reports; documents) but also sources (teachers; their school administrators; program hosts) in the study.

The questionnaire results reveal that teachers had positive feelings about the training, especially in regards to their English language development and gained pedagogical tools related to communicative-based teaching and learning. However, the case study findings suggest that teachers faced challenges in appropriating the tools into their own teaching sites. The results also suggest that their appropriation processes involve the complex interplay between individual teachers’ histories and goals and the settings in which their learning to teach occurred. Based on these findings, I argue that EFL teachers’ learning to teach needs to be viewed as a dynamic co-constructed process rather than passive internalization of transmitted knowledge. The study also suggests that it is critical for L2 teacher education programs to include the following activity settings in order to further foster EFL teachers’ appropriation processes and to develop effective programs: articulate and examine teachers’ prior knowledge about English teaching and learning, understand the conceptual principles underlying pedagogical tools, try out pedagogical tools in teaching sites, and reflect critically on their teaching practices and pedagogical applications.
Dedicated to my mother and the memory of my father
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A number of prospective and experienced English language teachers around the world participate in second language (L2) teacher education programs in the English speaking countries for professional development. In fact, there are a growing number of teachers from the English as a foreign language (EFL) settings in North American universities who intend to return to teach in their own teaching contexts (Liu, 1999; Nunan, 2003). Given this trend, it is important to understand EFL teachers’ learning to teach, in particular, how they make the pedagogical tools presented in the programs their own in their own teaching settings back home. It is also critical to examine how L2 teacher education programs themselves are appropriated as a result of teachers’ professional needs and the effects of teacher education programs.

The issues related to L2 teacher education have received attention among scholars in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) field. A topic in recent literature on L2 teacher education has centered on the issue of what constitutes a professional knowledge-base for the development of effective programs for English language teachers (e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Grabe, Stoller, & Tardy, 2000; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Reagan, 1997; Richard, 1998; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). Traditionally, scholars attempted to determine the core of L2 teacher education based on
a range of disciplines, such as linguistics, applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and psychology, to prescribe what L2 teachers need to know in order to successfully conduct their teaching practices (Grabe, Stoller, & Tardy, 2000; Reagan, 1997; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). Those who adopt this prescriptive view of training tend to consider exposure to disciplinary knowledge or subject matters to be central for language teachers’ professions.

This transmission model of teachers’ learning to teach, however, has been recently challenged by constructivists who seek to understand the complexity of teachers’ learning to teach and their practices (Roberts, 1998). For example, since the late 1980s researchers in L2 teacher education have explored a role of teachers’ beliefs in their learning to teach. Many researchers suggest that teachers filter the subject matter learned in teacher education programs through their own belief systems (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Richard, 1998; Wood, 1996). Recently, drawing on sociocultural theory, scholars have further explored teachers’ professional practices in relation to social and cultural contexts such as teacher education programs as well as classroom, institutional, and local/national culture. Social constructivists view learning as a social, cultural, historical, and situated activities which are inextricably interwoven with individuals’ mental lives (Cole, 1985; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, 2000 & 2006). For example, the issue of disconnection between theory and practice, that is, how teachers make sense of what they learned in teacher education programs in their classroom instruction, is a central issue in the field (e.g., Flowerdew, 1998; Richards, 1998). The studies from these descriptive views of teachers’ learning to teach have revealed an influential effect of social contexts on their professional activities and their
thinking (e.g., Burns, 1996; Richards, 1998; Gerbhard, 1998; Sato, 2002) and have had a great impact on the direction of L2 teacher education for the last decade (Crandall, 2000).

By synthesizing the current work on L2 teacher education, Freeman and Johnson (1998) propose a framework for the knowledge-base of L2 teacher education from a social constructivist perspective. This framework consists of three interconnected main areas: the nature of “teacher as learner,” the effects of “the social contexts,” and “the nature of the activity of teaching and learning” (p. 406). The “teacher as learner” concerns “how individuals learn to teach” and emphasizes that the primary focus of language teacher education needs to be placed on “teachers as learners of language teaching” rather than on “students as learners of language” (p. 407). The nature of social contexts refer to “schools” as “settings in which teaching and learning take place” and “schooling” as “sociocultural and historical process that takes place in the settings of schools” (p. 408). They argue that understanding these two contexts is critical for developing an effective knowledge-base on language teacher education. As for the nature of the activity of teaching and learning, it is teachers’ practices, including their “pedagogical thinking and activity, the subject matter, and language learning” (p. 406). In putting a special emphasis on the interconnected nature of these three domains, Freeman and Johnson further suggest that research on and proposals for L2 teacher education need to be grounded in these three areas.

In summary, the current literature on L2 teacher education examines the dynamic nature of teachers’ learning to teach by illuminating teachers’ thinking and the practices in relation to particular social contexts such as university level teacher education programs and teaching sites at schools. By studying L2 teachers’ learning from social-
constructivist perspectives, scholars attempt to create a theory-based L2 teacher education and to develop effective L2 teacher education programs for teachers’ professional growth.

**Statement of the Problem**

The studies from the social constructivist perspectives certainly have portrayed the dynamic nature of teachers’ experiences of learning to teach, and consequentially they have recently had a great impact on the direction of L2 teacher education research. However, the studies need to be further explored in the following four important aspects. One of the aspects is the relatively exclusive focus of the studies on ESL teachers (Crandall, 2000; Widdowson, 1997). Thus far, few studies have explored outside ESL contexts, in particular, EFL teachers’ professional experiences of learning to teach. In addition, even fewer studies have examined EFL teachers’ learning who receive overseas L2 teacher education programs in English speaking countries and return to their native teaching contexts. Given the circumstances in which social and cultural contexts (e.g., national policy, institutional environments) often play a critical role in making educational decisions in EFL contexts, it is crucial to examine teachers’ learning to teach by illuminating these settings. Furthermore, EFL teachers who participate in overseas teacher education programs inevitably encounter transitional experiences from the contexts of teacher education programs to their own teaching contexts by crossing two settings which may or may not overlap the values, goals, and practices. Therefore, teachers’ unique professional experiences in regards to their teaching conceptions and
practices across the two key settings need to be examined so that they can be added to the current emerging research on L2 teacher education.

Another aspect which needs to be further explored relates to teachers’ learning of disciplinary knowledge, which, according to scholars, tends to be taken for granted in the current L2 teacher education research from social constructivist perspectives (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Reagan, 1997; Widdowson, 1997; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). For example, the issue of EFL teachers’ own L2 learning, which is one of the main concerns that nonnative English speaking teachers have (Kamhi-Stein, 1999; Medgyes, 1992 & 1999; Murdoch, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Seidlhofer, 1999; Tang, 1997), has not been brought to the surface of the current work on the knowledge-base. The “categories of knowledge” of teacher developed by Shuman (1987) clearly suggests that linguistic knowledge is deeply interrelated with teacher knowledge as subject matter (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). In addition, nonnative teachers’ self-perceived image in light of their professional competence has been a concern for their professional development in the TESOL field (e.g., Braine, 1999; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2000; Tang, 1997). Therefore, it is imperative to explore teachers’ language development in the studies of EFL teachers’ learning to teach in order to incorporate the issues into the discussion of the knowledge-base.

In addition, the influence of teacher education programs is the area which needs to be further explored from social constructivist perspectives. Research in the L2 teacher education field has explored the effect of teacher education programs on their teaching beliefs and practices in order to examine whether teachers were able to apply their newly acquired knowledge to their actual teaching practices (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Lamie, 2001;
Pacek, 1996). These studies revealed the complex nature involved in L2 teachers’ learning to teach such as the influence of teachers’ beliefs about teaching and of social and cultural factors on their learning in training programs and their classroom instruction. Despite the contributions of these studies, the following issues need to be further addressed. First, much of the research focus on to what extent teachers successfully acquired propositional knowledge presented in teacher education programs (e.g., knowledge about particular teaching methodology) and successfully transfer it to their teaching practices, but not so much on how they make pedagogical tools their own by illuminating sources and settings in which their learning to teach takes place. In L1 teacher education, for example, by drawing particularly on activity theory, some researchers have explored how teachers appropriate pedagogical tools presented in teacher education programs in their teaching contexts (Grossman, Valencia, Evans, & Thompson, 2000; Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson, 2001). A fundamental assumption of activity theory is that “person’s frameworks for thinking are developed through problem-solving action carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been developed through historical culturally grounded actions” (Grossman et al. 1999, p.4). The scholars have examined the effects of teacher education programs by illuminating a variety of activity settings in which teachers’ learning to teach occurs, including university course work, cultural environments at schools, and contexts affecting teachers’ belief systems (e.g., their histories). By using activity theory as a theoretical framework, L2 teachers’ learning to teach, in particular, EFL teachers’ appropriation of pedagogical tools, also needs to be explored so that we can better understand the effects of teacher education programs in a theoretically grounded way.
Furthermore, in the current line of research, “dialectic” negotiation of various demands that teachers need to deal with has not been adequately explored. That is, teachers are not passive subjects who immerse themselves in the given settings and are only reproduced to serve the interests of more competent groups (Donato, 2000; Lantolf, 2000). In particular, the issue of how teachers deal with possibly competing and conflicting values, goals, and practices stressed in various activity settings has not been fully explored in the research on L2 teacher education. Hence, such studies need to be conducted especially with EFL teachers who have participated in overseas teacher education programs, because their experiences of learning to teach is complex given that their learning involves various activity settings both in and outside their home countries.

To summarize, the present study aims to explore EFL teachers’ appropriation of pedagogical tools presented in overseas teacher training programs into their own teaching contexts. By using activity theory as a conceptual framework, my study attempts to shed light on a variety of settings in which teachers’ learning to teach take place and on their unique experiences within and across the settings. In doing so, it examines the influence of teacher education programs on teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices, and attempts to incorporate the issue into the discussion of the current knowledge base of L2 teacher education.

**Purpose of the Study**

A main purpose of this study is to examine the nature of EFL teachers’ learning to teach by highlighting their appropriation processes when they shift from a teacher education program to their own teaching sites. Participants of this study are 66
experienced Japanese EFL teachers for the first phase of the study (questionnaires) and also three teachers selected from all the participants for the second phase (case study). All of these teachers completed the U.S. in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs between 1998 and 2003 and are currently teaching English in public secondary schools in Japan. In particular, this study examines teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices, their appropriations of conceptual and practical tools presented in the programs in their own teaching contexts, sources and settings affecting their appropriation, and their needs for professional development. In order to achieve these purposes, the present study employed a quantitative and qualitative mixed methods approach. The following research questions were identified in relation to the purposes:

**Research Questions**

1. What aspects of the U.S. in-service teacher education programs do all the Japanese secondary school EFL teachers consider the most useful for their current teaching professions, and what areas in the programs did they suggest more improvement?

2. What are the teaching conceptions and practices of Japanese EFL teachers who participated in the U.S. in-service teacher education programs?

3. What various degrees of appropriation take place when Japanese EFL teachers in case study adopt conceptual and practical tools presented in the U.S. teacher education programs into their classroom instruction?

4. What sources and activity settings have influenced the degrees of Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation?
Significance of the Study

Research on L2 teacher education is a relatively underexplored area (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richard, 1998). From the late 1980s, scholars started to examine the complex nature of L2 teachers’ learning to teach, and have searched for “a theory of language teaching” and “theory of language teacher education” (Crandall, 2000; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Larsen-Freeman, 1990). While previous studies in the field focused on ESL teachers’ learning to teach from a social constructivist perspective, the present study explores EFL teachers’ professional experiences in a further meaningful way. That is, by using particularly activity theory as the main theoretical framework, the study aims to bring together diverse research findings of EFL teachers’ professional development, including teachers’ content knowledge such as the issues of language and teaching methods (e.g., implementing communicative language teaching) and the impact of teacher education programs. In doing so, it aims to contribute to new insights into the existing theoretical framework to explain L2 teacher education phenomenon. A unique aspect of this study is to examine EFL teachers’ transitional experiences from the U.S. in-service teacher education programs to their own teaching sites in Japan.

Moreover, this study also aims to provide pedagogical implications for EFL teachers and L2 teacher education programs. In terms of the former, through experienced Japanese EFL teachers’ reflection, this study attempts to provide them with opportunities to critically examine their own teaching conceptions and practices. By (re)evaluating their ELT assumptions and practices, I hope that the teachers can realize a sense of “doubleness” (Foucault, 1989, cited in Canagarajah, 1999, p. 185; see also Seidlhofer, 1999) as ELT professionals in mediating various goals and practices stressed in particular
settings. In addition, given the recent circumstances in which many EFL teachers attend teacher education programs in English speaking countries, and return to their native countries to teach, it is meaningful to examine their learning to teach across these key settings. In particular, this study can offer other EFL professionals, who have similar training experiences, ideas regarding the process of teachers’ appropriation of pedagogical tools and also their use of specific instructional strategies to deal with various goals and practices emphasized among settings.

In terms of the latter, which is the implications for L2 teacher education programs, as research on teachers’ learning to teach has revealed a disjuncture of the values and practices between different settings, programs may face challenges in teachers’ professional development. Therefore, this study explores how the effects of teacher education programs can and should be viewed, and also under what circumstances particular kinds of changes take place (Grossman et al., 1999). In addition, as the number of EFL teachers who attend teacher education programs in English speaking countries increases, L2 teacher education programs may also be faced with new challenges. Those challenges may include how to meet the varying needs of EFL teachers, how to deal with EFL teachers’ language issues, how to balance making pedagogical adjustments for EFL teachers and meeting the needs of domestic students (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999), and how to help EFL teachers deal with the incongruity between values and practices in the different activity settings. This study attempts to answer some of these issues and to make suggestions for L2 teacher education programs in dealing with these challenges.

In summary, given the circumstances in which there is a growing number of EFL teachers who attend a L2 teacher education program away from home, it is critical to
examine their learning to teach by illuminating particular key activity settings that comprise their teacher education. By using activity theory as a theoretical framework, this study explores Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation of pedagogical tools and attempts to add their experiences of learning to teach to the current work on the knowledge-base of L2 teacher education.

**Definitions of Terms**

**Activity theory**: A fundamental assumption of activity theory is that “a person’s frameworks for thinking are developed through problem-solving action carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been developed through historical culturally grounded actions” (Grossman et al. 1999, p.4).

** Appropriation**: Appropriation is one of the key concepts of activity theory (Grossman et al., 1999). Drawing on Bakhtin, Wertsch (1998) describes appropriation as “the process is one of taking something that belongs to others and making it one’s own (p.53).

**Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**: The central tenet of CLT lies in “communicative competence,” which is defined by Hymes (1972) as “aspects of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts” (Brown, 2000, p. 246).

**English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**: EFL refers to the English language taught or studied as a subject in schools but seldom used as a medium of instruction in education
nor as a language for communication purpose within the country (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1993). Two terms, the EFL settings and “the Expanding Circle” coined by Kachru (1992) are used in an interchangeable fashion.

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** ESL refers to the English language taught to non-native English speakers (e.g. immigrants, international students, minority groups) in a country where English is widely used as a medium of communication. Two terms, the ESL settings and “the Center Circle” coined by Kachru (1992) are used in an interchangeable fashion.

**Experienced teachers:** For use in the present study, this term refers to teachers who have more than five years of teaching experiences at public or private schools.

**Government sponsored overseas in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs:** Japanese government sponsors 6 and 12 month overseas teacher education program for currently working Japanese English teachers at the secondary school level. The main purposes of this program are to develop teachers’ language skills and their teaching practices (Wada, 2002). The host counties of the program include Australia, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand.

**Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs):** Japanese teachers of English as a foreign language working in junior and senior high schools in Japan

**Knowledge-base of teacher education:** Shulman (1987) describes the nature of teacher knowledge by proposing seven interrelated “Categories of the Knowledge Bases:” Those categories are “content knowledge,” “general pedagogical knowledge,” “pedagogical content knowledge,” “curriculum knowledge,” “knowledge of learners and
their characteristics,” “knowledge of educational contexts,” and “knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values and their philosophical and historical grounds” (p. 8).

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT): The Japanese governmental body which makes decisions on educational policies regarding issues related to public education in Japan. In this study, two terms, MEXT and the Ministry of Education are used in an interchangeable fashion.

Social constructivist perspectives of learning to teach: Social constructivists view knowledge as “having both individual and social components and hold that these cannot be viewed as separate in any meaningful way (Windschitl, 2002, p.137). They see learning “as increasing one’s ability to participate with others in meaningful activity” (Windschitl, 2002, p.137).

Teachers’ belief: Richards (1999) defines teachers’ belief as “a primary source of teachers’ classroom practices,” that is, “the information, attitudes, values, expectations, theories, and assumptions about teaching and learning that teachers build up over time and bring with them to the classroom” (p. 66). Teachers’ belief, therefore, serves as a guide to their thinking and action (Borg, 2001). Teachers’ belief systems are shaped and reshaped from various personal, educational, professional, cultural, and social experiences.
Basic Assumptions

This study was conducted with four underlying assumptions. First of all, the course work in the MEXT programs made both conceptual and practical tools available to experienced Japanese EFL teachers. Due to the program requirements proposed by the Japanese Ministry of Education, it is assumed that the participant teachers particularly developed the following three areas of knowledge: (1) English language, (2) communicative-oriented teaching approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and (3) educational, cultural, and social aspects in the United States. Second, the experienced teachers who participated in this study are able to reflect on the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program and how they appropriate the tools in their own teaching settings in Japan. Third, teachers’ experiences of learning to teach are potentially complex process involving not only the acquisition of new conceptual and practical tools but also the negotiation of personal, institutional, social, and cultural expectations. Therefore, teachers are assumed to encounter overlapping and competing goals and practices among settings when they appropriate pedagogical tools. Finally, Japanese teachers of English who participated in this study honestly report their experiences of learning to teach before, during, and after the MEXT program through questionnaires, reports, and interviews.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The conceptual framework of this study is informed by research on the L2 and general teacher education field such as (1) activity theory, (2) teacher socialization, (3) appropriation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and (4) professional development for non-native English speaking teachers. The first two areas are drawn from the research on sociocultural perspectives which view teachers’ learning to teach not only as individuals’ cognitive activity but also as a fundamentally social, cultural, and historical practice. The third area, appropriation of CLT, examines a dominant teaching approach in the second and foreign language field, namely CLT, by taking into account the historical, cultural, institutional, and individual factors involved in the approach. The last area explores non-native English speaking teachers’ professional development by highlighting their unique professional needs and concerns. Professional development for Japanese English teachers will also be discussed at the end of this Chapter.

Activity Theory

Recently, a strand of research that has been increasingly influential on applied linguistics and social science draws on sociocultural theory, first developed by Vygotsky and then expanded by his collaborators (John-Steier & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, 2000). This
theory emphasizes the social construction of learning and aims to understand humans’
cognitive development as embedded in social, cultural, and historical conditions
(Vygotsky, 1978). The power of Vygotskian’s perspectives, therefore, lies in his ideas
that individual process of learning and its social environments are mutually connected
and interdependent (John-Steier & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Cole, 1985;
Wertsch, 1981). According to John-Steier and Mahn (1996), the fundamental concept of
sociocultural theory is “mediation,” that is “semiotic mechanisms (including
psychological tools) [e.g., language, systems of counting, writing, drawing, symbol
systems] mediate social and individual functioning and connect the external and the
internal, the social and the individual” (p. 192). Following this view, it is critical to
examine both individuals and their social environments reflectively as they engage in
particular activities.

Recent literature on teacher education explores the implications of this
sociocultural theory, in particular drawing on “activity theory,” for teachers’ professional
development (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999; Grossman, Valencia, &
Thompson, 2000; Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson, & Fry, 2003; Newell, Gingrich, &
Johnson, 2001). According to Grossman et al. (1999), a fundamental assumption of
activity theory is that “a person’s frameworks for thinking are developed through
problem-solving action carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been
developed through historical, culturally grounded actions” (p.4). According to Grossman
et al., this framework helps us understand how teachers set up goals while engaged in
activity in a particular context, understand and solve pedagogical problems that they
encounter, and use resources available to them. They note that because of the focus of
various settings in which teachers’ learning occur, activity theory has the potential to unify diverse findings of teacher education research (e.g., effects of teacher education programs).

Teachers’ learning to teach encompasses multiple activity settings, and activity theory provides useful insights into teachers’ various experiences of learning to teach within and across the settings. Those settings include university (both undergraduate and graduate) level teacher education course work, field practicum, school contexts, short-term teacher training programs, and elementary and secondary school course work. Each setting has its own cultural history through which members of the community have established specific goals or outcomes that guide their action within the setting (Grossman et al., 1999). At the same time, individual teachers do not just passively immerse themselves in the various settings because of their “internal goal-oriented actions” or “motive” within the setting (Donato, 2000; Grossman, et al., 1999; Lantolf, 2000). Therefore, teachers’ experiences of learning to teach may turn out to be distinctly different based on their own goals, their relationships within the settings, and a set of tools available to them.

Activity theory also helps recognize the critical roles of teachers’ use of pedagogical tools which mediate their learning toward the goals. Teachers use a wide range of pedagogical tools to conduct teaching practices within the given settings. Grossman et al. (1999) broadly divide teachers’ pedagogical tools into two: “conceptual” and “practical” tools. Conceptual tools are “principles, frameworks, and ideas about teaching and learning, and English/language arts that teachers use as heuristics to guide their instructional decision” (p. 14). In the L2 contexts, for example, the tools include
learning theories such as constructivism (e.g., making learning relevant to students’ life; problem-solving learning) and more subject related teaching approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). On the other hand, Grossman et al. (1999) define practical tools as “classroom practices, strategies, and resources that do not serve as broad conceptions to guide an array of decisions, but instead have more local and immediate utility” (p. 14). These tools include, for example, group works and teaching resources such as textbooks, supplementary workbooks, visual aids, and computer. Rather than focusing on “static internalization of facts and propositional knowledge transmitted during the course work,” activity theory provides a framework for examining how teachers understand, adapt, and make these conceptual and practical tools their “own” in relations to their own history and the activity settings, (Newell, et al., 2001, p. 323).

Another key concept of activity theory is “appropriation” (Grossman, et al., 1999; Wertsch, 1998). Drawing on Bakhtin, Wertsch (1998) explains that appropriation is “the process is one of taking something that belongs to others and making it one’s own” (p. 53). Several studies on teachers’ learning to teach explore this developmental process through which teachers adopt and internalize conceptual and practical tools available to them in particular settings (e.g., Freeman, 1996; Grossman et al., 2000; Newell et al., 2001).

Drawing on various existing research on teacher socialization in the L1 field, Grossman et al. (1999), for example, find different levels of appropriation as follows: “lack of appropriation,” “appropriating a label,” “appropriating surface features,” “appropriating conceptual underpinnings,” and achieving mastery” (pp.16-18). In lack of
appropriation, teachers might not appropriate a pedagogical tool for various reasons (e.g., difficulty in understanding a concept; understanding of the concept but rejecting it for some reasons). In appropriating a label, teachers use the name of a tool (e.g., CLT) but do not understand its features. The next level of appropriation is surface features in which teachers grasp part or most of the features of the tool, but do not understand “how those features contribute to the conceptual whole” (p. 17). At the conceptual underpinnings level, teachers understand conceptual meaning of a tool and are likely able to use it in new contexts and solve new problems. The final level of appropriation is “mastery” in which teachers understand the concept of a pedagogical tool and are able to use it effectively in their classroom instruction. However, to reach the “mastery” level, it may take more time.

Similarly, Newell et al.’s (2001) qualitative case study, which closely examining 9 student teachers’ field experiences at the secondary school level, also demonstrate three modes of appropriation: “reflective practice,” “procedural display,” and “routinization” (p. 322). The first level of appropriation, reflective practice, is “a theory-based consideration of instructional decisions” in a given context. The second level of appropriation involves a surface understanding of a pedagogical tool. Therefore, teachers may use the teaching tools taken from a university methods course, but do not fully understand the principles behind the decisions and the way the tool offers support for students’ learning. (e.g., a major purpose of questions is to get right answers from students). The last appropriation level, routinization, refers that “learning to teach was a matter of mastering routines, that is, adopting, without adaptation, curricular and instructional practices without concern for students’ understandings or for instructional
principles espoused by the teacher education program” (p. 302). Newell et al. point out that these modes provide useful ways to understand the various paths that teachers went through when they appropriated the pedagogical tools presented in the teacher education program into their teaching sites.

The findings of these studies reveal the dynamic nature involved in teachers’ appropriation of pedagogical tools. That is, teachers’ appropriation closely relates to their beliefs, prior experiences, goals of individual teachers, and the interaction with more competent members of particular activity settings (e.g., supervisors; more experienced colleagues; school administrators; university instructors).

**Teacher Socialization**

Teaching used to be viewed in relation to students’ acquisition of the necessary prerequisite skills (Freeman, 2002; Palincsar, 1998). This direct and linear instruction based on the behavioral standpoint raised many questions in the teacher education literature in the mid 1970s since the complexity of teaching that teachers deal with in their professions (e.g., how to develop necessary strategies in new contexts) was not taken into consideration (Freeman, 20002; Roberts, 1998). Currently, many have acknowledged that teachers’ learning to teach cannot be adequately understood apart from their individual histories and social environments in which their learning takes place. Within this perspective, it is critical to examine “the process by which individuals acquire the values and interests, knowledge and skills, and culture of the group” (Achinstein, Ogawa, & Speiglman, 2004, p. 559), which is so called “teacher socialization” (ibid.; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). This section reviews research on the socialization of L2 teachers...
by highlighting the following two interconnected areas that shape their socialization patterns: teachers’ prior knowledge and social contexts such as university, school, and state/national environments.

**Teachers’ Prior Knowledge**

Prescriptive view of teaching considers teachers as passive recipients of transmitted knowledge rather than active participants in meaning construction (Cradall, 2000; Roberts, 1998). Therefore, the goal of this view of teaching is for teachers to understand “best practices” and imitate them for their own teaching (Freeman, 1994; Richards & Nunan, 1990; Widdowson, 1997). Recently, however, there has been a great recognition that we need to learn more about what teachers do and believe, since classroom practitioners are the ultimate decision makers (Freeman, 1994; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). This shift from teacher as “input-output system” to one as “constructivist” (Roberts, 1998, p. 13) makes teachers a primary source of knowledge about teaching (Cradall, 2000; Richards and Lockhart, 1994). As a result, scholars started to actively conduct research on teacher’s beliefs, cognitions, attitudes and decision making processes which had been missed in the research on L2 teachers’ learning to teach for a long time (Freeman & Richards, 1996; Woods, 1996).

Woods’ (1996) case study, for example, which is the first major empirical study of teacher cognition in L2 teaching (Crandall, 2000), examines how eight ESL teachers in a Canadian university rely on their beliefs, assumptions, and background knowledge about teaching and learning in their decision-making process. By conducting interviews, classroom observations, and stimulus recall, the findings of his study suggest that
teachers actively involve constructing a personal and workable theory of teaching through their learning and teaching experiences. Along the similar lines, Richards (1996) examines the role of teachers’ personal principles or “maxims” in their language teaching. Through interviews with multiple level ESL teachers in Hong Kong, he identifies eight maxims which were derived from their teaching and learning experiences in their decision making in classrooms. Those maxims include learners’ involvement with their interests, teaching planning and attempt to follow it, maintenance of order and discipline, encouragement of students’ learning, accuracy of student output, efficient use of class time, conformity to the prescribed method, and empowerment through giving learners control (pp. 287-291). Richards concludes that, if personal maxims guide teachers’ instructions, they need to be recognized and examined in teacher education programs in order to help teacher trainees’ future professional growth.

Freeman and Richards (1996), which is the first collection of research-based accounts of teacher learning in L2 teacher education, also illustrates L2 teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, learning process, and practice. Among the collection, Almarza’s (1996) longitudinal case study describes how foreign language student teachers’ “pre-training knowledge” acquired through their learning experiences affected their learning in a language teacher education program and their teaching practices. The study documents four teachers’ different degrees of acceptance of a teaching method learned in the program. With their beliefs and assumptions about language teaching and learning acquired through “apprenticeship of observation” which refers to early school experiences, each trainee interpreted the model in different way as they reconstructed it (Lortie, 1975, p. 61). For the implication of the teacher education, Almarza emphasizes
an influential role that teachers’ existing knowledge plays in their learning, and the needs that the knowledge should be examined and challenged as a legitimate status in the curriculum. She concludes:

Although their [student teachers’] ideas might not have been put forward in an academic discourse, they may serve as a basis on which to make the connections between theory and practice which are crucial in their professional development. Yet we won’t be able to establish what kind of contribution teacher education courses make to student teachers’ development and how they contribute to student teachers’ education if we do not know what was already there and how this old knowledge related to practice (Almarza, 1996, p. 59)

Smith’s (1996) case study also describes the pedagogical decisions made by nine experienced ESL teachers working in three different Canadian institutions. A central focus of the study is placed on the role that L2 theory, individual teacher beliefs, and contextual factors play in their decision making in classes. The findings of her study suggests that teachers choose and adapt L2 theoretical ideas in ways that are consistent with their personal beliefs about L2 teaching and learning as well as with their practical knowledge of the ESL instructional context.

Freeman’s (1996) longitudinal study also examines how the activities of teacher training program (e.g. critical reflection on their teaching practices) enable French and Spanish teacher trainees to develop what they do and what they think about their instructions. Freeman finds the critical role of professional language that teachers acquired in the program in articulating their tacit knowledge about teaching. The exposure led teachers to “interpret new content through their existing understandings and modify and reinterpret new ideas on the basis of what they already know and believe”

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1 It is worth noting that, although all institutions provided explicit course guidelines such as level and course objectives, teachers felt that they have considerable freedom for their course planning.
(Kennedy, 1992, cited in Freeman, 1996, p. 237). In that dialectical process, Freeman suggests viewing teachers’ thoughts and activity as interrelated components:

If teacher’s practice is seen solely as behavior and activity, it is possible to miss the complex basis of understanding on which that activity is based. Likewise, if change in teaching means doing things differently, it overlooks how teachers’ understandings may themselves be modified or amended, possibly without external evidence in behavioral change (p. 238)

In summary, the studies of teachers’ beliefs and cognitions reveal the powerful role that teachers’ prior knowledge and beliefs or “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975, p. 61) most probably play in their decision making in teaching practice and their learning in teacher education programs.

Social Contexts

Teacher Education Program

The constructivist perspectives, which view teachers as a central source of knowledge about teaching, has resulted in examining how to make teachers’ tacit beliefs about teaching and practical knowledge explicit to help them develop new ways of knowing and teaching (Roberts, 1998). In particular, recently a distinction between theoretical course work and a teaching practice/practicum has been a great concern among scholars and teacher educators (Clark, 1994, Johnson, 1996; Kinginger, 2002; Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson, 2001). In the theoretical framework of “categories of the knowledge base” of teachers, Shulman (1987) asserts that “pedagogical content knowledge [which is a special combination of content and pedagogy] is the category most likely to distinguish the understanding of the content specialist from that of the
pedagogue” (p. 8). Freeman and Johnson (1998), in the discussion of one of the main
domain of L2 teacher education research, which is pedagogical process, also raise a
similar concern by using the term “grounded” and “a priori” categories of the knowledge-
base of teaching. Therefore, scholars continuously argue how they can establish more
productive relations between theory and practice (Johnson, 1996; Kinginger, 2002).

In the contemporary teacher education programs, the notion of “reflective
teaching” is a key component to work with these issues (Flowerdew, 1998; Freeman &
as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any beliefs or supposed form of
knowledge in light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusion to which it
tends” (Dewey, 1910 cited in Roberts, 1998, p. 48). In other words, reflection enable us
to reframe problems in various ways which further provide a wider range of possible
solutions, and then to allow us to change our perspectives (Roberts, 1998). Schon (1987)
further developed Dewey’s description of reflection and identified “reflection-in-action,”
which is “on-the-spot experiment and further thinking that affects what we do” (p. 29).
Furthermore, one of the developers of the inquiry, Zeichner and Liston (1985), proposes
that reflective teaching is for students who:

are willing and able to reflect on the origins, purposes, and consequences of their
actions, as well as the material and ideological constraints and encouragements
embedded in the classroom, school, and societal contexts in which they live.
These goals are directed toward enabling teachers to develop the pedagogical
habits and skills necessary for self directed growth and toward preparing them,
individually and collectively, to participate as full partners in their making of
educational policies (1985, p. 4)
In other words, reflective teaching is viewed as a means for teachers’ continued professional growth by helping them to move beyond a level where they are guided by intuition and routine (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985). In the L2 teacher education area, Bartlett (1990), who contributed the earliest discussions in the field (Crandall, 2000, p. 50), points out a double meaning of reflection which is “the relationship between an individual’s thought and action,” and “the relationship between an individual teacher and his or her membership in a larger society.” He explains a shift in thinking and acting in reflective teaching as follows:

Becoming reflective forces us to adopt a critical attitude to ourselves as individual second language teachers – to challenge our exposed personal beliefs about teaching. Becoming reflective through testing our practice systematically also challenges us to think about the influence we directly or indirectly exert on the formation of society in our role as teachers. How we present language through the curriculum and through our teaching has profound cumulative effects on the way our community and wider society changes. Becoming reflective also extends beyond ourselves, making possible a similar form of self-inquiry in students. (Bartlett, 1990, pp. 213-214)

In response to a current growing concern about theory-practice distinction in L2 teacher education, Kinginger (2002) explores what role programs need to play in order to establish a productive relationship between practitioners and researchers. She admits that “expert discourses,” which mainly emerge from the applied linguistics research community, does not easily articulate into teachers’ practice. However, she emphasizes the importance for teachers to be exposed to multiple expert knowledge or “genres of power” and to learn how to mediate between expert discourse and their particular features of their local teaching practice in teacher education program (Well, 1999, cited in Kinginger, p. 194). She goes on explaining that expert discourses provide teachers with
various frames for flexibly seeing a pedagogical problem from different perspectives and eventually influence and define many features of teaching contexts. Drawing on Schon’s “reflective practice,” Kinginger further points out that teacher educators’ roles are to help teachers recognize and promote the value of their own interpretation of expert knowledge and teacher’s role as “producers of context-sensitive, locally relevant knowledge” for their professional development (p.196). She concludes that through teachers’ interpretive work in teacher education program and also throughout their careers, “teachers can situate their meaning with respect to their own practice and to the genres of power influencing language education” (p.207).

Empirical studies have also supported the important role of reflection. Flowerdew (1998) also explores how students’ “experiential knowledge” and “received knowledge” are developed and integrated through reflection on the foreign language learning experiences in BA TESOL in Hong Kong. On-going diaries kept by students provide teacher trainees with many opportunities to test out theories of L2 learning and teaching as learners’ points of view. Based of the findings, Flowerdew suggests that reflection needs to be fully integrated within the overall teacher education program for continued professional growth so that teacher trainees can “take responsibility for and ownership of their own professional growth and autonomy” (p. 529). Along similar lines, Cole, Raffier, Rogan, and Schleicher (1998) describe how the use of journal outside class helped seven TESOL master students develop their professions as language teachers. Group journals allowed individual teachers to share and build a professional community, and also to build a bridge between graduate school community and professional practice. The authors
suggest that an “interactive group journal” can function as a teacher’s learning tool in the context of teacher education program, since it is a valuable record of teacher trainees’ learning process and progress.

In the EFL contexts, Murphy (2000) also describes a critical role that reflective practices play for in-service teacher education programs for Japanese English teachers. Students were all full-time working teachers who participated in year-long domestic master program at Nanzan University in Japan. The components that Murphy used in his course include action and risk loggings, self-videoing, presentations in class and at the public conference, and a short article for publication. The goals of these activities, according to him, are to let teachers engage in reflective practice, try out a new idea learned in the program in their own teaching situations, become a peer role model for fellow teachers in the program, gain their self-confidence in the target language, and gradually step into professional activities. Although Murphy did not discuss the teachers’ sense-making process in his study, with their positive reactions to these activities, he concludes that these components in the course allowed them to become reflective teachers, contribute to professional communities as researchers, writers, and presenters, and develop their own language competence in English.

**Classroom, School and Broader Social Contexts**

A growing recognition of multidimensional realities of teachers’ classroom instruction also calls into question a traditional transmission model of teaching (Clarke, 1994; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 1996). As a result, many scholars started to emphasize the importance of equipping teachers with the ability to understand influential
social factors involved in their own teaching situations. For example, Freeman & Johnson (1998) suggests that understanding contexts of practice should be one of the central elements in the L2 teacher education field. They point out:

> Schools and classrooms function as frameworks of value and interpretation in which language teachers must learn to work effectively. Studying, understanding, and learning how to negotiate the dynamics of these powerful environments, in which some actions and ways of being are valued and encouraged whereas others are downplayed, ignored, and even silenced, is critical to constructing effective teacher education (p. 409).

Drawing on Talbert and MacLaughlin (1994), Gebhard (1998) discusses a concern about the competing ideologies between theoretical course work and a teaching practicum and argues “more removed contexts were less consequential for teachers’ professionalism than were the strength and character of the local teacher communities” (p. 503). He then emphasizes the nature of teaching practices as being socially negotiated within the everyday contexts of schooling and the need to address contexts of teaching in L2 teacher education programs.

Empirical studies also support an influential impact of social contexts on teachers’ professional practice. Burns’ (1996) case study on six experienced ESL teachers in an English program for migrants in Australia, for example, describes the interrelatedness of the local social contexts in which classrooms are located and teachers’ thinking and belief. Focusing on one of the participants named Sarah, Burns points out the importance of understanding contextual factors involved in teachers’ professions: “It may be relevant in enhancing our understandings of the relationship between what teachers think and what teachers do when they teach, in terms of what is ‘thinkable’ and ‘do-able’ within institutional constraints” (p. 162).
In the EFL context, Sato (2002) also explored the interwoven relationship among Japanese teachers’ beliefs, their teaching practices, and the school culture. Through employing multiple qualitative data methods, he examined how teachers learn to teach in a large private senior high school for about a year. The findings reveal the difficulties in teachers’ professional development due to the realities that they faced which include “school norms and values,” “tension between individual ideas and a hidden goals,” “a pattern of teaching,” and “lack of learning opportunities” (pp. 51-52). Despite the teachers’ various teaching experiences and age, Sato argues that as individual teachers work together through observing colleagues’ teaching practices for example, they reciprocally promote “context specific beliefs” and as a result reinforce the routine teaching practice (p. 77).

Similarly, Cheng (2002) investigated the impacts of the social contexts which is the implementation of a new communicative English language test (HKCEE) on English teachers’ classroom practice in Hong Kong. The Examinations Authority introduced a major shift in an English examination at the secondary school level in 1993. That is a shift from the previous “reading aloud and guided conversation” in the oral components to “new task-based role play and group discussion” (p. 92). The main aim of this change was to develop English teaching and learning: “moving from noninteractive teacher-dominated talk to more task-based teaching” (p. 93). A variety of stakeholders in the educational context such as policy makers, intervening organizations such as textbook publishers and universities, principals, department chairs, teachers, and students participated in her longitudinal study. The data were obtained through multiple data techniques such as observations, interviews, and surveys.
The findings suggest that a relative number of teachers reported positive attitudes toward the implementation of the new exam. Publishers revised textbooks for the examination, and University institutions and publishers also organized seminars and workshops for teachers. However, the results also suggest that over the two-year period, teachers’ practice behavior remained unchanged. Teachers dominantly talked in the class rather than conducted more interactive and task-based teaching practices expected by the policy makers. In addition, the results indicate that teachers relied greatly on the workbooks for the new examination and employed oral and listening activities similar to those included in the exam. Therefore, from the cognitive-constructivist perspective, Cheng emphasizes the need for conceptual change and teacher learning within the context of classroom practice.

**Appropriating Communicative Language Teaching**

“Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is well established as the dominant theoretical model in ELT” (Thompson, 1996, p. 9). It derives from multiple disciplinary areas such as linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research (Savignon, 2002). According to Brown (2000), the central tenet of CLT lies in “communicative competence” introduced by Hymes (1972) who argued that Chomsky’s characterization of the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and his distinction between “competence” and “performance” do not sufficiently account for the social-cultural aspects of language. Brown (2000) explains that Hymes defines communicative competence as “aspects of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts” (p.
The idea of improving L2 students’ communication abilities in meaningful language use which emphasizes in CLT, has attracted the L2 educators in various contexts (e.g., ESL; EFL; other foreign language teaching), since they recognize the limitations of existing teaching methods such as the grammar-translation method, the direct method, and the audiolingual method. In Japan, for example, since the late 1980s, the development of students’ communicative competence has been rigorously initiated by the Ministry of Education (MEXT) at the secondary school levels.

However, the literature on CLT, especially in EFL contexts, frequently reports teachers’ dilemmas when they implement this innovative instruction (e.g., Cheng, 2000; Lamie, 2000, 2001; Li, 1998; Sato, 2000). According to these studies, the sources of teachers’ dilemmas derive from the approach itself, teachers, pedagogical issues (e.g., students; parents), school issues (e.g., school values; administrators; colleagues), and broader social environments (e.g., educational systems; teacher development opportunities).

First, this section explores the definition of CLT by highlighting several models of communicative competence which have greatly influenced the development of the approach. Then, various dilemmas that teachers face in implementing CLT, especially in EFL contexts, will be discussed. Finally, drawing on the recently emerging conceptual perspectives in applied linguistics and social science that include appropriate pedagogy, a sociocultural perspective, and critical research, several studies which explore the revision of the definition of CLT will also be discussed.
Communicative Language Teaching

Since Hymes introduced the notion of communicative competence in the mid-1960s, many scholars have explored what entails the communicative competence or communicative language ability in order to implement the ideas for language teaching (e.g., Bachman, 1990; Brown, 1994; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Savignon, 2002). Seminal work which has been most frequently discussed on the topic is Canale and Swain’s (1980, later extended by Canale, 1983) four areas of knowledge of the competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Brown, 2000). Grammatical competence refers to “mastery of the language code” that includes “features and rules of the language such as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics (Canale, 1983, p. 7). Sociolinguistic competence includes sociocultural rules of use, that is “the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction” (ibid., p. 7). They go on to note that appropriateness of utterances concern both meaning and form. Discourse competence refers to “mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres” (ibid., p. 9). Unity of a text, according to them, is achieved through cohesion in form [the use of cohesion devices such as pronouns, synonyms] and coherence in meaning [the relationship among the different meanings in text]. Strategic competence consists of “mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into

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action” “to compensate for breakdown….or to insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of communicative competence” and “to enhance the effectiveness of communication” (pp. 10-11).

Canale (1983) further proposed the five “guiding principles for a communicative approach” based on the communicative competence presented above. Those principles are: (1) Coverage of competence areas, (2) Communication needs, (3) Meaningful and realistic interaction, (4) The learner’s native language skills, and (5) Curriculum-wide approach (Canale, 1983, pp. 18-19). The first principle, coverage of competence areas, emphasize the importance of integrating the four areas of language knowledge (grammar, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic competence) in a communicative approach. Therefore, they warn that the overemphasis of one area over others is not likely to produce a good result of L2 learning. Second, a communicative approach needs to be based on learners’ communication needs and interests. These also need to be specified in light of each area of communicative competence (e.g., “the level of grammatical accuracy required in different situations;” “the settings, topics and communicative functions to be handled most frequently”) (p. 18). Third, a communicative approach must provide L2 learners with the opportunity to participate in “authentic and meaningful communicative interaction” with “highly competent speakers of the language” (pp. 18-19). Forth, the use of learners’ L1 communication skills that they have developed needs to be optimal, especially at the beginning stages, because of the certain common features between the two languages. Lastly, the primary objective of a communicative approach to L2 learning is to offer learners for “the information, practice and much of the experience needed to meet their communication needs in L2,” by drawing on their L1 learning and other
subject areas. These “curriculum-wide approach” may promote a natural integration of knowledge of L2, knowledge of L2 culture, and knowledge of language in general (p. 19).

Canale and Swain (1980)’s model of communicative competence has undergone some modifications (Bachman, 1990; Savignon, 1983, 2002). Savignon (1983, 2002), for example, proposed the “inverted pyramid” classroom model of communicative competence that comprises grammatical competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (p. 8). Although the definition of each component is relatively similar to that of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), Savignon broadens the “sociolinguistic” competence that they proposed. According to Savignon, “sociocultural” competence includes not only knowledge of L2 culture but also intercultural awareness. She goes on noting that each competence is interrelated and necessary at every stage of L2 learning. That is, “when an increase occurs in one area, that component interacts with other components to produce a corresponding increase in overall communicative competence (p. 8). However, she further notes that the relative importance of these four competences depends on the overall level of learners’ communicative competence, and also the relative importance of strategic competence decreases, as other three competences increase.

To provide language teachers working in various contexts with a way to categorize teaching strategies for communicative curriculum, many researchers propose key components, principles, or features of CLT. Savignon (2002), for example, proposes the following five components: (1) language arts, (2) language for a purpose, (3) personal second language use, (4) theater arts, and (5) language use beyond the classroom (p.11). The first component, language arts, refers to “forms of the language” which includes
syntax, morphology, and phonology (p. 11). Language for a purpose, on the other hand, concerns “the use of language for real and immediate communicative goals” (p. 11). She goes on noting that this meaningful language use needs to be built in the learning environment. The third communicative component, personal second language use, focuses on learners’ affective and cognitive aspects in learning a new language. That includes an understanding of the importance of opportunities for learners to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning, and also to develop a personality in L2 learning. Furthermore, theater arts provide learners with the opportunities to experiment the roles they play in real life (e.g., child; parent; foreigner; newcomer). The last component, beyond the classroom, is about “preparing learners to use the second language in the world beyond” by letting them explore their interests and needs through L2 use beyond the classroom (p. 15). Savignon concludes that an optimum combination of these five components must be determined by individual teachers for their learners in a given context, and be ongoing inquiry.

Brown (1994) also summarizes the principles of CLT as follows: (1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence, (2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes, (3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques, and (4) students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively (p. 245, italics original).

Furthermore, Nunan (1991) provides five features to characterize CLT: (1) An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, (2) The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation, (3) The provision of
opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself, (4) An enhancement of the learner’s own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning, (5) An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom (p. 279).

Thus, the main goal of CLT is to assist L2 learners to achieve the balanced four components of communicative competence (grammatical, sociocultural, discourse, and strategic competences) and to convey and interpret meaning successfully or accurately in a socially appropriate manner. Although, as been discussed before, the components of CLT at the practical level may slightly differ depending on researchers, the approach focuses generally on both meaning and form, the use of authentic materials, learners’ interests and their communicative needs, learners’ personal experiences, a link between inside and outside classroom, meaningful interactions, interactions with others (e.g., highly competent speaker of the language), contextualization of L2 learning, and the use of L2 and L1. However, a question of whether CLT successfully flourishes in actual classrooms perhaps depends on various factors such as characteristics of teachers and students, school culture, and the educational system (local and national policies), which are discussed next.

**Difficulties in Implementing Communicative Language Teaching**

Since the appearance of communicative competence in the 1970s, CLT has been introduced to various contexts as a dominant ELT teaching approach (Savinon, 2002). However, for the last decade there has been a growing dissatisfaction with the approach because of the difficulties that practitioners face at the implementation stage. These
problems derive from (1) CLT itself such as the lack of clear-cut content specification (Clece-Mucia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1997), the lack of established measurement tools for students’ learning outcomes (Clece-Mucia, et al.,1997), the insufficient treatment of linguistic forms (Futos, 1994), (2) teachers’ understanding of CLT such as misconceptions about the elements (Thompson, 1996), (3) pedagogical issues such as teachers’ content knowledge (e.g., Butler, 2004; Medgyes, 1992; Seidlhofer, 1999; Tang, 1997), teachers’ eclectic choices of teaching methods (Kumaravadivelu, 1994), and classroom interactions (Ellis, 1996; Sullivan, 2000), (4) social environments such as school culture (Sato, 2002) and cultural factors (Ellis, 1996; Sullivan, 2000). This section explores these problems that practitioners face when they incorporate CLT into their classroom teaching.

Aspects of Communicative Language Teaching

Clece-Mucia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1997) nicely explain the issues associated with CLT and propose a revision of the approach. By synthesizing the literature on CLT, they point out two main problems involved in it. Those are “the linguistic content base of CLT” and “the pedagogical treatment of linguistic forms in CLT” (p. 142). In terms of the first issue, they argue that when the principles of CLT were being developed, methodological content specification was not clear enough. This situation resulted in producing “a diversity of communicative approaches that shared only a very general common object, namely to prepare learners for real life communication” (p. 143). Therefore, “it [communicative] has come to have different meanings for different people” (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, cited in Clece-Mucia et al., 1997). One of the critical problems
in the lack of content specifications in CLT is a failure to provide testing tools that adequately measure students’ progress in their communicative competence. Without such tools, they note that “the washback effect of test drown from other approaches or methods will undermine the program’s effectiveness” (p. 143). In fact, many studies discuss this concern from various stakeholders’ points of view such as teachers, policy makers, and scholars (Cheng, 2002; Gorsuch, 2000; Sato, 2002).

Moreover, the general principles of CLT, which grew out of dissatisfactions with the existing methods such as the grammar-translation method and the direct method, neglected linguistic competence. Celce-Murcia et al. (1997) go on to argue that many CLT proponents accept an assumption that linguistic form emerges incidentally as a result of learners’ communicative activities. However, employing a cognitive perspective, they argue that “for learning to take place efficiently the learner must pay attention to the learning objective and must then practice the objective so that it changes from part of a controlled process to part of an automatic process (p. 145). For the past decade, by using different terms such as “consciousness raising” “input enhancement,” “language awareness” and “focus on form” (Celce-Murcia, et al., p. 145), many scholars have demonstrated that making learners aware of the linguistic form will greatly increase the rate of their language attainment (e.g., Ellis, Basturkmen, & Lowen, 2001; Futos, 1999).

Cele-Mucia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1997), therefore, extended Canale and Swain’s (1980) and Canale’s (1983) model by integrating the findings from the various research fields such as oral discourse analysis, communicative competence research, interlanguage analysis, language input analysis, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, cognitive psychology, and anthropology. They have proposed “a principled communicative
approach” which consists of five major components (discourse competence as a core, linguistic, actional, sociocultural, and strategic competence). It synthesizes direct, knowledge-oriented and indirect, skill-oriented teaching approaches, and includes raising learners’ awareness of regularities of language use both within and beyond the sentence level. According to them, this approach is “a pedagogically motivated framework for communicative competence that includes detailed content specifications” which have been missed before (p. 144).

**Teachers’ Understanding of Communicative Language Teaching**

Thompson (1996) argues, that although “CLT is well-established as the dominant theoretical model in ELT [English language teaching], there are a number of misconceptions about what CLT entails among practitioners (p. 9). By discussing teacher dilemmas in implementation of constructivist instruction, Windschitl (2002) also contends that one of the most powerful factors of whether the innovative approaches are being successfully employed in classrooms depends on “the degree to which individual teachers understand the concept of constructivism (p. 138). According to Thompson, four major misconceptions that that teachers have regarding CLT are (1) grammar, (2) communication, (3) pair work, and (4) demands on teachers. First of all, the misconception about grammar is that CLT excludes explicit instruction in grammar. According to Thompson, this is the most damaging misconception, and an explicit attention should be paid to grammar in a way that enables learners to discover it with teachers’ assistance. The second misconception is that CLT places primacy to speaking and listening skills. However, Thompson points out that communication takes place in
both written and spoken media, and that both the speaker/ writer and the listener/reader take part in communication. The third misconception is that CLT involves pair work and/or group work such as role play. Although the author acknowledges a useful technique of pair work, he argues that providing learners with some degree of control over learning is more important than a narrowly defined pair work (e.g., learners’ utterances are controlled by books). The last misconception is that CLT places greater demands on the practitioners than other existing ELT approaches. Thompson partially agrees with this point because the approach involves less predictable lessons, needs for a wider rage of management skills than in the teacher-centered practices, reconsiderations about teachers’ own preconceptions about language teaching. In addition, nonnative teachers need a higher level of language proficiency. However, Thompson explains that these challenges would allow teachers to reevaluate their teaching beliefs and practices, and hence to improve their skills. He further notes that the use of good materials currently available would reduce teachers’ professional demands. Thompson concludes that in order not to loose important elements of CLT, it is important to clear away the misconceptions discussed above.

**Pedagogical Issues**

Difficulties in implementing CLT involve pedagogical issues that teachers need to handle in a given context. In particular, contextual differences between ESL and EFL have created a variety of issues. Seminal work on EFL teachers’ content knowledge, which has created active discussions about the issues of non-native English speaking teachers, is Medgyes’s series of research examining non-native teachers’ unique
professional features in comparison to native teachers. Through questionnaires obtained from 220 non-native and native teachers in ten countries, Medgyes, for example, examines non-native teachers’ difficulties in the use of English and differences in teaching behavior between the two groups of teachers. Most teachers viewed the teaching methods used by non-native teachers and native teachers as different mainly due to the discrepancy in linguistic competence. However, he argues that non-native teachers have equal opportunities to become as effective teachers as native speakers because the former posses teaching strengths as successful English learners. For example, they can “serve as imitable models,” “teach learning strategies more effectively,” “anticipate language difficulties,” “provide learners with more information about the English language,” “show more empathy to their students,” and “share the learners’ mother tongue” (pp. 346-347). Therefore, Medgyes suggests that the differences in teaching practice between native and non-native teachers should be acknowledged and also encourages collaborative teaching between the two groups of teachers to balance their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Tang (1997)’s empirical study also reveals that non-native teachers’ feelings of inadequacy in their teaching practices are due to a strong anxiety caused by their perceived lower proficiency of English as compared to native teachers. Through the questionnaires, she asked 47 non-native teachers enrolled in a teacher-retraining course in Hong Kong about their perceptions of English proficiency and the role of both groups of teachers in the classroom. Most of the participants viewed native teachers as more respected linguistic models for English learning. However, as Medgyes (1994) discussed, the participants of her study also identified their own advantages as non-native teachers
(e.g., their use of L1 as an effective instructional tool; understanding learners’ problems; anticipating and preventing learners’ difficulties and the possible errors). Based on the results, Tang concludes that non-native teachers’ self-image had a strong impact on shaping their identities as English teachers.

In part of her study on unique roles of non-native English speaking teachers in the Expanding Circles, Seidlhofer (1999) also examines Austrian teachers’ self-perceptions as an important aspect of their professional identity. The survey questionnaires were distributed to 700 local English teachers and exactly 100 questionnaires were returned. The findings show that, although Austrian teachers acknowledged their strengths as non-native professionals such as their shared L1 with students and L2 learning experiences, they clearly expressed their “feeling of ambivalence” (p. 241). Seidlhofer describes such participants’ voices as “confidence: as a teacher – insecurity: as a speaker” (p. 242).

**Social Environments**

By viewing the issues from broader perspectives, Li (1998) provides a nice summary of teachers’ dilemmas when they implemented CLT. She reports the perceived difficulties that Korean secondary school English teachers encountered. Based on a case study, which includes a written questionnaire and interviews, she found four factors that caused constraints: teachers, students, educational system, and CLT itself. Difficulties associated with teachers are deficiency in spoken English, strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English, lack of training in CLT, and little time and expertise to develop communicative materials. The sources of difficulties caused by students are their low English proficiency, little motivation for communicative skills, and resistance to students’
class participation. Large class sizes, grammar-focused examinations, insufficient funding, and lack of support are central to the constraints from the educational system. Finally, CLT’s inadequate understanding of EFL teaching and lack of effective assessment instruments are regarded as the source of difficulties caused by CLT itself (see “CLT Itself” for more detailed information about this issue).

Focusing on the educational innovation in Japan, Gorsuch (2000) examines the influences of national, prefectural, school, and classroom culture on Japanese English teachers’ teaching practices and the relationship between teachers’ perceptions of the influences on their teaching instruction and their attitudes toward CLT activities. Through questionnaires, he especially focused on the following four areas: “formal/local school,” “informal/classroom,” “examination,” and “teachers’ approval of CLT activities.”

According to Gorsuch, “formal” refers to influences on teachers’ teaching practices that are caused by government bodies at the national and prefectural levels, whereas “informal” is influences on teachers caused at the institution and classroom levels. The key concepts within the “formal/local school latent variable” (p.684) are the influences of pre-service teacher training program, colleagues, principals, and syllabi designed within school. The influences of class size, students’ English abilities and their expectations, and teachers’ English speaking skills are the focus of the “informal/classroom latent variable” (p.685). In terms of “examinations latent variables”(p. 687), the Course of Study, university entrance examinations, and parents’ expectations of the exams are considered as their related concepts. Gorsuch, then, examined the relationships between these impact areas and teachers’ attitudes toward CLT activities in classrooms.
The results suggest that, although Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) seem to support the national policy that emphasizes communication, university entrance examinations seem to have a strong influence on their perceptions of school and classroom cultures. In addition, teachers might be more reluctant to change their attitudes toward CLT in their own classrooms than at the institutional level. He concludes that “the essential step of transforming teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of EFL education in Japan has likely not been taken” (pp. 699-700)

**Appropriating Communicative Language Teaching**

Dissatisfactions with some aspects of CLT and teachers’ difficulties in implementing more communicative oriented approaches have recently created ongoing discussions about the needs for appropriating CLT in particular contexts. These discussions have been made from a variety of perspectives that include “postmethod condition” (Kumaravadielu, 1994), appropriate pedagogy (e.g., Ellis, 1996; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996), and most recently from sociocultural perspectives (Sullivan, 2000) and critical research (Canagarajah, 1999).

Kumaravadielu (1994), for example, argues that the dissatisfaction with the conventional concept of teaching method has been losing their relevance to actual language instruction and created “a postmethod condition.” The postmethod condition requires the teachers to design their own situation-based, need-based “microstrategies” or classroom techniques in the broad L2 teaching guideline of “macrostrategies” (p. 32). Kumaravadielu explains that the macrostrategies are method neutral, and provide teachers with a coherent teaching guideline with which they do not have to use a method
term like CLT. Ten macrostrategies that Kumaravadivelu proposes are: (1) maximizing learning opportunities, (2) facilitating negotiated instruction, (3) minimizing perceptual mismatches, (4) activating intuitive heuristics, (5) fostering language awareness, (6) contextualizing linguistic input, (7) integrating language skills, (8) promoting learner autonomy, (9) raising cultural consciousness, and (10) ensuring social relevance. According to Kumaravadivelu, these macrostrategies should help teachers develop contextually suitable classroom techniques and further become more strategic researchers who reevaluate their own teaching systematically.

Ellis (1996) raises a question about the universal relevance of the communicative approach to language teaching, suggesting a need for appropriating the predominantly Western valued language teaching approach to make suitable for Eastern culture. Ellis argues that the following aspects of CLT create challenges for both teachers and learners in Asia: process as opposed to content, meaning rather than form, teachers’ role of a facilitator rather than a provider of content knowledge, and differences in learning environments between ESL (English-speaking communities) and EFL (English as school subject). In addition, contextual factors such as support from the institutions (e.g., administrators), the local community, and government policy have great impacts on English language teaching and learning in EFL contexts. Ellis, therefore, concludes that to successfully implement CLT, teachers need to make the approach both culturally appropriated and accepted. He further suggests that “mediating, by trying to fit contradicting norms together” can be a useful tool in this process (p. 217).

From a sociocultural perspective, Sullivan (2000) also argues that commonly employed classroom activities in CLT (e.g., group work; information gap activities) are
embedded in Western values. Therefore, she argues that the current definition of CLT needs to be broadened to one that can include different communication styles so that it is recognized in multiple ways that CLT is being appropriated depending on the contexts. Through the classroom observations, Sullivan examined a second-year university level English language teaching practices conducted by a Vietnamese teacher. In the class, the teacher sat in front of the classroom, and his students, who all majored in English, sat closely together on shared benches and worked collaboratively. The teacher adapted CLT to a whole-class in teacher-fronted format. Students’ learning was mediated through teacher-let playful practice in language. The class embodied Confusion culture, which include values of dependence and nurture rather than independence, hierarchy rather than equality, and mutual obligation of members of group rather than individualism. Sullivan further notes that, although CLT emphasize “authenticity,” it does not necessarily mean bringing “outside reality” into the classroom in EFL contexts. Drawing on Wertsch (1991) Sullivan emphasizes a necessity to revise the current definitions of CLT: “The main criterion [of a sociocultural approach to mediate action] is that the analysis be linked in some way to specific cultural, historical, or institutional factors,” and “universalism that has come to dominate so much of contemporary psychology makes it extremely difficult to deal in a serious, theoretically motivated way with human action in context” (Wertsch, 1991, cited in Sullivan, 2000, p. 130).

Like the sociocultural researchers, critical researchers are also interested in language teaching and learning as a social practice. Unlike the former view, however, a central concern of critical research is unequal relations of power in society involving in English language and its teaching and learning. Therefore, they believe that issues of
power need to be addressed in research and pedagogy. In the ELT methodology areas, critical researchers have explored how L2 teachers deal with power and inequality in a conflictual and dialectical way within the given contexts.

Canagarajah’s (1999) four year long ethnographic study, for example, examined teachers’ and students’ linguistic and cultural negotiation in L2 classroom teaching with relation to historical and sociocultural contexts in Sri Lanka. Canagarahah situated his study in “resistance theories” within the critical pedagogical paradigm. Resistance theories propose “there are sufficient contradictions within institutions to help subjects gain agency, conduct critical thinking, and initiate change” (p. 22). The findings demonstrate how the former colonial experience has an influential impact on the hegemony of English and how such experiences create contradiction, struggle, and resistance in students’ and teachers’ daily English learning and teaching.

For an implication of ELT, especially for the development of appropriate pedagogy in the periphery community, Canagarajah proposes that teachers need to engage with dominant discourses and to negotiate the inherent tensions critically and creatively in order to gain agency. To develop this “doubleness,” he emphasizes the practice of reflexivity in which teachers critically examine what they bring with them and what dominant institutions establish (Spellmeyer, 1989, cited in Canagarajah, p. 185). Moreover, he urges teachers to employ ELT teaching beyond the “communicative teaching methods” because of its insensitivity to the reflexivity and its potential role to reinforce the norm. Drawing on the Kramasch (1993), Canagarajah points out the importance of negotiating the linguistic and cultural tensions rather than limiting to teach the target culture behind English or to use the only students’ local culture (Kramasch,
1993, cited in Canagarajah, p. 188). He concludes that “In this reflexive and negotiated process of pedagogy there is scope for developing a “context-sensitive and culture-specific approach” to language teaching (p. 195).

**Professional Development for Non-Native English Speaking Teachers**

Approximately 80 percent of English language teaching professionals around the world are considered to be bilingual users of English (Canagarajah, 1999). Because of this large number of so called “non-native English speaking teachers” working in the ELT field, many researchers in TESOL started to examine non-native teachers’ professional concerns, issues and needs (e.g., Brains, 1999; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2000). Central topics to be explored in this section are (1) non-native teachers’ professional needs and concerns and (2) various attempts to meet non-native teachers’ needs in teacher education programs inside and outside the Inner Circle.

**Non-Native Teachers’ Professional Needs and Concerns**

In recent years, issues related to non-native Speaking teachers’ professional development have received attentions among scholars in the TESOL field. The literature on the topic has revealed their particular professional needs and concerns. Drawing on a variety of studies, Kamhi-Stein (2000) summarizes the four areas that non-native teachers consider as challenges in their professions (p. 10): (1) low confidence and self-perceived challenges to professional competence; (2) self-perceived language needs; (3) lack of voice and visibility in the TESOL profession; and (4) self-perceived prejudice based on ethnicity or nonnative status. Regarding non-native teachers’ perceived low confidence,
Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) report that, although non-native graduate students perceived themselves as successful ELT teachers in their home countries, many questioned their professional competence because of the cultural, educational, and linguistic unfamiliarity involved in the study in the U. S. In terms of “self-perceived language needs,” researchers in the L2 teacher education programs both inside and outside the Inner Circle discuss non-native teachers’ concerns about the development of their English language proficiency for their professional success (Liu, 1999; Carrier, 2003; Murdoch; 1994; Cullen, 1994; Medgyes, 1999). Lack of non-native or EFL teachers’ voices in the TESOL communities is another concern (Carrier, 2003; Kamhi-Stein, 1999 & 2000; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Thomas, 1999). Regarding “self-perceived prejudice,” scholars describe non-native teachers’ challenges inside and outside the Center Circle, especially regarding their credibility as ELT professionals due to their non-native status (e.g., Amin, 1997; Kamhi-Stein, 1999; Thomas, 1999; Hubbel, 2002). In Expanding Circle, Hubbel (2002), for example, discusses discriminations that she experienced. One of them is that administrators and colleagues assumed that native teachers and non-native teachers play different teaching roles, which are conversation classes and required courses respectively, regardless of non-native teachers’ English proficiency.

Furthermore, the literature also discusses EFL teachers’ concerns about a discrepancy between what they learn in L2 teacher education programs in the ESL contexts and what they may face in their own teaching sites in their home countries (e.g., Liu, 1998, 1999). Liu (1999) discusses cultural, socioeconomic, and educational difference broadly between the two contexts, and then points out three areas that the
TESOL teacher education programs in the ESL contexts need to address for EFL teachers’ professional needs. Those areas include: (1) L2 acquisition theories and teaching methodologies relevant to the EFL contexts, (2) the development of teachers’ English language proficiency for their professional success, and (3) cultural knowledge of English speaking communities.

**Attempts to Meet Non-Native Teachers’ Professional Needs**

Although the studies examining how L2 teacher education programs incorporate non-native teachers’ needs into their curricula are considerably dearth (Kamhi-Stein, 2000), several teacher educators have made suggestions for L2 teacher education (e.g., Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Carrier, 2003; Cullen, 1994; Kamhi-Stein, 1999, 2000; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). In the Inner Circle, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) introduces a graduate level seminar which discusses issues of ELT professionals from different teaching contexts in the TESOL program. Main aims of this seminar are to raise students’ critical awareness of the dichotomous discourse of non/native speakers, developing their identity as ELT professionals, and promoting “counterdiscourses” regarding cultural assumptions within the field of applied linguistics and L2 pedagogy. Based on the students’ experiences of a new sense of agency, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler propose more emphasis on “multidimensionality and expertise” than “nativesness or authenticity” in teaching methodologies (p. 142).

Kamhi-Stein (2000) also proposes another approach which integrates non-native teachers’ issues across the curriculum of the TESOL MA program. Central to this “cross-curricular approach” is that both native and non-native student teachers come to
understand international students’ L2 learning experience and challenges so that non-native teacher-trainees can reevaluate themselves as resourceful informants. Kamhi-Stein introduces activities across the curriculum of the program, including reflection on their L2 learning histories, collaborative projects between native and non-native teacher-trainees, and participation in professional conferences to discuss issues related to non-native teachers.

Carrier (2003) also proposes “an introductory first semester course” for non-native teachers in the TESOL program to meet their professional needs. Several key areas emphasized in the course are “contextually responsive teacher education content, training in a different school culture, competing with native English-speaking teacher trainees, self-confidence, and encouraging contributions by non-native teacher trainees to the field of English language teaching” (p. 242). In terms of the contextually responsive content, the course aims to develop non-native teachers’ abilities to evaluate the knowledge presented in the program for use. A different school culture focuses on non-native teachers’ development of “Western-style academic writing and oral presenting” (p. 245). Carrier also points out teachers’ development of their language proficiency would help them gain self-confidence as ELT professionals and allow other teachers to hear non-native teachers’ voice in professional communities.

Furthermore, scholars also make suggestions for L2 teacher education in the Expanding and Outer circles to meet non-native teachers’ professional needs. One of the central topics of the scholarly discussion seem to be non-native teachers’ roles as mediators (Seidlhofer, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999) and their professional expertise, especially regarding language aspects (Cullen, 1994; Murdoch, 1994; Medgyes, 1999). In
terms of the former, Seidlhofer (1999), for example, discusses non-native teachers’ “double” roles for appropriate pedagogies in a given settings when they are required to reconcile the conflicting contradictory expectations of global claims with the local reality (See Canagarajah, 1999 for a similar topic). She then suggests that, in L2 teacher education, EFL teachers need to be encouraged to consider what choices they can make to develop appropriate pedagogy in their teaching contexts and how teachers can cultivate their strengths of their double capacity.

Regarding the latter, the development of non-native teachers’ language proficiency, Cullen (1994) argues that, given a circumstance in which CLT has been widely introduced around the world, teacher training programs need to meet non-native teachers’ language needs. He introduces an in-service teacher training model that integrates language element with other practical-driven components such as methodology and pedagogical skills by using trainees’ direct learning experiences of methodology as learners. In addition, Murdoch (1994) also introduces a curriculum revision of the teacher education program in Sri Lanka which emphasizes the development of teachers’ English language proficiency levels, especially in the early part of the program to reduce their anxiety caused by the lack of language ability. In- and pre-service non-native teachers who participated in his study viewed the development of both teaching and linguistic skills through interactive and learner-centered activities as important among other components in ELT expertise in the program.

To summarize, non-native teachers have faced various challenges in their profession, including perceived low self-confidence, concerns regarding the applicability of the knowledge being exposed in L2 teacher education programs, and lack of their
voices in the field. To help them become successful ELT professionals, however, several teacher educators in TESOL have introduced their approaches to L2 teacher education. In the ESL contexts, those approaches include a graduate seminar discussing non-native teachers’ issues (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), “the cross-curricular approach” (Kamhi-Stein, 2000), and “an introductory first semester course” for non-native teachers (Carrier, 2003). Outside the Inner Circle, Cullen (1994) specifically suggests an approach integrating language elements across the curriculum. Other researchers also discuss the importance of non-native teachers’ double role as mediators to meet global as well as local demands for the English education in given contexts.

**Professional Development in Japanese Contexts**

Currently, the Japanese Ministry of Education has extensively promoted an educational innovation of the English curriculum in junior and senior high schools toward more communicative language teaching. As stated previously, however, this educational innovation has raised various practical concerns among practitioners (e.g., Gorsuch, 2000; Sato, 2002). This section first discusses this nationally promoted curriculum innovation in Japan in historical perspective and further explores practitioners’ reactions to the movement. Moreover, the section discusses the impact of the Japanese government-sponsored overseas teacher education programs on practitioners in order for them to successfully achieve the aims of the educational innovation toward more communicative-oriented teaching (Lamie, 2001).
Japanese English Teachers’ Perceptions on English Teaching Innovation

In response to practitioners’ concerns about the gap between the educational innovation and the English teachers’ reaction to it, Wada (2002) explained the implementation process of CLT from the perspective of an insider who involved in the innovation initiatives. For the first time, the 1989 guideline for English education at the secondary school level emphasized the development of students’ communicative competence as the central goal of English education. According to Wada, the foundation of this reform was based on communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), and Savignon (1983). This guideline, in particular, created new courses which emphasize students’ development of communicative skills at the high school levels (e.g., Oral Communication A, B, & C, and later revised as Oral Communication I). To fulfill the goals in the guideline, the government also made two initiatives. One is to hire native speakers of English as teaching assistants in the name of Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program (JET). The other initiative relates to in-service teacher trainings inside and outside Japan for local teachers’ professional development. The current training programs include one-month domestic training, and two-, six-, and twelve-month overseas programs (Lamie, 2001; Wada, 2002). According to Wada, the main objectives of these in-service training programs are to develop teachers’ pedagogical ideas and language skills.

To investigate teachers’ reaction to the new curriculum, Wada delivered questionnaires to senior high school teachers working in college preparatory (Ippan) and vocational schools (Jitsugyo) throughout one of prefectures in Japan. The response rate of return was 18.6 percent. Wada reported that overall the 1989 guideline has made a clear
improvement in English education in Japan. For example, 75 percent of the Jitsugyo teachers and 67 percent of Ippan teachers participated in in-service seminars which offer communicative teaching approaches and techniques. In addition, a majority of teachers identified that the most important goals of English teaching is the development of students’ communicative ability. Wada also reports that the JET program helps teachers improve their language skills and also gain their self-confidence in working native speakers of English.

Lamie (2000) also examines teachers’ perspectives of the English curriculum innovation toward more communicative approaches promoted by the Japanese Ministry of Education. Unlike Wada’s positive perceptions of the innovation, Lamie points out various areas which need to be improved to fulfill the goals of the revised curriculum. The areas that she particularly focused on in the study include 1) initial teacher training, especially about teaching methodologies, 2) practitioners’ English teaching aims and objectives, 3) the type of teaching resources available at school, and 4) teachers’ opportunities to attend in-service education and training. A total of 100 junior and senior high school English teachers around Japan participated in the survey questionnaires and 62 teachers responded. The findings suggest that teacher education at university level has not shifted in accordance with the revised curriculum that emphasizes “authentic English, living English, and the use of English” (p. 34). The results also suggest that “old relied-upon methods” such as grammar translation appear to be prevalent due to the influential effect of entrance examinations and the lack of use of resources available to teachers (p. 42). Furthermore, the results indicate that, despite various in-service training activities open to teachers (e.g., local and national conferences; overseas programs), all teachers

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can not necessarily make use of the opportunities for their professional development. Based on these findings, Lamie concludes that both initial and in-service teacher education and training need to play critical roles in order for teachers to promote change in both their awareness and practice and to eventually achieve their professional requirements.

**Impact of Overseas Teacher Education Programs**

Pacek (1996) examined the effect of a U.K one-year in-service teacher education programs on Japanese English teachers’ professions, in particular, focusing on any professional change in their teaching attitude and practice. To assess the usefulness and practicality of the Japanese government sponsored program, Pacek (1996) investigated the impact of the program course through surveys. The main objectives of the course that satisfy the requirements provided by the Ministry are to: (1) improve participants’ English proficiency, (2) expand theoretical concepts underlying L2 teaching approaches, in particular, CLT, and (3) understand British culture and society and educational system. A total of 56 secondary school teachers who participated in the program several months or years ago, responded to the questionnaires for the study. Among then, forty three teachers answered the questionnaires with a return rate of 76.8 percent.

The findings from the post-course evaluation revealed that teachers selected as well as adapted the elements of the course relevant to their teaching situations. Therefore, they generally responded to the program positively. However, the results also suggested that teachers frequently encountered a pressure to follow “the traditional Japanese way of teaching, because of peers’, students,’ and parental resistance, as well as problems of
prescribed textbooks (p. 339). Pacek attributes these difficulties to cultural and educational differences between Britain and Japan, and make the following two suggestions as an implication for the program: (1) the needs to adapt the program more relevant to Japanese teachers’ expectations and their own educational traditions (e.g., providing a range of teaching methods and leaving the final decision of choice to them) and (2) the needs to offer “raising awareness-discussion and activities” for the course instructors to allow them to better understand cultural and educational differences between Britain and Japan (p.341).

Like Pacek’s study, Lamie (2001) also examined the impacts of the in-service teacher education program in U.K on Japanese English teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. This one-year long teacher training program was also sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Education and designed with the host program to assist the curriculum innovation toward more communicative-based teaching approaches. The main objectives of the program were (1) the improvement of the participants’ basic language abilities, (2) an understanding of theoretical grounds of communicative competence and the development of teaching methods and resources beyond the textbook used in classroom, and (3) an understanding of British culture (p. 80).

Unlike Pacek’s study, who obtained the data through questionnaires, Lamie employed multiple data methods such as survey questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations in her study. Introducing the Model of Change, which describes the process of teacher change, she explored four participants’ change in their teaching methodology, teaching attitudes, and actual teaching practices. More specifically, she closely examined the following areas: English teaching aims, the classroom organization,
grammar teaching and its correction procedures, teaching materials, vocabulary instruction and kinds of dictionaries, focus on four skills, and mother and target language use. These areas were examined by looking at pre-and post program.

The findings suggest that the four participants experienced transformation in all three areas, which are teaching methodology, beliefs, and practice, toward more communicative oriented teaching. For example, the findings through the pre-course observation showed that the features of grammar translation methods dominated the classroom teaching in all the participants. However, even though the constraints at the national and institutional levels remain the same (e.g., examinations; large classroom size), the results through the post-observation revealed that all participants displayed some of the features of CLT in their practices. Their classes leaned toward more student-focused, meaning-based, and the use of more authentic materials.

Based on these findings, Lamie made the following suggestions for implication for the English education in Japan. In order to fulfill the aims of the revised curriculum toward more communicative-oriented teaching, it is necessary (1) to develop textbooks in accordance with the objectives of the revised curriculum, (2) to develop initial teacher training in line with the current revision, (3) to expand in-service training to provide experienced teacher with continued professional development, (4) to re-examine the entrance examination, (5) to re-examine the process of curriculum innovation to include teachers, and finally (6) to encourage teachers to take more responsibility for the development of their teaching attitude and practices.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes a combined qualitative and quantitative methods approach employed in this study. Although a greater priority was given to a qualitative study, the researcher discusses the particular expectations that each research inquiry had. First, this chapter discusses the overall research design by highlighting the reasons why the researcher employed a mixed methods design. Then, based on the planned implementation sequences of the two types of approaches, the chapter describes the following areas in light of both quantitative and qualitative approaches: the characteristics of the population and the participants in the study, the instruments of multiple data collection strategies (e.g., questionnaires; self-reports; individual interviews; classroom observations; document analysis), the data collection procedures, the validity and reliability issues related to these instruments, and the data analysis steps followed in the study.

Research Design

This study employed a “qualitative case study” approach in combination with quantitative research strategies to explore Japanese EFL teachers’ learning to teach (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2000). A case study is generally
characterized as “a specific, unique, bounded system” (Stake, 2000, p. 436) or “specific cases for in-depth study and comparison” (Patton, 2001, p 447). It aims for “holistic” and “context sensitive” descriptions of the cases (Patton, 2001, p. 447). In this qualitative case study, “cases” involved three layers: cases of individual teachers at the school sites in Japan, cases of two MEXT program sites in the U.S., and a case of a national (MEXT) program (See Figure 3.1). By combining the studies of individual teachers and those of the programs, the researcher attempted to reveal the complexities involved in their learning to teach.

In addition to the qualitative case study approach, the researcher employed a quantitative research method. The primary assumption of using a mixed methods approach is that “collecting diverse types of data best provide an understanding of a research problem” (Creswell, 2003, p. 21). Although the researcher integrated the two approaches at several stages in the research, the study was broadly divided into two phases: collecting quantitative data by questionnaires in the first phase and obtaining qualitative data by interviews, reports, observations, and document analysis in the second phase. The main purposes of employing a quantitative method strategy first were not only to obtain general views of Japanese teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices but also to select the participants of the qualitative case study, which was sequentially conducted in the following stage.

In this study, the researcher triangulated not only data collection strategies (questionnaires, interviews, reports, observations, and document) but also data sources (teachers, program hosts, school administrators), sites (6 month and 12 month programs, and school settings), and perspectives (teachers, program hosts, school administrators,
and the Ministry of Education). By combining multiple data, the researcher aimed to examine general characteristics about teachers’ experiences of learning to teach and to gain a deeper understanding of the examined issues and the complexities involved in teachers’ individual cases.

![Figure 3.1: Case Study: Layers of Analysis](image-url)
The goals of the MEXT programs correspond to the fundamental aim of the national curriculum of English education in Japan that is to develop students’ communication abilities. Therefore, the main objectives of the programs are to develop teachers’ communicative abilities, in particular listening and speaking skills, and to familiarize teachers with communicative teaching methodologies (Nagasawa, 2004; Wada, 2002). Each host coordinated its program to satisfy the requirements proposed by the Ministry. Both university A (including language training programs at university C and D) and university B programs shared four goals: to improve Japanese teachers’ English language skills; to better understand English language teaching (ELT) methodology and its application; to deepen their understanding of the cultural and social aspects of the U.S. (and other countries); and to conduct a research on their relevant EFL area (Holschuh & Romstedt, 1999; CLED, 1999, 2004).

The conceptual principles stressed in each program were “interaction” and “language learning as a social construct” at university A and “changing the course of their [teachers’] teaching from traditional grammar translation and teaching English through Japanese to teaching English in different methods such as communicative methodology and task-based learning” at university B (Program coordinators, Interviews: 8/8/2005 & 9/13/2005 respectively). As one of the coordinators pointed out, the programs were conceptualized using these principles of English language teaching and learning to respond to the general MEXT guidelines which are to deepen teachers’ understanding of communicative-based pedagogy and to develop Japanese students’ communicative
abilities. In addition, both programs emphasized the pedagogical application connection between the two key settings, the U.S. program and the teachers’ own professional contexts in Japan.

Although the programs shared the same goals, the actual course work offered in each program was slightly different, not to mention to its time frame (six month program at university A including university C or D and 12 month program at university B). In university A program, for example, all teachers, who had taken the two-month intensive language course in either university C or D, began the program with “American Educational System” and “Intensive Writing and Academic Skills” followed by “ESL Methodology and Classroom Observations” and “Research Projects Writing” (Holschuh & Romstedt, 1999). The first two pre-session courses were designed to “build the contexts for the classes teachers will see [in local schools] in the second part of the program” (Program coordinator, Interviews: 8/8/2005) and to prepare for the research project. The methodology class provided an overview of L2 teaching methodology. Teachers were required to read a textbook, titled The practice of English Language Teaching by Jeremy Harmer (1991 in 1998 program and 2001 in 2003 program), and other selected reading materials from, for example, TESOL Journal, TESOL Quarterly, and a book chapter. The focus of these readings appeared to be more practical, but they contained both practical and theoretical knowledge, including an overview of learning theories and ELT approaches, teaching steps to introduce new language, communicative activities, communicative competence, Multiple Intelligences, and students’ motivation. This methodology course also included foreign language classroom observations of local middle and high schools, creating (part of) a lesson plan, and a teaching project (teaching
a lesson once for elementary level ESL students in a small group). Discussions and journals were also incorporated throughout the course to reflect on their observations, their learning from the readings, and their own lessons and teaching sites in Japan. These components were emphasized to encourage teachers to consider “potential application of communicative methods to the participants’ current teaching situations” (Holschuh & Romstedt, 1999). Furthermore, teachers were given an option to take courses in the ESL programs (e.g., “American English Pronunciation;” “Drama;” “TOEFL Preparation”) and/or to audit a university course (e.g., graduate-level course in TESOL). In “Research Project Writing,” teachers were provided guidance and mentoring to write a research project that would be helpful to their colleagues in Japan. At the end of the course, teachers presented their research to fellow participants, instructors, and visitors. During the program, they also engaged in extracurricular activities, including “Conversations Partners,” “Professional Pal” (a conversation partner with an ESL staff), a local TESOL conference, and social gatherings with the members of the program.

University B program consisted of four phases: Phase one, “Orientation to Language and Life in the U.S;” phase two, EFL summer session; phase three, “Methodology of Language Teaching” and elective linguistics courses; finally phase four, “Research Project Mentoring Program,” “Oral Presentation Seminar,” and “Re-entry Orientation Seminar.” Similar to the program A, the first phase was designed for teachers to “‘settle in’ to their new environment and culture” and to improve their English language skills, in particular, listening and speaking (CLED, 1999, p.1). In phase two, the participants continued to develop their English skills to prepare for the main program
courses in the next phase. The courses they took in the Intensive English Language Program focused on academic reading, writing, and oral communication skills.

In phase three, teachers took a methodology course, “Methodology of Language Teaching,” which included ESL classroom observations at local secondary schools. In addition, as an elective, they either took for credit or audited university level linguistics courses, or took courses in the Intensive English Language Program based on their TOEFL score. More specifically, the methodology course presented theoretical background and practical approaches to ELT which emphasized the communicative-oriented pedagogy proposed by the MEXT. The readings required in the course included the following books: *How languages are learned* by Lightbown & Spada (1993, 1999); *The practice of English language teaching* by Harmer (1991); and *Techniques and principles in language teaching* by Larsen-Freeman (1994 & 2000). These textbooks contained both theoretical knowledge and practical ideas about ELT (e.g., an overview of various teaching methodologies; theories of L2 learning; effective teaching techniques) and were used to develop lesson plans for four language areas (speaking, listening, writing, and reading). These lesson plans were a major course requirement of the methodology course. The main objectives of this requirement were to incorporate communicative-oriented instruction into more traditional teaching methodologies and to adapt the required textbooks used in Japan to make them more communicative (Lezhnev, 1998). Teaching practicum and field work were also included in this course. Teachers spent one week in a local school observing ESL classes. For each visit, they submitted observation tasks and reports. Among the linguistics courses that teachers took for credit or audited were “EFL Materials Preparation” and “Language Acquisition.” As an optional
activity, teachers were given an opportunity to teach a class in the Intensive English Language program in order to try out the lesson plan they had developed in the Methodology course (e.g., a reading lesson or a listening lesson).

In the last phase, teachers were expected to analyze and apply EFL theories to their own teaching classrooms and to produce a research paper. They were also given the opportunity to present their research findings and implications in the “Oral Presentation Seminar.” They also took a course called the “Re-Entry Orientation Seminar” which was designed to help them anticipate challenges they might encounter on their return to their country. Furthermore, the program also offered a variety of extracurricular activities to the participants, including “Interaction with Americans” (e.g., the local JET program alumni [native English speakers] who taught English in secondary schools in Japan; language partners with American students; trips organized by local church groups) and “Professional Opportunities” (e.g., the WATESOL Fall Convention and professional development workshops organized by the association; volunteering at adult education center for immigrants).

**Teaching in Japan**

**Ministry of Education and School Settings**

Researchers have argued that social and cultural dimensions of education, which are both salient and latent, have an impact on teachers’ learning to teach (e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Gorshuch, 2000; Lamie, 2001; Sato, 2002; Shimahara, 2002). In the contexts in Japan, one of the unique cultural characteristics of its education is the top-down structure of implementing educational reforms (Markee, 1997; Neustupny and
Tanaka, 2004; Shimahara, 2002). The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (hereafter called Ministry of Education) establishes a national curriculum of school subjects and issues a curriculum guideline called “the Course of Study” approximately every ten years. Since the late 1950, the Course of Study has served as a binding framework for constructing the curriculum of each subject, including content, objectives, and required credits/standard number of annual teaching hours of each subject. Textbooks have also been authorized by the Ministry to ensure that they are in compliance with the goals described in the guideline.

Recently, the Ministry of Education has extensively promoted educational reforms at all levels in response to rapid social change, including internationalization, information age, advent of science and technology, environmental deterioration, declining birthrate (Monbusho [Ministry of Education] 1999) and “persistent problems of adolescent behavior” such as students’ resistance to traditional schooling (Shimahara, 2002). As a result, what has been emphasized in the current curriculum are “to enhance the child’s ‘power to live’ [Ikiru chikara]” by harmonizing intellectual, moral, and physical development of the student, “to teach basic thoroughly’ to rectify the past overemphasis on knowledge transmission,” to allow students “greater freedom in school,’ and to promote ‘education of heart’” (Shimahara, 2002, p.52). More specifically, the Ministry of Education has reduced the curricular content, implemented a five-day attendance policy, included “comprehensive study period” (Monbusho [Ministry of Education] 1999) to cross subject-matter boundaries in order to enhance individual student’s initiative, motivation, and interest in learning (Shimahara, 2002).
Within the contexts of these educational reforms, Shimahara (2002) describes how the national policies shape the culture of teaching at school settings. He describes the unique culture of teaching that beginning teachers in elementary and junior high schools experienced in five themes. First, it emphasizes whole person education (zenjin-kyoiku), which encompasses not only cognitive aspects of learning but also social, moral, and expressive dimensions of students’ development (e.g., academic lessons; life guidance; moral education; school cleaning; club activity; home visits). Second, it embraces the concept of ethnopedagogy (kizuna) that views close interpersonal relations as the primary condition for effective teaching and learning. Third, it considers learning to teach as craft (kenshu) based on “the accumulation of pedagogical wisdom” as embedded in “teacher-generated experience and knowledge” (p. 24). Fourth, it emphasizes that cooperative management of schools through teachers’ division of work is part of the system of school operation (komu bunsho) represented by, for example, the department of school programs, life guidance, and health. Finally, their professions involve the intensification of teaching (shido) derived from the cooperative management, placement of students in an upper level, club activities, student guidance and the like. Although these themes do not specifically focus on teaching English, they suggest how schools and nationally initiated educational reforms as activity settings mediate teachers’ thinking and practices on the whole.

In regards to English education, since the late 1980s, new curriculum reforms have been initiated by the Ministry of Education. Drawing on the Ministry’s conference documents (Monbusho, 1986, cited in Lamie, 2001), Lamie describes its perspective on issues related to the English education around that time. These include “a lack of
exposure to spoken English,” “a lack of confidence in communicating in English,”
“large-class sizes,” “difficult teaching materials,” and “adherence to traditional teaching
methods” (p. 18). Lamie further notes that the structure of entrance examinations, which
emphasize grammatical and factual knowledge, could also be added. Among these factors,
scholars have consistently discussed the prevalence of English teaching method in Japan
called yakudoku or “Japanese-style ‘grammar translation approach’” (Henrichsen, 1989,
p. 104), which values translating activities as well as grammar teaching in reading
(Gorsuch, 1998; Henrichsen, 1989; Hino, 1988; Lamie, 2001; Smith & Imura, 2004). To
solve these issues, the goals of English education at the secondary school level proposed
by the Ministry have shifted away from a fact-oriented teaching and recitation to a
communicative-oriented approach. In terms of the group of Japanese teachers of English
that I examined in the present study, besides unique histories that individual teachers
bring to the settings, they can also situate themselves as English learners before or right
after the implementation of the English curriculum reform. Thus, when learning English
as a foreign language (EFL) at the sites of their formal schools, teachers were more likely
to be exposed to fact-oriented pedagogy.

In the 1989 Course of Study, the Ministry of Education adopted the notion of
“communicative competence” that is defined as “aspects of our competence that enables
us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within
specific contexts” (Brown, 2000, p. 246). Accordingly, the 1989 and 1999 course of
study emphasized the communicative aspects of English, which is indicated in the
documents with terms such as “practical communication abilities” and “actual language
use situations” (Ministry of Education [Monbusho], 1999).
Teacher Education and Professional Development

Similarly to curriculum policy in Japanese schools, the Ministry also formulates the national policy for developing courses and credits leading to teacher certification. The group of Japanese teachers of English who participated in the study, many of whom received teacher license in the 1980s and early to mid 90s, can situate themselves before or right after the implementation of the English curriculum reform discussed above. Thus, when receiving pre-service teacher training at universities, they were less likely to be exposed to communicative-oriented English teaching and learning (Lamie, 2000).

To deal with these problems, both teachers and the government promote initiatives in teachers’ professional development (Lamie, 2001; Nagasawa, 2004; Shimahara, 2002). Although the opportunities may vary depending on schools and their levels, teachers in general experience school-based professional development. It stresses peer collaboration such as in-school study lessons by reviewing and critiquing peers’ instruction and study meetings organized by subject area teachers by reviewing curriculum and discussing issues related to the field (Shimahara, 2002).

In addition, to fulfill the goals of educational reforms in English curriculum, the Ministry has initiated in-service teacher training programs both inside and outside Japan for Japanese secondary school EFL teachers. The current training programs include a domestic three-week workshop, and six- and twelve-month overseas programs in English speaking countries (Nagasawa, 2004; Wada, 2002). Compared to the school-based professional development discussed before, however, only limited number of teachers can participate in these programs: approximately 450 in 2001 for the domestic workshop (Nagasawa, 2004) and 100 in 2002 for the overseas trainings (Council, 2003). The goals
of these programs accord with the fundamental aim of the national curriculum, which is to develop students’ communication abilities. The main objectives of these government-sponsored trainings are to develop teachers’ communicative abilities, in particular listening and speaking skills, and to familiarize teachers with communicative teaching methodologies (Nagasawa, 2004; Wada, 2002).

Participants

Quantitative Approach

Population

The target population for the quantitative data of this study was Japanese junior or senior high school English teachers who participated in six-month or one-year government-sponsored overseas in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs. Since 1988, the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) has promoted overseas teacher training programs as one of the necessary components in the professional development of Japanese teachers of English (Monbusho, 1990, cited in Lamie, 2001). Recently, the MEXT has sent more than 100 Japanese teachers to English speaking countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States annually (Wada, 2002). In the U. S. for example, from 1998 through 2003, approximately 200 public full-time English teachers participated in the individually coordinated U.S. MEXT programs which satisfied the requirements proposed by the Ministry of Education. During that period of time, a total of 12 state or private universities in the U.S. hosted the programs for Japanese teachers. After completing the program, they returned to their own teaching contexts to resume their practices.
Questionnaire Sample

The sample (accessible population) of the quantitative part of this study was a group of Japanese English teachers who participated in four U.S. MEXT programs from 1998 through 2003 (N = 103) (see Table 3.1). This sample was purposively selected by the researcher based on program units, which were one 6-month program offered at university A, C, and D, and one 12 month program at university B. The 6-month program consisted of two training components which were a 2-month university-affiliated English language/ESL program at university C and D and a 4-month methodology-based training program at university A. Therefore, the participants in this 6-month MEXT program first attended one of the former language training programs and then continued their training by transferring to the latter program. The 12-month program, on the other hand, included the two components within the single program. Therefore, the participants in the 12-month program stayed at the university during the whole training period.

The main reasons for choosing these two programs were due to the researcher’s prior knowledge of one main school at university A by observing several courses in the program, and the fact that there were a larger number of participants who completed university A and B programs than the rest of other MEXT programs. Among the sample (N = 103), 50 teachers participated in the 6-month program at university A and C or D and 53 attended the 12-month program at university B (see Table 3.1). University B program’s distinct characteristic, which only offered 12 month training instead of 6-month program in the U.S., was another reason the researcher chose the program for the sampling selection.
To draw the most wide-ranging description possible for generalizations, the researcher administered a questionnaire to the group of teachers who attended the programs in different years (1998 to 2003) and those who attended not only 6 but also 12 month programs. However, it must be noted that the researcher needs to carefully generalize the results of this study because of the purposive sampling that she used. The lists of information about the past participants in each program were provided by the Council on International Educational Exchange, a non-profit organization which facilitated the MEXT programs on behalf of the Japanese Ministry of Education (Council, 2001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEXT Programs</th>
<th>Total Number of Participants from 1998 to 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeder School (2months)</td>
<td>Main Campus (4 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University C</td>
<td>University A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: The U.S. MEXT Programs and Their Participants

Qualitative Case Study

Participants

Three groups of participants, Japanese teachers of English, program coordinators, and school administrators in each Japanese teacher’s teaching setting, were further invited for qualitative case studies. Although teachers were the main participants of this study, the hosts’ perspectives on the programs and the school administrators’ vision of
English education in a specific school setting were examined since their perspectives were closely related to potential key settings in which teachers’ learning to teach took place. In addition, triangulations of methods and data sources also contributed to the trustworthiness of the qualitative inquiry (Glesne, 1999; Janesick, 2000; Lather, 1986b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Given that Japanese teachers already have heavy daily work loads in Japan, only those who expressed interests in this study were selected for the qualitative case study. Therefore, survey participants were asked to indicate their willingness in participating in the qualitative case study on the questionnaire. Once teachers who were interested in the case study were identified, the researcher employed an “intensity sampling” strategy to learn the most from the “information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely” (Patton, 2001, p. 234). That is, the researcher particularly looked for cases from the questionnaire responses which represented differing principles of English teaching and learning (e.g., constructive/student-center approach; more transmission approaches; or combined), multiple factors which seemed to affect their teaching conceptions and practices, and various degrees of teachers’ applying pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT programs to their classroom instruction. The researcher’s main intention to select these cases was to provide a more comprehensive portrait of teachers’ responses to their teaching conceptions and practices. Under these considerations, a total of five Japanese EFL teachers out of all questionnaire respondents were selected for the
qualitative case study. In this dissertation, however, the researcher will report about three teachers among them due to a possible redundancy of these teachers’ findings in answering the guiding research questions in the study².

Other groups of case study participants were program coordinators in the four U.S. MEXT programs at university A, B, C, and D as well as the school administrators in five selected Japanese teachers’ teaching settings. The researcher contacted each program coordinator and school administrator to invite him/her for an interview. Regarding the school administrators, however, interviews were only conducted with the Japanese teachers’ permission. A total of four school administrators participated in the interview.

**Portraits of Case Study Participants**

The following section is detailed information about three participants of the qualitative case study and what were considered to be key settings in these teachers’ development of learning to teach.

**Portrait of Mr. Fujii.**

**Personal and professional backgrounds**

Mr. Fujii received a B.A. in linguistics and EFL teacher certificate from a university in Japan. Since the completion of the undergraduate studies, he has taught

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² There were two rationales for making this decision. First, regarding teachers’ levels of appropriation, the results of the questionnaires revealed that these 5 case study teachers were categorized somewhere between (a) applying tools a great deal, (b) applying tools to some extent, and (c) applying tools only a little (See the section, “Pedagogical Tools Teacher Use”). Three teachers among the five were located in (c), while others were either in (a) and (b). Therefore, to examine their levels of appropriation, I kept one teacher in each category. In addition, in terms of sources and settings affecting teachers’ appropriation process, while every teacher had different histories, the three teachers’ cases could explain key factors having to do with their appropriation process, which resulted from individual teachers’ process of learning and its social environments (e.g., teachers’ histories and goals, identities, goals and practices emphasized particular social settings, tools available to them).
English for 12 years at high schools in western Japan. According to Mr. Fujii, his student teaching experiences in a high school directly motivated him to become a teacher as his future career. Two experiences, in particular, had a great impact on his decision: (1) the opportunities to attract students to learning through creative ideas in his teaching practices, and (2) encouragement from his mentor teacher to become an educator as his future career. His university preparatory school teacher, who took care of students despite his physically ill condition and passed away before long, also affected his decision to become a teacher. By encountering these mentors, he reported that “he came to hope for becoming a person like them” (Interview, 10/19/2005)

**Pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program**

With a strong admiration for the teachers he met, Mr. Fujii appeared to have high motivation to be an English teacher. Before participating in the MEXT program, he studied English education by reading academic books which interested him (e.g., second language acquisition; sociocultural perspectives on learning), and tried out a variety of ideas learned in the books in his classes. However, he felt unsatisfied with his “student-centered” instruction since “he pushed his students around based on what he wanted to do in the class,” for example, by using difficult English expressions and vocabulary in his teaching (Interview, 10/19/2005). According to him, his prior belief about what constitutes good teaching contributed to this instruction. While struggling with this uncertainty about EFL teaching approach, he was appointed to attend the MEXT (originally called MOE) program by The Local Board of Education of his prefecture and
the principal of his school. He eventually used the training opportunity to consider the problems he had faced and also to learn other pedagogical tools he had wanted to explore (e.g., assessment; use of visual aids).

In 1998, Mr. Fujii participated in one of the 6-month MEXT programs in the U.S. that included language learning opportunities for 2 months at university D and then methodology training at university A for 4 months. In the language training program, he participated in the ESL courses with other international students and learned about “natural way of interacting in class.” That is, how an instructor effectively uses students’ ideas to achieve the goals of a lesson (Interview, 10/25/2005). In the methodology training, he had opportunities to read as many practical oriented books and articles as possible, some of which were assigned by the course instructors but others were journals in TESOL related field which he found in the university library. The former includes *The practice of English language teaching* by Harmer (1991) and *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice* by Savignon (1983). The latter also includes *Mind in society* by Vygotsky (1978) and *TESOL Quarterly*. In addition, he observed second and/or foreign language teaching professionals’ lessons in the ESL classes at the university and the local schools in the town. Furthermore, as a requirement of the program, he also conducted a research project which discussed the importance of integrating language skills by placing a special focus on writing. In the project, he studied how to develop Japanese students’ writing skills by relying on a power of social interaction in learning developed by Vygotsky, which includes the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and textbooks as a learning tool (mediation). According to him, the MEXT program equipped him with ideas about “how to create language use in classroom
environments where [he] relies on not only his intuitions and expectation level but also theoretical based perspectives on EFL teaching approach to some extent” (Questionnaire: Part IV). He went on to comment, “It is difficult to describe, but the image of my future EFL teaching, which is what I want to do in my classes, mostly came to my mind during the program” (Interview: 10/19/2005).

**Teaching sites at school**

During his 12 year teaching career, Mr. Fujii taught English at two high schools in northwestern Japan. While working in the first school, he received an opportunity to attend the MEXT program and returned to the same school. Right after coming back from the U.S., he became a main instructor for students who were enrolled in the English language focused course at the school. The teaching environments at the school allowed him to have many opportunities to try out what he had learned in the MEXT program in his classes.

The high school where he was currently teaching was located in a quiet residential area in the same prefecture and served approximately 1100 students. The students at the school were enrolled in either Ordinary or Math and Science courses and “academically high” (Interview: 10/19/2005). The school sent most of the students to universities or colleges. The educational goals of the school were “to let students learn a zest for living as the most important goal” and also “to prepare students for university education as the second important goal” (Vice-principal, interview: 10/19/2005). I observed both aspects in his teaching practices.
At the time of my observations of Mr. Fujii’s classroom instruction, he was teaching English II (comprehensive course) and Writing to 12th grade students. I observed both classes when I visited his school in October 2005. In the former class, English II, students were enrolled in Math and Science course and all English classes that they took were being taught by Mr. Fujii only. Note that based on my observations of other participant teachers’ classes, this is a rare case since a group of teachers are usually in charge of all English courses provided to a class. In the latter class I observed, which is Writing course, his students were enrolled in Ordinary course. Mr. Fujii said that right after he transferred to his current school, he started to take care of these 12th grade students without teaching them in the previous year. Therefore, he was now “letting them get familiar to the way [he] teaches” (Interview: 8/28/2005).

Mr. Fujii continuously sought professional development opportunities in and outside school. The classes that I observed were, for example, opened to anyone who was interested in observing his lessons. His colleagues and vice-principle, also an EFL teacher, visited his classes and exchanged ideas and questions after the classes. He also involved in different roles outside school such as creating an English dictionary and developing English teaching materials and textbooks.

**Portrait of Mr. Suzuki**

**Personal and professional backgrounds**

Mr. Suzuki received a B.A. in English Literature and also EFL teacher certificate from a university in Japan. After graduation, he became a high school English teacher in western Japan and has taught in the same area for 18 years. When I asked him to describe his background as an EFL learner, he responded that “because my major [in the
university] was literature, I devoted much time reading literature related books. But I completed the English conversation courses without much understanding” (Interview: 8/29/2005). After starting his career, he felt a necessity to learn spoken English and started to develop his oral skills by reading books on oral communication, taking English proficiency tests, listening to English (internet) radio, and reading English newspapers.

**Pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program**

When he became over 30 years old, he had several opportunities to go outside Japan, including an in-service teacher education (MEXT) program in the U.S. and homestay programs as an escort teacher in Australia and Canada. Reflecting on his attitude toward his own professional development before having these opportunities, he described himself as a person who “hardly studied” (Interview: 8/29/2005).

In 1998, he participated in one year MEXT program in the U.S., which was coordinated by the ESL program affiliated by the large private university. Many readings were assigned in the Methodology course, including *How Languages are Learned* (1993) by Lightbown and Spada, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (1991) by Harmer, and *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (1994) by Brown. In addition to the course work, Mr. Suzuki conducted a research project. Drawing on conceptual tools such as “intrinsic motivation” of language learners, “learner-centered learning,” “collaborative learning” and “task-based learning” (Suzuki, 1999, pp. 10-19), he discussed the potential of the use of internet in “form-focused” English teaching in Japan. Furthermore, he experienced an actual teaching practicum and taught English to ESL students in the program once. Mr. Suzuki considered the program, especially the
Methodology class, as “a place where he gained the basis of what he is doing now” (Questionnaire, Part IV). According to him, the course was “appropriate and selective, which took English teaching situations in Japan and Japanese teachers of English into great consideration” (Questionnaire, Part IV) and also “practical-oriented such as creating lesson plans by using our textbooks in Japan” (Interview: 8/29/2005).

**Teaching sites at school**

After the completion of the program, Mr. Suzuki transferred to his current high school. The school historically emphasized English education by having English specialized courses. Reflecting on the first year of the new school, he commented that “I taught the way I wanted to do and tried out whatever I gained in the program” (Interview: 5/28/2005). However, he also shared the challenges he had experienced during the third year of the school, which came from students’ resentment to his “one-shot” classroom instruction (Interview: 5/28/2005). In the fourth year, the school was designated as “Super English High School (SELHi)” by MEXT. SELHi is one of the projects the MEXT has promoted to “nurture Japanese citizens who can use English” (MEXT, 2004). It is a three year project in which each designated school has a responsibility to create curriculum that concentrates on English teaching and share the goals, instruction, and the effects of the program to public through providing an open forum and information through online (MEXT, 2004). The goal of Mr. Suzuki’s school is “to develop high practical English communication skills, especially expressing yourself, through English education and international understanding” (Y High School, 2004). English teachers at the school collaboratively created the English curriculum for the project, which was
continuously revised by sharing their lessons with guests outside school. He is currently the head of the SELHi program, the English department, and the 12th grade. The principle and vice-principle of the school are also English teachers. With regards to his colleagues in English department, he described them as being “willing to cooperate to achieve goals” (Interview, 3/23/2006).

At the time when I visited his school, he taught a comprehensive course (English II) and an elective course (Communication 4) to the 12th graders. While the former concentrated on university entrance examinations that many of the students in the class (39) would take in the following semester, the latter focused on oral communication with a small class size (9) in which they were expected to respond as quickly as possible in English and to logically express their opinions (My field note, 10/27/2005).

During the last 6 years after he came back to Japan, he continued to have various professional development opportunities such as entering a distant education TESOL MA program in England, reading practical oriented books, and attending a study group meeting to further develop his speaking skills. Reflecting on his past several years, he commented, “MEXT program was the origin of what I have been doing. Right after I came back, I was so excited and did everything I wanted to try out. Thinking back to the 6-7 years, everything started from the experience (Interview, 8/29/2005).

Portrait of Mr. Kato

Personal and professional backgrounds

Mr. Kato received an EFL teacher certificate from a university in Japan. As an undergraduate student majoring in English studies, he devoted himself to studying English by taking reading class being conducted in English only, listening to and
speaking in English in classes, and revising writings multiple times. After becoming a senior high school English teacher, he spent extensive time on learning English through studying teaching materials. However, he encountered increasing concerns about his own English abilities:

I always felt something missing in myself. Through studying teaching materials, I could teach English to high school students, but I had felt frustrated since I could not use English like the way I wish. In a meeting with ALTs (native English speaking Assistant Language Teachers) for a team-teaching plan, for example, I had hard time to express my intentions to them. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2006)

This excerpt suggests that from the hard experiences, he came to realize the importance of developing his English proficiency as an EFL professional and had concerns about his perceived limited practical English skills.

**Pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program**

This language issue that Mr. Kato faced as an English teacher eventually brought him to the U.S. to participate in the MEXT program. From June through December 2003, Mr. Kato attended one of the 6-month programs in the U.S which consisted of language training at university C for two months and methodological learning at university A for four months. Like other participants, he took required (e.g., ESL classes; methodology class) and several elective courses in the program, lived with American family, visited local schools for classroom observations, and also attended a local conference in the TESOL field. As one of the requirements of the program, he also completed a writing project in which he studied reading as “the most basic and required skills for Japanese” (Kato, 2003).
To examine what Mr. Kato had learned in the program, I depended on the documents provided from him and the program. Among these documents, the research project he conducted and journals he kept in the program courses greatly helped me better understand what he actually took from the program. As briefly mentioned before, he focused on L2 reading in the project, especially how teachers could help high school level English learners in Japan develop “practical reading skills.” By conducting a literature review in the area, Mr. Kato discussed the definition of reading, reading strategies a good reader uses (e.g., schema; skimming; scanning; predicting), reading process (top-down and bottom-up process), the goals of the English education in Japan and specific level of English ability students need to develop based on official English tests such as STEP and PET, and effective reading instructions for high school students in Japan. He further composed a lesson plan for reading by discussing specific pedagogical tools which he believed should be incorporated into lessons. These tools include “exposure to the target language,” “comprehensive input,” “language consciousness-raising,” “Communicative Language Teaching,” “L2 learners’ affective variables,” “classroom as a place for practice,” “group work,” “scaffolding,” “learner autonomy,” “Multiple Intelligences,” and “reading activities” (e.g., pre- and post-reading) (Kato, 2003). To discuss these instructional tools, he drew on a variety of literature, including *The practice of English language teaching* by Harmer (2002), *TESOL Quarterly, The Language Teacher, The Course of Study & An Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities* by the MEXT. These references were either required to read in the course work or prepared outside the program.
Another important document that I used to better understand the pedagogical tools presented in the program was journals he kept during his participation in the program. As being consistent with one of the goals of the program, he noted the role of “interaction between a teacher and students,” which he noted he had learned by observing the ESL classes and the lessons at a local middle school. As he commented:

Among my new findings in these two weeks, I will note the responsibility of the students. Of course we teachers are responsible for all the activities in class, but leaving some duty to the students is also necessary…. Students’ responsibility—this may be one point of views I should have in order to lead my students to be independent learners. Teaching is not one way. It is an interaction between students and teachers. This is a foundation in education that every teacher’s work is supposed to be based on. (Reflective Journal, No. 2: 10/13/2003)

These documents describe various pedagogical tools (both conceptual as well as practical) Mr. Kato learned in the program from not only the literature but also the classroom observations he experienced during the participation in the program.

Overall he considered the learning experiences in the program as being “greatly influential on [his] current teaching beliefs” and noted regarding his own English abilities that “I feel that I own it through the experiences in the U.S.” (Questionnaire, Part IV).

**Teaching sites at school**

Mr. Kato was an experienced EFL teacher with 20 year high school level instruction. The school where he currently worked was closely located in a large commercial city in Western Japan. The school was built in 1919 as a commercial school and is characterized as a “historical school” in the town. It served approximately 1140 senior high school students who were enrolled in either ordinary, commercial, or music courses. With 85 percent advancement rate (university, collage, vocational schools), the
school was experiencing an educational reform by dividing the students in the ordinary course into group based on their academic interests (e.g., arts; sciences) from the first graders. Thus, one of the major goals at the school was to prepare students for university entrance examinations. Mr. Kato explained this as follows: “the greatest expectation of this school and people around the school [community] was probably to deal with university examinations” (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006).

Mr. Kato served several professional roles at school. Among them, a manager in the general affairs department (Somu) took most of his professional time. After coming back from the U.S., he found his career direction shifting from an EFL teacher to a school manager and commented that “it is hard to design English language curriculum by directly involving in English teaching for specific graders” (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2006). This professional shift created some concerns for him as an EFL teacher.

When I visited his school in October, 2005, he taught English Writing for 11th graders and an Elective Course (reading) for 12th graders. In the writing class, since he needed to take over the class from another teacher just a few weeks prior, he attempted to become acquainted with his new students, their interests, and the atmosphere in the class. Most of the students in the class already had specific future plans to go to vocational schools. In the other class, which was an Elective Course, his students, studying in the art course, planed to take university entrance examinations in the following semester. My observations occurred approximately two weeks before the mid-term examination at the school.
Data Collection

Instruments

Questionnaire Instrument

Questionnaires employed in this study serve an important role of obtaining general characteristics of the sample and eliciting in-depth responses for selecting the participants of the following qualitative case study. To achieve these purposes, the questionnaire instrument contains both closed- and open-ended questions (Appendix A). The instrument was developed by the researcher based on the literature review on teacher education in a variety of subject areas (e.g., ESL; EFL; English education) as well as a preliminary study that she conducted with Japanese English teachers who attended one of the U.S. MEXT programs in 2001. In terms of the literature, teacher socialization (e.g., Achinstein et al., 2004; Freeman & Richards, 1996), activity theories (e.g., Grossman et al., 1999; Lantolf, 2000; Newell, et al., 2001; Wertsch, 1991 & 1998), Communicative Language Teaching (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 2002), and non-native English speaking teachers’ professional development (e.g., Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Butler, 2004; Li, 1998) informed the basic conceptual framework of the study. In addition, the interview questions developed by Achinstein et al., (2004) and Gingrich (2003) offered specific ideas for constructing the questionnaire items. Moreover, the preliminary study greatly helped the researcher contextualize the questions in order for her to expect possible responses from the participants. In this section, the preliminary study will be first discussed, and then the questionnaire instrument developed for this present study will also be described.
**Preliminary study**

A preliminary study was conducted with eight Japanese teachers of English who participated in 2001 MEXT program at a large mid-western university in the U.S. At the time when the researcher conducted this study, approximately three months had passed since their completion of the program. The main purpose of this study was to explore teachers’ post-U.S.-training experiences over a relatively long period of time. The researcher was particularly interested in examining the following three areas: 1) teachers’ perceived impact of the program on their teaching beliefs and practices, 2) teachers’ perceptions regarding useful knowledge acquired in the program, and difficulties in transferring their new expertise to the classroom, and 3) teachers’ negotiations with various expectations (e.g., teachers’ beliefs; the knowledge learned in the program; students’ needs; school demands) in their teaching practices.

To answer these questions, the researcher developed a questionnaire instrument and interview questions through reviewing the literature on CLT, in particular, the sources of difficulties that teachers face in implementing the approach in the EFL contexts (e.g., Lamie, 2000, 2001; Li, 1998; Gorsuch, 2000). The questionnaire consisted of both open- and closed-ended (multiple choices, Likert Scale) questions. In addition, two semi-structured follow-up interviews (at the beginning and end of the study) and several email messages (after the two interviews) were exchanged with all teachers to further explore their perspectives of the issues in depth and to clarify their responses to the questionnaire. The data collection lasted from March to August of 2002.

Overall, the findings of the questionnaires suggested that the program had positive impacts on all participants’ teaching philosophy and practices, especially regarding their
attitude toward “communication.” However, as the previous research on CLT suggests, all teachers reported some difficulties in applying their newly acquired knowledge to their local teaching situations. These difficulties mainly came from teacher, student, and social (e.g., school; national) factors. One of the intriguing findings of this study is that, despite the difficulties teachers encountered, they described their attempts to dialectically mediate various expectations in their practices in order to accommodate students,’ their own, school, and national needs. These negotiations included balancing the development of students’ four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and interconnecting language components among the four skills (e.g., writing-speaking). In addition, the interview findings also captured several teachers’ uncertain feelings about the current direction or trends, which place a great emphasis on oral communication in English education in Japan, as well as differences in what constitutes good teaching and learning between students and teachers themselves. Other unique findings of the study were teachers’ growing sense of responsibility for contributing to the improvement of English education at the classroom, institutional, and/or local levels, and also teachers’ desire to learn subject matter (e.g., the target language; L2 teaching and learning theories related to their teaching practices) for professional development.

**Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for this study consists of a total of four parts: (1) teachers’ professional background, (2) professional development, (3) teachers’ principle of teaching, and (4) teachers’ appropriation of practical and conceptual ideas acquired in the programs (Appendix A). The first part of the questionnaire examined teachers’
professional background. A total of 15 items, which contains multiple choices and open-ended questions, were designed to elicit teachers’ information. The topics covered in this part include program type and participation year, reasons for participating in the program, their teaching experiences and current roles at schools, type of school they teach and teaching level, teaching areas, class size, their specializations, and gender.

The second part of the questionnaire identified teachers’ professional needs. This part consisted of two sections, one of which relates to teachers’ opinions about the most useful aspects of the MEXT experiences for their current ELT professions, and the other was about the areas that teachers desire to develop more in the MEXT program in order to better prepare for their professions. Most categories included in both sections were identified through a review of Council and program reports, the literature on professional development (e.g., appropriating CLT; activity theory), and the preliminary study. A total of 22 statements (section one, 12 items; section two, 10 items) covered the following areas: teachers’ English language training, their teaching approaches/methodology including practical and conceptual tools relevant to the field, cultural and social aspects of the host country, use of teaching resources, assessment instruments, classroom observations, interaction with fellow teachers, and applications of their new expertise into their own teaching contexts. In both sections, the respondents were asked to identify the degree of extent to each statement based on a 4-point Likert-scale: 4, Very Great Extent; 3, To Some Extent; 2, A Small Extent; 1, Not At All. An alternative answer, “Not Applicable” was also provided.

The third part of this questionnaire examined teachers’ primary principles of their English teaching and learning as well as the factors (sources and contexts) that shape
their beliefs. A total of 3 open-ended questions and a closed-ended (Likert scale) question were partly adapted from the Gingrich’s (2003) interview questions. The topics covered in this part were teachers’ classroom instruction, their principles of teaching English, and activity settings shaping their teaching beliefs (e.g., secondary school level education; university level teacher education programs; field experiences; short-term teacher training programs). The last section, factors influencing teachers’ beliefs were measured using 4-point Likert-scale: 4, Very Great Extent; 3, To Some Extent; 2, A Small Extent; and 1, Not At All.

The last part of the questionnaire examined the relation between the MEXT program course work and teachers’ classroom practice. In particular, this part highlights teachers’ application of practical and theoretical tools learned in programs. A total of 7 (3 open- and 4 closed-ended) questions were created by reviewing the literature on teacher socialization (Gingrich, 2003; Newell, et al., 2001) and teachers’ dilemmas in implementing CLT (e.g., Li, 1998). The first two questions in the questionnaire examined the degrees of relevance between the program course work and teachers’ teaching practices, and specific instructional examples of their use of practical and conceptual tools from the programs. The following two questions asked teachers whether they experienced any reexamination of their English teaching and learning assumptions during/after the MEXT experiences. The last three questions asked any rewarding experiences in the use of the ideas, the degrees of difficulties in appropriating the ideas, and the specific factors affecting the degrees of appropriation. The last question was used to identify factors creating difficulties in appropriating pedagogical ideas at the teachers’ pedagogical, social, cultural, and political levels (Windschite, 2002). All items were
measured using a 4-point Likert scale: 4, Very Great Extent; 3, To Some Extent; 2, A Small Extent; and 1, Not At All. An alternative answer, “Non-Applicable” will also be included.

The questionnaire ended with a request for volunteering to participate in the qualitative case study which was sequentially conducted. To contact and send an honorarium to the teachers who agreed with this second phase of the study, the researcher asked them to provide their email and mail addresses (telephone number if they preferred).

**Case Study Methods**

**The researcher**

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting and interpreting data (Janesick, 2000; Merriam, 1998). Therefore, who I am and how I position myself as a researcher affect the processes and the products of this study.

Similar to the Japanese EFL teachers in this study, I was an English teacher at the high school level in Japan for three years and then participated in the overseas in-service teacher education programs in North American universities to gain knowledge about ELT. Before becoming a teacher, I attended the pre-service teacher education program in Japan and exposed myself to the knowledge related to ESL and EFL education. A major source of challenges I faced after entering the teaching sites at Japanese school, however, was how to connect what I had learned in the university course work and the classroom instruction at the school contexts. I felt torn between theory-based pedagogical tools at the university course work based on a range of disciplines such as (applied) linguistics,
second language acquisition (SLA), and ELT methodology, and examination-oriented pedagogy at the school. In other words, the disjuncture between theory and practice created certain difficulties and frustration for me. As the bulk of the SLA literature had discussed, I had originally viewed that a major source of the challenges in applying the pedagogical tools resulted from my limited cognitive and linguistic abilities. As I was introduced to social constructivist perspectives of teaching and learning during my doctoral program overseas, however, I came to appreciate that the challenges I faced could be not only individually but also socially constructed.

This ongoing reflection on my teaching practices with support from competent members of the academic communities and cultural artifacts (e.g., literature) eventually let me to explore Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation processes when they shifted from the U.S. teacher education program to their own teaching sites. The sociocultural literature that problematizes the prescriptive view of teaching, which views teachers as passive recipients of transmitted knowledge rather than active participants in meaning construction, has offered me a new way of understanding my experiences of learning to teach and of collecting and interpreting those of the case study teachers in this study.

As for my position as a researcher, I was an insider to the teachers in many ways in that we shared similar interests as a secondary school teacher (e.g., EFL teaching and learning), received education in Japan, and participated in an overseas teacher education program in the U.S. This insider status helped me be “sensitive to the context and all the variables within it” such as the school settings, the people in the sites, and the overt and covert expectations and goals of the schools (Merriam, 1998, p. 21). At the same time, I was an outsider because each individual teacher had their personal histories and
experiences as an EFL learner and teacher. In addition, I was not a participant as an English teacher in the specific school communities to which each teacher belonged. Being both an insider and outsider, however, offered advantages to build more empirically-based case portraits of teachers. That is, the insider status allowed me to better understand the information being gathered and the outsider status also helped me notice the values and practices stressed by teachers and in their school settings which an insider may have taken for granted.

**Documents analysis**

The study of written texts is of importance for both quantitative and qualitative inquiries. Literature review plays a critical role to help researchers learn about the feasibility of the study (Creswell, 2003), situate their studies in the knowledge-based of the field, and consider rationales for conducting the proposed study (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Written texts that are directly obtained from participants further allow researchers to “explore multiple and conflicting voices, differing and interacting interpretations” (Hodder, 2000, p. 705). Given that the four MEXT programs that the Japanese teachers attended have been cancelled, to examine existing written texts was important for better understanding the characteristics of the programs and teachers’ learning experiences in the programs. For this study, therefore, the researcher reviewed available literature related to the MEXT programs throughout the study to develop the study instruments (questionnaire; interview; report; observation) and to interpret teachers’ responses to the instruments.
The texts that the researcher collected include the final reports written by the program coordinators and the Council members in several years. With regard to each program’s final report, it included program objectives and course syllabi that specified, for example, course objectives, (bi)weekly schedule, required readings, and course assignments. These written documents provided the information regarding characteristics of each program and its courses. The Council’s reports also address the information about the MEXT programs such as the history of the programs, teachers’ feedback on the programs through the Ministry’s initiated survey, and achievements in as well as concerns about the programs from the hosts’ perspectives. Furthermore, to better understand the case study participants’ conceptions of EFL teaching (e.g., goals; assumptions), their classroom instruction, and their interests in the field, the researcher examined the documents that the participants created during the programs (e.g., the research projects; reflective journals [for some teachers]) and after the program (e.g., assignment documents and activity sheets in their lessons; school tests they developed). These reports provided the researcher with valuable opportunities to better understand teachers’ appropriation processes from multiple points of view.

**Reports by teachers**

Five focal teachers reported their classroom instruction at each school setting on an approximately monthly basis throughout the study. The main purpose of these self-reports was to explore the teachers’ practical and conceptual tools they employ in their daily teaching practices. They chose a specific lesson from the courses that they taught (e.g., English I; Writing; Communication) and reported about their classroom instruction upon
the completion of the class. The topics covered in the reports are: (1) goals of the lesson, (2) activities and the reasons for making the instructional decision, (3) assignments and the reasons behind the assignments, (4) interactions between the teacher and students, (5) language use, (6) self-evaluations of the lesson (e.g., successful and less successful aspects), (7) any teaching adjustments during the class and/or for the future lesson if any, (8) the degree of relevance between the program course work and the particular lesson, (9) information about students (e.g., grade level; ability of English; class size), (10) use of teaching resources (e.g., textbooks; a native English speaking assistant teacher; technology) (Appendix G). The format of the reports consisted of open-ended questions to make the research design more “holistic” and “contextual sensitive” (Patton, 2001).

Regarding the mode of the reports, the researcher initially asked the teachers to choose among the following options: (1) e-mail reporting by attachment, (2) keeping a written journal and mail it to the researcher regularly, or (3) audio-taped telephone conversation. All teachers chose to report either through email or mail. Once the teachers sent a report to the researcher, she exchanged e-mail messages to clarify and/or expand their comments. In this way, the reports created a space for negotiating meaning between the teachers and the researcher. The researcher hopes that this report technique allowed the teachers to critically reflect on their assumptions and also helped both the teachers and the researcher establish a rapport with one another. All conversation occurred in Japanese, which was the native language of the participants.
Interviews
Japanese teachers

In addition to teachers’ self-reports, the researcher further conducted two formal interviews with five selected teachers through email or phone conversations. The main purpose of the interviews was to better understand teachers’ perspectives on the issues examined in the questionnaire (first interview) as well as self-reports and classroom observations (second interview) in more depth. The topics covered are: (1) professional life in the school settings, (2) professional and educational background, (3) their visions as EFL teachers, (4) any factors influencing their visions, (5) professional experiences after the completion of the program, (6) professional and English ability, (7) any suggestions for fellow-teachers, the MEXT programs, and/or the sponsors of the programs (MEXT or Local Board of Education), (8) self-evaluations of their lessons, (9) students’ and institutional reactions to each teacher’s teaching view and practice, (10) their professional plans for the future, and (11) comments on their participation in the study (Appendix H). The interview questions developed by Gingrich (2003) offered specific ideas for constructing the interview questions. These interviews were “semi-structured,” that is, the researcher prepares an interview guide to further explore certain topics, but attempts to allow participants to offer their insights and information (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Merriam, 1998). After each interview, email or telephone interactions were conducted for clarification and/or elaboration upon their interview responses.
Program coordinators

Four coordinators of each MEXT program were also interviewed through face-to-face or telephone conversations. The main purposes of obtaining information from the program coordinators were to better understand the MEXT programs from the hosts’ points of view and to obtain another set of perspectives on Japanese teachers’ training experiences. The topics covered in these interviews were the following: (1) the goals and characteristics of the programs, (2) pedagogical modifications of the program if any (3) their expectations for participant teachers, (4) benefits and challenges in offering the programs, (5) the roles of the program coordinators and/or instructors, (6) characteristics of participant Japanese teachers, (7) suggestions for teachers regarding the challenges that teachers may face, (8) Japanese teachers’ professional development, (9) evaluation of the program, and (10) the roles of overseas in-service teacher training programs (Appendix I). Like the previous interview items for teachers, the interview questions developed by Gingrich (2003) as well as Morita (2002), offered specific ideas for constructing these interview questions. These interviews were also conducted in a semi-structured format. All interviews were tape-recorded with their permission. Several questions were further posed to some coordinators due to the need for clarification and/or elaboration upon specific issues.

School administrators

With the selected teachers’ permission, the researcher also conducted face-to-face interviews with the administrators in each focal teacher’s school. Teachers’ practices are always situated in a larger context, that is “a tacitly understood frameworks of norms,
expectations, and values that give meaning to all activities occurring in schools” (Windschitl, 2002, p. 150). To better understand the focal teachers’ appropriation processes within school culture and develop more effective teacher education programs, it was critical to interview a key stakeholder at the contexts that was school administrators in my study. The topics covered in the interviews were: (1) administrators’ views of teaching and learning, (2) opportunities of professional development for teachers, (3) responses to the new established national curriculum in Japan, (4) difficulties experienced by teachers and suggestions to them, (5) expectations for teachers and students, (6) characteristics of the school, (7) roles of school administrators, and (8) their professional background (Appendix J). These interviews were semi-structural and all interviews were tape-recorded with the participants’ permission.

**Classroom observations**

Another set of the data came from the classroom observations of selected teachers’ English teaching practices in each school setting. To validate teachers’ conceptions of teaching and practices documented in their questionnaire response and reports, the researcher collected data that represented “a firsthand encounter” with each participant (Merriam, 1998, p. 94). Due to the geographical distance between the researcher and the participants, it was practically impossible to observe all selected teachers’ practices throughout the study period. Therefore, observations were intensively conducted 2-3 times by visiting each school. It is worth noting that the plans of these classroom observations were made collaboratively with the teachers and the school administrators.
With regard to the researcher’s stance in conducting observations, she played a “peripheral membership role” as a participant observer in the class (Adler & Adler, 1994, cited in Angrosino & May de Perez, 2000, p. 677). That is, she was not actively involved in classroom activities, but established some level of membership with the teacher and students in the classroom (e.g., answering questions when asked).

Table 3.2 summarizes the research data collection methods, media used in the methods, main purpose of collecting data in methods, and data collection timing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Methods</th>
<th>Media Used in Methods</th>
<th>Main Purpose of Collecting Data in Methods</th>
<th>Data Collection Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires to teachers</td>
<td>Mail survey (or Email Attachment)</td>
<td>To examine: -useful aspects and challenges in the program -teachers’ perceptions of pedagogical application &amp; factors affecting the process (Research Question 1, 3 &amp; 4)</td>
<td>-Beginning of the study -Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>-Council reports -Program reports -Other documents Journals, Research projects Lesson plans, Curriculum, Assignment materials, School tests</td>
<td>To examine: -the tools the program made available to teachers -the goals, principles, &amp; practices stressed in the program -Japanese school culture (Research Question 4) -teachers’ conceptions of teaching &amp; practices (Research Question 2)</td>
<td>-Throughout the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with teachers</td>
<td>-Audio-taped -Face-to-face &amp; Telephone interviews -A total of 5 teachers</td>
<td>To examine: -teachers’ conceptions of teaching -factors affecting their appropriation process (Research Question 2 &amp; 4)</td>
<td>-Interview 1: Aug.-Oct. 2005 -Interview 2: March-May 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with program coordinators</td>
<td>-Face-to-face or Telephone interview -A total of 4 coordinators</td>
<td>To examine: -Goals, principles, and practices stressed in the program -the tools the program made available to teachers (Research Question 3 &amp; 4)</td>
<td>-Beginning of the study -Aug.- Sep.2005 -Once for each coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports by teachers</td>
<td>- Email attachment or Mail - A total of 5 teachers</td>
<td>To examine: -teachers’ conceptions of teaching &amp; practices -teachers’ appropriation process (Research Question 2 &amp; 3)</td>
<td>-Oct. - April 2005 -Monthly (2-5times)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Summary of Data Collection
Table 3.2 continued

| Teachers’ classroom observations (Pre- and Post-observation discussions) | - Field notes on lessons | To examine: -teachers’ conceptions of teaching & practices classroom instruction -teachers’ appropriation process (Research Question 2 & 3) | -2-3 classroom observations -2-3 pre-observation discussions -2-3 post-observation debriefings -Oct. 2005 |
| Interviews with school administrators | -Audio-taped face-to-face interviews | -To examine Japanese school culture (Research Question 4) | -Once for each administrator -Oct. 2005 |

**Data Collection Procedures**

This section describes the steps for administering two methodological strategies. That is, implementing the questionnaires first followed by qualitative methods through interviews, reports, and classroom observations. It also addresses some ethical issues that needed to be considered such as access to the participants and confidentiality of research data. Finally, how to establish validity and reliability involved in multiple data collection modes will be described.

**Questionnaire**

To maximize the return rate of questionnaires, the researcher followed a slightly revised five-phase administration process or Tailored Design suggested by Dillman (2000). This design is especially useful for self-administered surveys, since it takes into account not only general cases in implementing surveys but also each specific situation.
According to Dillman, multiple contacts with the participants are indispensable to achieve high response rates. The *Tailored Design*, therefore, suggests the five phases each of which has individual purposes as follows (p. 151):

1. a brief pre-notice letter to the respondent a few days prior to the questionnaire
2. a questionnaire mailing that includes a cover letter
3. a thank you postcard a few days to a week after the questionnaire
4. a replacement questionnaire sent to non-respondents 2-4 weeks after the previous questionnaire mailing
5. a final contact made by different mode of contact a week or so after the fourth contact (e.g., telephone; special delivery)

Before starting the first stage of these steps, the researcher first sent an access letter to the Councils on International Educational Exchange in the U.S. The main purpose for sending this letter was to gain the permission from the Councils to provide access to Japanese teachers of English who participated in the four U.S MEXT programs focused in this study. In the access letter, the researcher explained the characteristics of her research such as purposes, goals, the expected time, and the use of research findings. Upon receiving an agreement to this study from the Councils and an approval from an Ohio State University Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher distributed a prior notification letter to the research participants. The purpose of sending a pre-notice letter to the participants ahead of the questionnaire was “to provide a positive and timely notice that recipient will be receiving a request” to participate in a study (Dillman, 2000, p. 156).

Once pre-notice letters were distributed, the researcher mailed the questionnaire packet including a signed cover letter, questionnaire, and preaddressed and stamped
return envelope. In addition, to produce “a sense of reciprocal obligation” for higher response rate, incentives, which were coasters, were enclosed in each packet with the request (Dillman, 2000, p. 156). Approximately three weeks after the distribution of the questionnaire packet, a postcard was mailed to the teachers who had not responded yet of her request to politely remind them. Four weeks after the original 3 questionnaire mailing, the second questionnaire packet including a slightly revised cover letter, a replacement questionnaire, and an addressed and stamped return envelope were sent to the teachers who had not responded to the survey.

**Measurement Errors in Questionnaire: Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are of great concern in designing research instruments. Validity refers to “the defensibility of the inferences researchers make from the data collected through the use of an instrument” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000, p. 128). In this study, the researcher determined the content validity, the degree to which the instrument measures an intended content area, by expert judgment. Therefore, the draft form of questionnaires was presented to three groups of people, which included 4 experts in the field of (L2) teacher education, 2 doctoral students who had extensive knowledge about survey design, and 6 EFL teachers and/or doctoral students in the TESOL field who had EFL teaching experiences. The main purposes of conducting this field test were to check validity, suitability, and clarity of each item in the questionnaire instrument. Based on their feedback, the researcher revised the instrument.

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3 A final contact was not made to non-respondents through different modes because their telephone numbers (school, home) and email addresses were not available.
A second consideration of potential questionnaire error involves reliability. Reliability refers to “the consistency of the scores obtained” from the instrument (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). Reliability issues occur due to ambiguous instructions and item statements, differences in motivation, anxiety, different testing situations, and so forth. To create a reliable instrument, after completing the field tests with experts, the researcher administered a pilot test with 5 teachers who represented the target population but independent from the entire sample of the present study. The pilot test participants were, therefore, Japanese English teachers who attended the MEXT programs and were currently teaching EFL at the secondary school level in Japan. These teachers were asked to comment on appropriateness of expression, readability, approximate time to complete the questionnaire, general impressions and any other inadequacies of the instrument. Based on their comments, the researcher further revised the instrument.

**Report Procedures**

Among the teachers who indicated their willingness to volunteer for qualitative case studies in the questionnaire, the researcher purposefully selected 5 participants. Upon receiving their responses to the participation, the researcher contacted them by email to inform about her request and to express her appreciation of their participation in the second part of the study to the teachers. In addition, once again she carefully explained ethical issues such as “confidentiality” of the information that they provide and the “voluntary basis” of their participation in the study to the participants.

Once teachers chose a reporting mode (email, mail, or phone), they were asked to answer the questions on the report sheet and send it back to the researcher on a monthly
basis. In the case of email, the researcher sent the report sheet to the teachers by email attachment and asked them to regularly return it to her via attachment. Since this data collection method required immediate reactions rather than the retrospective interviews that the researcher conducted as a separate method, she carefully explained the importance of completing the task with their relatively recent memories (Morita, 2002). To receive the report on regular basis from the participants, the teachers and the researcher negotiated when they could send email or mail to her.

Each volunteer teacher who participated in this qualitative part of the study received a 100 dollar bookstore gift certificate as an honorarium to appreciate sharing their professional experiences with the researcher.

**Interview Procedures**

Interviewing is “one of the most common and powerful ways” “to understand our fellow human beings” (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Similarly, Merriam (1998) also points out that interviewing allows researchers to better understand another person’s perspectives. Therefore, for this study, separate from teachers’ reports, the researcher interviewed the selected teachers twice (e.g., once during the summer break or the fall semester, and once at the end of the study). In terms of data collection mode, the participants had several options such as email interactions and telephone conversation. When they preferred email interactions, the researcher sent the interview questions to the teachers by email attachment and asked them to return their responses to her by attachment. When interviews were conducted via phone, the interview conversations were tape-recorded.
with the teachers’ permission. After each interview, further questions were provided to the participants in order to clarify or elaborate on the issues discussed in the interview.

**Observations Procedures**

Another critical data came from the observations of teachers’ daily teaching practices. In order to validate the data obtained from teachers’ self-reports, interviews and questionnaire, the researcher carried out several observations of focal teachers’ classroom instruction with their and school administrators’ permission. In the middle of the semester, the researcher visited each teacher’s teaching site and observed his/her classroom teaching two to three times. The researcher’s focus of the observation was mainly placed on teachers’ teaching instruction and their use of pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program. During the observation period, the researcher took field notes to record the activities and interactions that occurred in their classroom lessons. Pre-and post-observation discussions were also conducted to gain the information about the classes (e.g., goals; students) and to examine the teachers’ conceptions of teaching.

**Trustworthiness of Qualitative Inquiry and Ethics**

Many scholars have discussed the standards to be used for judging the credibility of qualitative research (Glesne, 1999; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Janesick, 2000; Lather, 1986b). This study followed Lincoln and Guba (1985) who developed the notion of “trustworthiness” in qualitative research. They provide five methodological techniques to establish trustworthiness: “credibility,” “transferability,” “dependability,” and
“confirmability,” and the use of reflective journal (pp. 236-244). Among these criteria, Guba and Lincoln express that member checking is the single most crucial technique to verify multiple realities that participants present (Guba & Lincon, 1989).

Credibility is parallel to internal validity, but instead of pursuing an objective reality it focuses on “the match between the constructed realities of respondents and those realities as represented by the evaluator” (p. 237). This study’s credibility lies in its triangulation of multiple methods (survey, interviews, self-reports, observations, and documents) and multiple data sources (Japanese teachers, instructors, and school administrators) (see Table 3.3 for the summary of this triangulation). In addition, through peer debriefing, confirming evidence (negative case analysis), and member checking, the researcher collaboratively analyzed the data with her peers and qualitative case study participants.

Transferability is used as parallel to external validity or generalizability. In the interpretive paradigm, however, it depends on “the degree to which salient conditions overlap of match (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, p. 241). In this present study, by providing readers with “thick descriptions” of the examined cases (e.g., qualitative case study participants; data collection and analysis process), the researcher attempted to make the study possible to replicate and extend her research.

Dependability is parallel to reliability (consistency) in the nomological tradition. Due to the open and emergent nature of qualitative research methods, the researcher experienced slight changes such as additions and omissions (e.g., data collection
Therefore, she attempted to enhance consistency of this study by providing an explicit and detailed description of its design features by tracking methodological changes for outside reviewers.

Confirmability relates to objectivity in the conventional paradigm. It concerns the issue of whether the findings of the study are based on “contexts and persons apart from the evaluator” (p. 243). Similar to credibility, the researcher provided the qualitative case study participants with several opportunities to check or confirm my interpretations of the findings through interactions via e-mail.

Reflexivity involves rethinking ourselves and uncovering unconscious biases that distort data (Durham, 1998) and leads to establishing more trustworthy data (Lather 1986b). The researcher, therefore, kept a journal throughout the study not only to form data but also to critically reflect her subjectivity questioning, for example, the research questions in the interviews and reports, her assumptions on the English language teaching and learning, and her interpretations of data.

Regarding ethical issues, Lather (1986a) points out that reciprocity is “give-and take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power” (p. 263). In this study, to establish fair reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the participants was not so easy, since they were either experienced teacher trainers in the teacher education programs, experienced Japanese teachers of English, or administrators in secondary schools in Japan. However, the researcher hopes that reciprocity was established to some extent when the teachers were offered opportunities to reflect on their teaching practices and to voice their concerns through interactions with her.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Methods</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Sources</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Program coordinators</td>
<td>School administrators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settings</td>
<td>Program A 6 months</td>
<td>Program B 12 months</td>
<td>Individual secondary schools in Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspectives</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Program coordinators</td>
<td>School administrators</td>
<td>MEXT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Summary of Triangulation

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this study involved both inductive and deductive reasoning processes. That is, patterns, categories and themes that emerged, and theories developed about the examined issues were grounded in the data (Charmaz, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Patton, 2001). At the same time, the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2 also informed the data collection, analysis, and interpretation in both the qualitative case study and the questionnaire. Because of the use of combined qualitative and quantitative method strategies, the integration of the two types of research occurred at various stages of the study such as data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2002).

**Qualitative Case Study**

By combining qualitative data analysis suggested by Patton (2001), Merriam (1998), and Ericson (1986), the researcher broadly conceptualized the analytic procedure based on the following levels of analysis: (1) organizing the data, (2) developing patterns,
categories, and themes, (3) generating emergent assertions, (4) testing the assertions, and (5) interpreting findings. To build “an empirically based and theoretically informed case portrait” of each teacher (Johnson, et al., 2003, p. 151), the transcripts of the interviews, field notes of classroom observations, and open-ended questions in the questionnaires were collaboratively coded by the researcher and peer debriefers, who were a doctoral student in the Education field with extensive knowledge about qualitative research approach and the school/national environments in Japan and an expert on the teacher education field.

Organizing data was an ongoing, creative, and decision-making process. To focus and process a large amount of materials, it was critical for the researcher to analyze data in conjunction with data collection (Merriam, 1998). While conducting the inventory, the researcher also started with the first level of coding of raw data. That is, “assigning shorthand designations [e.g., single words, letters, numbers, and phrases] to the data” to “identify information about the data and interpretive constructs related to analysis” (Merriam, 1998, p. 164). In addition, the researcher kept track of her thoughts, speculations, and hunches in her memos as she immersed herself in the data. By conducting “within-case analysis” of individual focal teacher, the researcher first created each case’s summary (Merriam, 1998, p. 194). After analyzing individual cases, “cross-case analysis” was conducted by comparing and contrasting across cases, adding complexity to the interpretations of the data (Merriam, 1998, p. 194).

More specifically, the coding system was developed by following Johnson et al.’s (2003) study. Before coding the transcribed data, the researcher divided the text into any bracketed segment based on a theme. A segment was made up of a short and long
interaction between the researcher and each teacher, and included various and overlapping codes. If codes were overlapped (e.g., school mandate and school goals), they were coded under the same name (e.g., school). The categories used in the data analysis were “pedagogical tools,” “teaching areas,” “source of tools,” and “problems” which all derived from activity theory (Grossman, et al., 1999; Johnson et al., 2003).

In terms of pedagogical tools, to understand the tool-mediated nature of teachers’ instruction, we used two types of tools, practical and conceptual. According to activity theory, practical tools are principles, frameworks, and ideas about teaching which guide teachers’ instructional decisions. Practical tools, on the other hand, are strategies and practices which have more immediate instructional purposes. Tools identified in the teachers’ instruction in the current study include problem-solving learning, collaborative learning, and language use in real life situation for conceptual tools, as well as group work activities, visual/auditory aids, worksheets, and quiz for practical tools. In addition, teaching areas or “curricular strands” (Johnson et al., 2003, p. 152) in which they employed particular tools included reading, writing, speaking/listening, language, management, and lesson plan/syllabus, and professional development. The source of tools explained where the teachers had learned of a particular tool, including prior experiences, colleagues, school culture, the MEXT program, other professional development opportunities, and national policy. Finally, to understand the teachers’ goal-oriented action, we also identified what problems they attempted to solve through their use of particular tool. The problems they attempted to deal with were, for example, students’ learning, students’ interests, the application of tools, entrance examinations, teacher identities, and school related issues (e.g., tests; goals).
The followings are an example of how we coded the data. During a post-observation interview, one of the case study teachers was asked about his grammar lesson to the 12th graders:

**Researcher:** You instructed your students to write points [of today’s lesson] in either “Key Pints” section or “Margin” section on the worksheet you made. Is there any specific reason why you asked them to do so?

**Teacher:** I took over this class from the previous instructor all of the sudden [due to his physically illness]. After the following two teaching practices, the students will take a mid-term exam. Therefore, I thought that I needed to do something similar to what the previous instructor did [using the same grammar textbook]. Otherwise, the students would be in trouble.”

In this quotation, the researcher and the peer debriefers identified two tools, “worksheet” and “writing points in Key Points and Margin.” Because these tools served a “local and immediate utility” (Grossman et al., 1999, p. 14), we coded them as practical. The teacher attributed his instructional decision to the contexts of his school in which he had to be a substitute teacher and prepare his students for an institutional based mandatory examination. Therefore, we coded “school requirement/expectation” as the source of the tools. The areas of his instruction were “school based assessment” and “language (English grammar and expressions)” that he focused on in his use of the worksheet. He also attempted to solve the following problems through the use of the following practical tools: “the school mandate,” “protecting his students for failure,” and “students’ learning about language. The code, “students’ learning,” was assigned based on his subsequent comments on the textbook he had to use in the lesson, “Students would not learn if a text is not suitable to their English level and if they deal with the multiple choice questions by recalling just symbols of the answers [e.g., A and B].”
By carefully assigning these codes, the researcher identified the teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices, the settings associated with their appropriation process, supports and constraints that they created in the process, and the goal oriented nature of the teachers’ tool use.

During the coding process, the data were reviewed multiple times throughout the study and salient pattern, themes, and tentative categories were discovered. The number of codes which emerged from the data was eventually counted to see the frequencies. The purpose of this counting was to understand the tendency of the teachers’ practices within the contexts of school, not to compare or contrast among them. After certain recurring themes became apparent, more theoretical categories were generated both from the data and the relevant literature. Then, relations between the categories were further explored.

Once the data were coded in terms of salient themes and categories, tentative assertions about each individual teacher and across the teachers were generated. These assertions were then tested by closely examining the data obtained from multiple data sources, and were confirmed, revised, or rejected. Through comparing and contrasting the assertions, theories that seemed to explain the similarities and differences across teachers’ cases were developed. When theories that seemed to explain the case of one teacher did not hold truth in the case of another, alternative explanations were sought.

To report the findings of the qualitative data, the researcher followed Ericson’s (1986) approach. The researcher provided readers with a “particular description,” “general description” and “interpretive commentary” to display the “evidentiary warrant for the assertions” that she made (pp.146-149). According to Ericson, “particular description” is narrative vignettes or direct quotes from the collected data and is used to
warrant key assertions. General description is global patterns in the units of data analysis and necessary to provide readers with typicality or atypicality of the particular matter. To help readers connect between these particular and general descriptions, interpretive commentary was included in the report. Not only commonalities but also differences among cases were identified and discussed.

**Questionnaire**

Data analysis of the questionnaire involved deductive reasoning where data were analyzed according to an existing framework. That is, the researcher interpreted the data which constituted manageable variables, and hence used statistics to analyze the data. The data obtained from closed-ended questions, in particular, were analyzed by using descriptive statistics such as frequency, central tendency (e.g., mean), percentage, and standard deviation. With regards to categorical data such as teachers’ demographic information, the researcher also nominally summarized them. Open-ended questions in the questionnaire (part 3 & 4), however, were inductively analyzed following a tradition of qualitative research (see the previous section for inductive analysis).

Part 1 in the questionnaire identified teachers’ professional background such as years of teaching experiences, school types, class size, educational degrees they earned, and type of MEXT programs in which they participated. By using the measurement scales such as nominal, ordinal, and ratio, the researcher assigned numbers to individual categories to show the differences involved in each category. She also statistically summarized these categorical data through frequency, central tendency (e.g., mean; median), percentage, and standard deviation.
Part 2 in the questionnaire examined professional development for Japanese teachers of English. All responses obtained in this part were numerically summarized, organized using frequency, percentage, mean, and variability (standard deviation and range).

Parts 3 and 4 in the questionnaire explored teachers’ perceptions of their teaching conceptions and their application of practical and theoretical tools presented in the programs to their own teaching sites. Although most of the questions in these parts consisted of open-ended questions, several closed-ended questions (e.g., Likert Scale items) were included. Therefore, the latter data were also analyzed based on frequency, percentage, mean, and variability.

**Integrations of Qualitative and Quantitative Data**

Integrating both qualitative and quantitative data occurred at several stages in the process of this project, which were the data collection (mixing open- and closed-questions on the questionnaire) as well as the data analysis and interpretation of all the findings of the study. At the stage of data collection, to select the participants of the subsequently conducted case study, qualitative themes and quantitative numbers needed to be combined and compared within and across the questionnaire respondents. At the stage of data analysis and interpretation, the researcher also integrated the findings of both qualitative and quantitative data to provide more comprehensive views of teachers’ appropriation processes. In the final chapter of this dissertation, the researcher described the findings of each data according to the following guiding research questions of the research:
1. What aspects of the U.S. in-service teacher education programs do all the Japanese secondary school EFL teachers consider the most useful for their current teaching professions, and what areas in the programs did they suggest more improvement?

2. What are the teaching conceptions and practices of Japanese EFL teachers who participated in the U.S. in-service teacher education programs?

3. What various degrees of appropriation take place when Japanese EFL teachers in case study adopt conceptual and practical tools presented in the U.S. teacher education programs into their classroom instruction?

4. What sources and activity settings have influenced the degrees of Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation?
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:
QUESTIONNAIRE TEACHERS’ LEARNING ACROSS ACTIVITY SETTINGS

Since the mid 1990s, research on L2 teachers’ learning to teach has revealed an incongruity of values, motives, and practices between different settings that comprise their teacher education (Almarza, 1996; Freeman, 1996; Richards, 1996; Smith, 1996). These settings include elementary and secondary school course work, university level course work, sites for field experiences, in-service teacher training programs, and teaching sites at school. The sources of this disjunction in the L2 field are many, including a different emphasis of practices and institutional goals between university level teacher education programs and teaching sites at school (e.g., Gebhard, 1998), national policies and experiences in schools (Lamie, 2001; Pacek, 1996), teachers’ professional socialization in school contexts and the nationally promoted educational reform (e.g., Sato, 2001), and their personal beliefs about teaching and learning and university teacher education programs (Almarza, 1996; Freeman, 1996; Richards, 1996).

To unify these diverse findings (Grossman et al., 1999), I draw on activity theory as a framework of the present study and attempt to integrate these findings from a larger perspective. A fundamental assumption of activity theory is that a person’s learning is constructed through problem-solving carried out in particular settings whose social
structures are embedded in historical, cultural, and social conditions (Cole, 1985; Grossman et al., 1999; Lantolf, 2000 & 2006). Because of its emphasis on settings for teachers’ learning, activity theory links their practices with teachers’ specific goals and the social and cultural factors that mediate their development in given contexts. In the case of the group of Japanese teachers of English that I examined in the present study, their learning to teach is a complex phenomenon since it involved the relationship within the native settings (e.g., teaching and learning sites at schools; university level teacher education course work) but also across the settings between two countries (e.g., U.S. MEXT programs; teaching sites in Japan) that have unique social, cultural, and historical conditions embedded in each context.

Before exploring the case study teachers’ learning to teach in the specific contexts in Chapter 5, this chapter takes a broader view of all participants’ learning by describing questionnaire results. The data were derived from 66 Japanese teachers of English who participated in either 6 month or 12 month Japanese government-sponsored in-service teacher education (MEXT) program in the U.S. from 1998 to 2003. This chapter particularly addresses the first research question: what aspects of the U.S. in-service teacher education programs do all the Japanese secondary school EFL teachers consider the most useful for their current teaching professions and what areas in the programs did they suggest more improvement? This chapter also explores teachers’ use of pedagogical tools learned during their training in their classrooms and the challenges or concerns they faced in applying the tools. As discussed earlier, these teachers’ professional development involves multiple activity settings whose values and practices may or may not be consistent with one another. From an activity theory perspective,
therefore, the issues such as teachers’ appropriation of particular pedagogical tools and the relationship between the activity settings and teachers’ thinking, especially across the two different linguistic and cultural environments, are central in this study.

As discussed in Chapter 3, this study employed a combined quantitative and qualitative methods approach by collecting diverse types of data (Creswell, 2003). I systematically collected questionnaire data during the first phase and then obtained qualitative data using case study methods (e.g., interviews; classroom observations; self-reports) during the second phase. The primary purpose of employing questionnaires in the first stage was to examine general characteristics about Japanese EFL teachers’ learning after the MEXT program. With a larger view of the examined issues, I then attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in teachers’ learning to teach by examining individual cases which will be discussed in the following chapter.

This chapter begins with teachers’ professional background (Part I of the questionnaire) and then activity settings associated with their conceptions of ELT teaching (Part III). In illustrating these two aspects first, I provide background information about the teachers’ experiences of learning to teach. As activity theory assumes, individuals’ learning is simultaneously unique to individuals and socially co-constructed. This chapter then turns to teachers’ appropriation of new pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program for use in their own school contexts. In particular, it focuses on their perceptions of the strengths and challenges of the MEXT programs (Part
II), uses of pedagogical tools (Part IV), and challenges in applying the tools (Part IV). In doing so, I aim to describe the complex nature of Japanese EFL teachers’ learning and professional development across activity settings in the U.S. and Japan.

**Teachers’ Professional Background**

The questionnaire was distributed to 103 teachers in summer 2005. Among them, 12 teachers were not eligible to answer the questionnaire due to their current roles inside and outside school (e.g., working as a supervisor/teacher educator in the Local Board of Education; working as an administrator but not as an English teacher). Out of 91 teachers who were currently working as a junior or senior high school English teacher, 66 returned the questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 72%. Among the respondents, 43 teachers (65.2%) worked at senior high schools and 23 (34.8%) at junior high schools. Their schools were located throughout all regions of Japan, including Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa. All participants were experienced Japanese EFL teachers, with experience ranging from 7 to 27 years ($M = 16.8$). While approximately four-fifths of the teachers ($N = 52$) were male, one-fifth was female ($N = 14$).

Half the respondents ($N = 33$) participated in a 6-month program (university A and either C or D) and the rest ($N = 33$) attended a 12-month program at university B. Furthermore,

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4 Open-ended questions about teachers’ principles of English teaching and learning in Part III were not reported in this dissertation due to the purpose of including the questions in the questionnaire. That is, to select case study participants for the second part of the study.
to participate the program, 49 teachers (74.2%) were chosen by the Board of Education in the prefecture where they were working and/or by the principle at their schools, whereas 15 teachers (22.7%) applied for it on their own.

**Teachers’ Attitude toward Professional Development**

Activity theory suggests that the history that each teacher brings to settings and social contexts of their teaching affect their learning to teach (e.g., Grossman, et al., 1999). To examine these aspects, therefore, I explored to what extent all the Japanese teachers of English in my study consider various relevant activity settings comprising teacher education shaped their conceptions of teaching. Table 4.1 presents the results for teachers’ response to the question above. The settings included in the question were teachers’ formal education at secondary schools, undergraduate/graduate level coursework, teaching practicum in pre-service teacher education programs, other in-service training opportunities, sites of teaching at schools, and the national policies of English curriculum promoted by the Ministry. As can be seen, the percentages for “affected a great deal” ranged from 6.1 - 68.2 percent, indicating that teachers found certain settings more relevant than others to construct their beliefs about English language teaching (ELT). For example, the majority of teachers considered “teaching experiences at school environments such as relationship with students, parents, administrators and colleagues” as the most influential setting (68.2% for “affected a great deal” and 22.7% for “affected to some extent). They also perceived that “in-service professional development opportunities” such as domestic short-terms trainings (e.g., in/outside school; local contexts), overseas MEXT programs, and conferences in the ELT field were another
important setting (56.1% for “affected a great deal” and 36.4% for “affected to some extent). Therefore, in the teachers’ opinions, these two settings, teaching sites at schools and professional development opportunities after they started full-time EFL teaching, had the greatest impact on their beliefs about English teaching. In contrast, teachers’ responses to other settings were relatively low. For example, there is a great drop-off for “the national policy described in The Course of Study.” A majority of teachers view the national policy as being either “affected to some extent” (33.3%) or “affected only a little” (48.5%). In addition, the percentages for their formal education settings such as junior and senior high schools ranged from 30.3% for “affected to some extent,” 33.3% for “affected only a little,” to 27.3% for “did not affect at all.” The same tendency can be seen for “teaching practicum” teachers experienced during their pre-service teacher education programs. The percentages for their responses to the setting ranged from 24.6% for “affected to some extent,” 32.3% for “affected only a little,” to 33.8% for “did not affect at all.” These findings indicate that teachers have a mixed feeling about the influence of secondary school courses and teaching practicum on their ELT beliefs. Similarly, teachers view “undergraduate level course work (including teacher education) and graduate level work if any” as less influential, with responses ranging from 22.7% for “affected to some extent,” 30.3% for “affected only a little,” to 39.4% for “did not affect at all.”
To examine these activity settings in more detail, teachers were further asked to describe the most influential event(s) that shaped their conceptions of ELT teaching by answering an open-ended question. Similar to the results illustrated above, they most frequently mentioned the critical roles that “in-service professional development opportunities” and “teaching sites at schools” have played to construct their English teaching beliefs. Interestingly, the most frequently noted setting was in-service professional development opportunities (n = 45). In particular, 27 teachers among them commented that the U.S. MEXT programs affected their teaching beliefs the most. Their
learning experiences in the programs such as “second/foreign language methodology courses,” “interactions with other ELT professionals” (e.g., instructors; other participants), “research projects,” and “English language development opportunities” seem to contribute to their conceptions of teaching. In addition, 18 teachers considered other professional development opportunities before and after the MEXT programs as influential. They especially had positive feelings about prefectual level study meetings in which they presented their research and also learned teaching ideas from other ELT teachers. Among them, some teachers (n = 5) commented that learning in the MEXT programs allowed them to realize “the importance to continue to have professional development opportunities.” Furthermore, 24 teachers considered that teaching to students and working with colleagues such as native English speaking assistant language teachers and experienced teachers as most influential events that shaped their ELT beliefs.

These findings suggest that teachers strongly believe that their sites of teaching at schools and in-service teacher development opportunities were the key settings which helped them construct their beliefs about ELT teaching. The open-ended question further revealed that they especially valued the U.S. MEXT programs among the activity settings. Teachers’ comments on school contexts also suggest that they highly valued “teacher-generated experience and knowledge” (Shimahra, 2002, p.24) by interacting with students and colleagues such as ALTs and more experienced teachers. In contrast to the widely acknowledged wisdom in the teacher education field arguing for the impacts of “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975, p. 61) for teachers’ learning to teach (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Smith, 1996; Woods, 1996), the teachers in the present study did not consider learning experiences at secondary schools as highly influential on their
conceptions of teaching. One possible explanation for this result is that these teachers may have been exposed to ELT teaching approaches in their formal schooling as an EFL learner that differed from the kinds of approaches currently advocated by the Japanese Ministry of Education. In fact, a handful of teachers critiqued their English learning experiences when they were secondary school students. In addition, all the participants in my study were experienced EFL teachers, with teaching experience ranging from 7 to 27 years. Therefore, activity settings such as secondary school courses, pre-service teacher education course work, and teaching practicum constituted learning experiences that occurred a relatively long time ago. This may have created difficulties for them to contrast the settings to others that they experienced rather recently (e.g., the MEXT programs). Nevertheless, despite a wide range of teachers’ responses to activity settings, these settings examined in the study were more or less relevant to their construction of their ELT teaching beliefs.

In the next sections, I will focus on the two key settings, the U.S. MEXT programs and their teaching sites at schools, to explore teachers’ transitional experiences from the contexts of the programs to their teaching sites in Japanese school systems. Drawing on activity theory, foci of the questionnaires were placed on the settings of their learning to teach and their goals, pedagogical tools available to the particular settings, and relevant cultural and historical aspects of teaching in Japan.
Useful Aspects of the Programs

The results of teachers’ perceptions of their appropriation of new pedagogical tools are described in the following order: (1) the strengths and challenges of the MEXT programs, (2) uses of pedagogical tools, and (3) challenges in appropriating the tools.

The first question addresses teachers’ perception on the aspects of the MEXT programs they considered most useful in their current teaching contexts. The examination of these aspects stems from my interest in how the teachers understand the relationship between activity settings of their school and the MEXT program, each of which has particular linguistic, social, and cultural environments. The question included two areas: (1) How useful were the language development opportunities throughout the program for your current English teaching practices? and (2) How useful were the pedagogical tools and their application to their classroom teaching? Table 4.2 shows teacher reports of language development opportunities. The percentages for “very useful” and “somewhat useful” are considerably higher than “not very useful” and “not useful at all” in most of the areas, indicating that, in general, teachers had positive feelings about their language development opportunities throughout the programs. In particular, the area of listening skills had high percentage (95.5%)\(^5\), indicating that teachers considered the learning opportunities for listening skills the most beneficial in their teaching practices. Another area that also had a high percentage of “useful” responses was speaking skills (89.4%). In addition, although there was a slight drop-off in terms of reading skills (86.4%) and writing skills (86.3%), these responses were still positive. It is worth noting that a higher

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\(^5\) To clarify the discussion of the data, teacher responses will be collapsed into two categories, “useful” and “not useful” by placing “very useful” and “somewhat useful” into the “useful” category and “not very useful” and “not useful at all” into “not useful” one.
percentage of teachers reported “very useful” for writing (53%) than that for reading (45.5%). There was another slight drop-off for vocabulary learning (81.8%), but teachers still viewed this area useful for their instruction. A variety of language development opportunities provided by the programs such as ESL courses, a research project, and extracurricular activities (CIIEE, 2001 & 2003) may have contributed to their positive responses to English learning on the whole. Compared to other areas, however, the percentages of teachers reporting grammar as “useful” was relatively low (43.8%). Only a handful of teachers considered the area to be “very useful” (14.1%). To account for low interest in this area, I will present detailed accounts of teacher learning in later in this chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4. Very Useful (%)</th>
<th>3. Somewhat useful (%)</th>
<th>2. Not very useful (%)</th>
<th>1. Not useful at all (%)</th>
<th>Median(^a)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening skills</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking skills</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading skills</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar(^a)</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(^a\) N = 65

Table 4.2: Percentages and summary statistics of teachers’ reports of usefulness in language development opportunities during the MEXT program (N = 66)
Table 4.3 shows the teachers’ reports of the usefulness of the MEXT programs’ presentation of pedagogical tools and their application in their classroom instruction. As can be seen, the overall percentage for “very useful” and “somewhat useful” is relatively high, indicating that teachers generally considered program tools useful in their current teaching. An overwhelming majority of teachers, for example, favored opportunities to learn cultural and social aspects of the U.S. (97%). The discrepancy between “very useful” (77.3%) and “somewhat useful” (19.7%) responses indicates that teachers felt strongly about the value of the knowledge for EFL teaching in their home settings. As they further explained in an open-ended question, they made use of this knowledge “to promote students’ cross-cultural understanding” and also “to motivate them to learn English.” A majority of teachers also indicated positive feelings about the opportunities to reflect on English teaching practices and beliefs developed previously in the programs (96.8%). A higher percentages for “very useful” (61.9%) compared to “somewhat useful” (34.9%) also indicates teachers’ positive feelings about this tool. Furthermore, although there was a slight drop-off in percentage, many teachers favored the following activities: learning conceptual tools in the English language teaching field (86.3%), classroom observations in local schools and ESL programs (83.4%), discussions of English language teaching (ELT) issues with other professionals (80.3%), a research project on ELT issues required by the Ministry (81.8%), and learning practical tools in English language teaching and learning (78.7%). Among these tools, teachers’ responses to “classroom observations” demonstrate a sharp discrepancy between “very useful” (56.1%) and “somewhat useful” (27.3%), indicating that teachers found the tools
beneficial to their teaching practice. The findings in Table 4.3 indicate the teachers’ perceptions of the critical role these aspects of the programs may play in their professional development and classroom instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4. very useful (%)</th>
<th>3. Somewhat useful (%)</th>
<th>2. Not very useful (%)</th>
<th>1. Not useful at all (%)</th>
<th>Median(^a)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. culture &amp; society</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection(^a)</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Observations</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual tools</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion about ELT</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical tools</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application consideration</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching practicum</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(^a\) N = 65

Table 4.3: Percentages and summary statistics of teachers’ reports of the usefulness of program-sponsored pedagogical tools (N = 66)

There was a drop-off in the percentage when the Japanese teachers were asked to consider if the program enabled them in applying the pedagogical tools to their teaching settings in Japan. Compared to other aspects of the programs discussed earlier, teachers’
responses to application-related areas were more widely distributed along the scale. For example, when asked whether to consider and discuss the application of the pedagogical tools to their own teaching sites was useful, 36.4% of the teachers responded “very useful,” 34.8% “somewhat useful,” and 25.8% “not very useful.” Although a relatively high percent of teachers considered the tool to be valuable, when asked to consider the tool’s relevance to their institutional contexts, the results indicate that their level of utility declined. With regards to the teaching practicum to try out the new tools presented in the course work, teachers’ responses were also highly variable, with responses ranging from “very useful” (26.2%), “somewhat useful” (41.0%), to “not very useful” (31.1%). This result indicates that they consider teaching practicum less favorable compared to other aspects of the programs. One of the possible explanations of teachers’ less favorable responses to this tool may be due to few teaching opportunities that teachers had to try out the new pedagogical tools during the programs: one-time micro-teaching at the 6 month program and observation-based teaching practicum at the 12 month program.

Taken together, these results indicate that overall the teachers considered the pedagogical tools presented in the program to be useful, but not necessarily useful in their current English teaching contexts. High percentages for “U.S. culture and society,” “reflection” on their teaching practices and beliefs, and “conceptual tools” about English teaching and learning show that these experienced teachers believed they benefited from being exposed to these pedagogical tools. However, by closely examining the results in the table, it is clear that teachers’ responses for “very useful” vary considerably depending on the tools. Specifically their reactions for usefulness ranged from 26.2 percent to 77.3 percent. Notable are results for application such as “application
consideration” and “teaching practicum.” Teachers responded less favorably to these items as compared to other tools. Teacher education scholars who draw on activity theory have discussed the issues of a disjuncture between the values and practices in the different activity settings in which teachers learn to teach (Grossman et al. 1999; Johnson, et al., 2003; Newell, et al., 2001). Given that many teachers considered learning both theoretical and practical tools to be useful in their classroom instruction, the lower percentages for application suggest that Japanese teachers may face similar challenges in putting these ideas into their actual classroom instruction when crossing the two different linguistic, social, and cultural settings. EFL teachers’ challenges of a transfer from L2 teacher education programs in the Inner Circles such as the U. S. (Kachru, 1982) to the realities of practices in their home countries have also been of concern among researchers (e.g., Lamie, 2001; Liu, 1999; Pacek, 1996). In addition, given the fact that teachers had limited opportunities to try out new tools during the programs, their attitude toward application aspects may be partly due to the less focus on teaching practicum in the programs. More detailed explanation of the results of application aspects will be discussed the following sections.

Aspects Teachers Desired to See Improved

Figure 4.1 addresses the second research question, regarding what areas the teachers desire to see developed more in the programs. The purpose of examining this question is to understand teachers’ perspectives on the relationship between activity settings of the MEXT programs and their school contexts. As in the case of useful aspects described before, this question was also examined in light of (1) language development
opportunities and (2) pedagogical tools and their application. Multiple choice questions were used, so the data are the percentages of teachers’ reports for desiring various aspects of the programs. As Figure 4.1 shows, the percentage varies depending on the area or domain of English language skill. For example, a relatively high percentage of teachers (68.2%, n = 45) reported that speaking was the area they would like to have developed more in their programs. In addition, 60.6 percent of teachers (n = 40) reported that listening was another area they had hoped the program would provide more. Considering that the teacher perceived listening and speaking as most useful components of the programs, these results show that there is a gap between what teachers perceived to be useful and what they desired to see improved. However, this gap can be explained from EFL teachers’ perspective as non-native English speakers. That is, while teachers found the opportunities to develop oral skills useful, they appeared to view the progress of their language knowledge along the “interlanguage” continuum between the native language and the target language (Brown, 2000; Ellis, 2001; Lightbown & Spada, 2003). Therefore, while teachers indicated that language learning opportunities in the programs were useful, they still desired further opportunities to develop their skills for their classroom instruction. In fact, the results of teachers’ use of pedagogical tools, which will be discussed later, reveal that teachers expressed mixed feelings about their professional self. While gaining confidence in their English skills as a result of the programs, they also referred to themselves as “teacher as a language learner.” As the goals of the secondary school English curriculum in Japan have shifted toward communicative-oriented teaching
and learning as a result of the national reforms, teachers’ desire to further develop their language skills is understandable. Hence, they saw the areas of speaking and listening worth further development.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of respondents desiring to receive more instruction in English language skills in various domains (N = 66)

There was a drop-off with regards to writing, but some teachers still felt it necessary to develop the area further (36.4%, n = 24). Only 27.3 and 22.7 percent of teachers agree that they desired to further develop vocabulary and reading skills respectively. When considered in conjunction with the results reported in Table 4.2, where a majority of teachers responded that vocabulary and reading skills are either “very useful” or “somewhat useful,” results here indicate that, in general, teachers were more likely to find the two areas satisfying for their current teaching practices. Moreover, the
percentages with respect to pronunciation (18.2%) and grammar (16.7%) were low. The results for pronunciation were consistent across Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1, suggesting that the teachers appear to be satisfied with what the programs offered in this area. With regards to grammar, however, although many teachers perceived the area to be “not very useful” (45.3%) and “somewhat useful” (29.7%) in Table 4.2, the findings in Figure 4.1 suggests that teachers may have low expectations for opportunities to learn about grammar in the overseas programs. As discussed earlier, during their own early schooling the majority of teachers in this study were most likely exposed to the traditional teaching approach which emphasizes translation and grammar-focused teaching and learning. Thus, if the history that teachers bring to their classroom instruction and the curriculum reforms are viewed as settings in their learning to teach, as activity theory assumes, this low percentage for grammar can be partly accounted for by their low interest in the area.

Figure 4.2 presents the results for teachers’ response to items regarding the need for more instruction on pedagogical tools and their application. Teacher responses ranged from 3 percent to 51.5 percent, indicating that their desire widely varies. For example, approximately half of the teachers (51.5%) reported an interest in further instruction in “testing of students’ English proficiency” in oral communication, reading, and writing and in developing “practical tools about English teaching methodology” (48.5%). In addition, conceptual ideas about (English language) teaching and learning (30.3%) and cultural and social aspects of the U.S. (28.8%) are other areas in which some teachers desired more instruction. Since a majority of teachers found the areas such as practical ideas, conceptual tools, and social and cultural aspects of the US useful in their current teaching contexts as demonstrated in Table 4.3, there was a gap between what teachers
found useful and what they had hoped to develop during the program. That is, while some aspects, such as practical ideas (e.g., methodology) were positively evaluated, participants judged practical tools important enough to require additional development and emphasis in their programs.

Approximately one-third of the participants (34.8%) indicated that they wanted more opportunities to consider the application of pedagogical tools presented in their programs to their native teaching contexts. As will be explained later, teachers reported a
variety of factors that caused challenges in their efforts to apply the pedagogical tools to their daily teaching practices in Japan. In addition, a lower percentage of teachers (22.7%) reported a need to have more practicum opportunities. As illustrated in Table 4.3, teachers’ responses to the usefulness of the tool for their current teaching were spread to various degrees (“very useful”, 26.2%; “somewhat useful,” 41%; and “not very useful, “31.1%). These findings seem to suggest that, although some teachers are satisfied with their experiences of teaching practicum, there are teachers who desired more opportunities to try out the pedagogical tools in an actual classroom and those who did not expect such opportunities in the MEXT programs. As teachers pointed out, the unique cross cultural aspects involved in the teachers’ learning to teach (e.g., teaching ESL students in the U.S. and EFL students in Japan) may have contributed to these complex patterns in the results. Few teachers reported an interest in more time to reflect on their previously developed English teaching beliefs and practices (13.6%). They also had diminishing interest in classroom observations at the local schools and ESL program(s) (10.6%) and discussion of L2 teaching and learning issues with fellow teachers (7.6%). These results for “reflection,” “classroom observations,” and “discussion with other teachers” were consistent across Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2, suggesting that teachers appear to be satisfied with these areas presented in the programs.

**Pedagogical Tools Teachers Use**

The questionnaire also included both closed- and open-ended questions regarding how the programs prepared the teachers for using pedagogical tools in their own Japanese classrooms. In particular, I was interested in examining (1) To what extent are the
pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT programs relevant to teachers’ teaching practices? and (2) What pedagogical tools being exposed in the programs do teachers report for use in their own teaching contexts? As discussed earlier, the main objectives of these government-sponsored programs are to develop teachers’ communicative abilities and to familiarize them with communicative teaching methodologies (Wada, 2002). Therefore, the pedagogical tools presented in the programs were based on these requirements proposed by the Japanese Ministry of Education. Teachers’ responses to the first question were quite variable (“very great extent,” 28.8%; “to some extent,” 37.9%; “to a small extent” 31.8%; “not at all” 1.5%), implying teachers’ differing reactions to the applicability of the pedagogical tools that they learned to their own teaching contexts.

Table 4.4 addresses the second question regarding teachers’ application of the pedagogical tools presented in the programs to their daily teaching practices. Due to the nature of open-ended questions, frequencies of tools (how many times teachers mentioned certain tools) rather than percentages are presented in the table. Drawing on Grossman et al.’s (1999) categories of pedagogical tools, the teachers’ references to tools were divided into practical and conceptual. The pedagogical tools presented in the programs teachers most often reported were the use of teaching/learning tools such as authentic materials and visual/auditory aids (n = 24), English in classrooms (n = 16), group/pair work (n = 16), planning such as setting up the goals of lesson and making syllabus (n = 16), the knowledge of social, cultural, and educational aspects in the U.S. (n = 16), task based activities (n = 10), top-down processing (n = 10), skimming and scanning (n = 10), and ideas about communicative abilities (n = 9). Many of the tools
described in Table 4.4 reflect elements associated with communicative language teaching/learning, which is consistent with the goals of the programs satisfying the requirements proposed by the Ministry of Education.

Table 4.4 also presents the type of pedagogical tools teachers often used. They reported practical tools more frequently than conceptual ones, with 215 tools coded as practical and 49 as conceptual. Table 4.5 also illustrates this difference by examining the mean number of practical and conceptual tools used per teacher (practical, M = 3.26; conceptual, M = .74). In general, teachers incorporated more practical skills/techniques into their classroom teaching than theoretical ideas/principles about ELT. This result is consistent with that of other studies in the teacher education field such as Cook et al., (2002), Johnson, et al., (2003) and Newell, et al., (2001).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pedagogical tools</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>U.S. society/culture/education</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing revision</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paragraph writing/reading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Essay writing, academic writing, logical writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process writing (e.g., writing Ss’ own opinions/ideas)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memo-taking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top-down processing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bottom-up processing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content based teaching &amp; learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reader-focused approach in writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phrase reading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picture walk</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discourse organization in writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skimming/Scanning</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapid reading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning strategies (e.g., Inductive inferencing; selective attention)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive reading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-reading activities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-reading activities (e.g., discussion; report; essay)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching/learning tools (e.g., authentic materials; visual aids)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To make textbook more authentic/modify</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group/pair work</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation/speech</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debate/discussion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation/Intonation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading aloud</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jazz chant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning (e.g., setting up goals; teaching plan; making syllabus)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criteria for choosing a textbook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test making (e.g., vocabulary test; criteria for interview test)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation (e.g., writing)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ss’ evaluation of their performance (e.g., self-monitoring cards)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Number of practical and conceptual tools presented in the MEXT program teachers often use (N = 66)
Table 4.4 continued

| Ts’ evaluation of their performance (e.g., reflection) | 3 |
| Ss’ evaluation of Ts’ performance | 1 |
| Ts’ use of English/Teaching English in English | 16 |
| Tasks based activities (e.g., role play; problem solving learning) | 10 |
| Communication oriented teaching and learning (e.g., more focus on listening; speaking) | 8 |
| Total physical response (TPR) | 1 |
| Prefix/Suffix | 1 |
| Brain storming | 1 |
| Seat arrangement | 1 |
| Bingo Game | 1 |
| Further teacher education/training opportunities | 7 |
| **Total of Practical** | 215 |

| Conceptual | Ideas about communication/English abilities (e.g., meaning focus; practical subject; necessity of developing 4 skills) | 9 |
| English user’s level of comprehension | 2 |
| Task-based learning | 2 |
| Importance of exposure to English (e.g., input/output) | 5 |
| Perspective on mistakes | 2 |
| English as a tool to communicate | 6 |
| Learner autonomy | 3 |
| Learning theories (e.g., constructivism; information processing) | 3 |
| Integrating 4 skills | 1 |
| English as an international language | 3 |
| Learning styles (Multiple Intelligences) | 4 |
| Student-centered teaching/learning | 3 |
| Making learning relevant to students’ life | 3 |
| Peer learning | 1 |
| Engishes | 1 |
| Teaching through textbooks | 1 |
| **Total of Conceptual** | 49 |
Table 4.5: Summary statistics for number of practical and conceptual tools used per respondent (N = 66)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical tools</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual tools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, Figure 4.3 and 4.4 provide a detailed analysis of the number of the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT programs that individual teachers reported for use. This was examined in both practical and conceptual tools. The number of teachers’ reported use of both tools ranges between 0-13 for practical tools and 0-6 for conceptual tools, indicating that use of each pedagogical tool varied greatly from teacher to teacher. In addition, a majority of teachers (approximately 86 %) used practical tools somewhere between 0-5 times and conceptual tools somewhere between 0-1 times, indicating again that they incorporated more practical tools than conceptual tools into their classroom instruction.

The relatively high number of teachers (47%) who did not report any conceptual tools was interesting, given the results in Table 4.3 that a majority of teachers reported that they appreciated learning about conceptual tools in the program. This rather low percentage of use of conceptual tools could be partly due to the difficulties teachers encountered in connecting their learning in the program and their classroom teaching in Japan. In particular, some teachers reported that, when applying the tools to their teaching contexts, they faced some level of concerns regarding “gap between theory presented in
university teacher education programs and practice at school sites,” “differences of English teaching and learning in ESL and EFL contexts,” and “gap between [their] teaching beliefs and students’ needs.” In the following section, the factors that may cause challenges when teachers applied the pedagogical tools to their classroom instruction will be examined in more detail.
Figure 4.3: Number of use for program-sponsored practical tools per respondent (N = 66)

Figure 4.4: Number of use for program-sponsored conceptual tools per respondent (N = 66)
It is also worth noting that, in addition to these practical and conceptual tools, teachers often reported in the open-ended question their sense of professional self. In particular, they commented that they developed confidence in their ELT professions, especially in areas such as English skills, teaching practices, and beliefs about English teaching and learning (n = 37). In addition, they expressed a need to further develop their professional skill and experience by attending conferences and teacher education programs, improving their language skills, and understanding knowledge about English language education better (n = 19). Due to the limitation of a one-shot questionnaire, it is difficult to document how teachers’ identity and agency interact with their teaching in particular settings. However, these results suggest that their self-image as an ELT professional, especially in light of English skills and teaching beliefs and practices, became more positive as a result of participating in the MEXT program. Non-native teachers’ low self-perceived image has been a concern for their professional development in the TESOL field (e.g., Braine 1999; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Kamhi-Stein 2000; Tang, 1997). The results of this study also suggest an important role that teachers’ professional self may play for their professions.

**Difficulties in Application**

Table 4.6 presents more detailed information regarding factors that the teachers perceived as sources of difficulties and challenges for the application of pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT programs. A high percentage of teachers (81.7%) responded that high-stakes tests such as university/high school entrance examinations were the most challenging factor. This result suggests that although the teachers were open to and
interested in the professional development offered by the MEXT programs, they struggled with the incongruence of purpose across activity settings. Specifically, Table 4.6 indicates that the teachers anticipated challenges in transferring Ministry of Education initiated goals in the program to English classes situated within a set of examination-governed structure that are typically responsive to local expectations. In the school sites, they are expected to maximize the outcome of entrance examinations, but they may have perceived the MEXT programs as less interested in such a goal or purpose. Although there was a large drop-off, the teachers’ second highest concerns stem from “large class size” (60%). Other important factors were limited teacher autonomy in selecting contents in class (56.3%), differences between student and teacher expectations regarding English teaching and learning (55.3%), students’ limited English proficiencies (52.5%), and difficulties in assessing students’ communicative abilities (50.9%). It is also worth noting that the percentages for “very great extent” in “differences between student and teacher expectations” (33.9%) and “limited teacher autonomy in selecting contents” (32.7%) are relatively higher than factors such as “students’ limited English proficiency” (22.0%) and “difficulties in assessment” (16.4%). Accordingly, challenges teachers faced involve overlapping as well as competing motives and values existing in the multiple activity settings. Those settings include national culture that values an unified curriculum and thus limited teacher autonomy, school culture that stresses conformity to established goals such as entrance examinations, and teachers’ beliefs about English language teaching and learning which differ from students’ expectations of English learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>4. Very great extent (%)</th>
<th>3. To some extent (%)</th>
<th>2. To a small extent (%)</th>
<th>1. Not at all (%)</th>
<th>Median^2</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-stakes tests</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large class size</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in expectations of Ss &amp; Ts^a</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited T autonomy</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited S English proficiencies</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in assessing communicative abilities</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less collaboration among Ts</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss’ unfamiliarity with collaborative activities</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Ts’ English proficiency</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T roles expected at school</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less satisfactory contents of prescribed textbooks</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Ts’ understanding of the concept of CLT</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ts previously developed practices &amp; beliefs</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Ts’ understanding of social &amp; cultural aspects of other countries</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from administrators</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from parents</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ^a N = 59; Ss = Students; Ts = Teachers

Table 4.6: Percentage distributions of challenges in using program-sponsored pedagogical tools (N = 61)
One of the interesting results in Table 4.6 is that a majority of teachers do not consider “a lack of understanding of the concept of Communicative Language Teaching” (CLT)” as a major factor causing challenges in application (“not at all,” 53.8%; “to a small extent,” 19.2%; “to some extent,” 19.2%). This result suggests that the teachers appreciated learning about conceptual tools in the program. The same conclusion can be made in terms of “teachers’ knowledge regarding the cultural and social aspects of other countries relevant to English teaching and learning.” A majority of teachers agreed that a lack of the knowledge did not cause or caused only a few challenges in using pedagogical tools (“not at all,” 49.1%; “to a small extent,” 36.4%).

Another intriguing result in Table 4.6 is that, although institutional and national culture such as entrance examinations and lack of teacher autonomy appears to create challenges for teachers, many teachers consider “a lack of support from parents and administrators” less relevant to their applying the pedagogical tools to their classroom teaching (“not at all,” 68.9%; to a small extent,” 15.6% and “not at all,” 56%; “to a small extent,” 28% for support from parents and administrators respectively). At first glance, these results suggest that a majority of teachers were satisfied with support from administrators and parents for their teaching practices. However, the results need to be carefully interpreted. Some teachers viewed these aspects as non-applicable (16.7% and 24.2% for support from administrators and parents respectively), indicating that some teachers regard school administrators and parents as irrelevant to their application of the pedagogical tools learned in the programs. These findings suggest that the challenges teachers encountered may partly stem from departmentally-governed English teaching
(e.g., “lack of teacher autonomy in selecting contents” and “collaboration among colleagues”) rather than factors related to school administrators and parents who are generally considered as influential figures in the social environment of schools.

Worth noting is that, in the open-ended question asking how teachers’ assumptions about ELT teaching and learning were reshaped during and/or after participating in the program, 20 teachers expressed their concerns regarding transitional experiences. They reported that they found themselves torn between settings which emphasize different, if not contradictory, values, expectations, goals, and practices. Those settings include “ESL and EFL teaching/learning,” “theories learned in the teacher education programs [such as MEXT] and realities in practice in their own teaching contexts,” and “their beliefs about English teaching practices and culturally established expectations of English education in Japan.” These results do not reveal how teachers manage the transition from the learning in the U.S. program to the teaching in their local contexts. However, the findings indicate that when returning to their Japanese schools and community, they anticipate how the goals and purposes of their schools as activity settings for teaching may conflict with the goals of the MEXT programs. Teachers’ cultural beliefs and newly constructed assumptions about English teaching and learning, and broader historical and cultural conditions of teaching in Japan may make their transitions more complex. Thus, teachers face settings whose goals, values and practices are varying, overlapping, and sometime competing with one another in dynamic ways.
Summary and Discussion

This chapter explored issues related to professional experiences of 66 Japanese EFL teachers by considering overlapping and conflicting goals and teaching practices in two activity settings, the Japanese government-sponsored overseas in-service (MEXT) programs and their sites of teaching at schools in Japan. In particular, the chapter examined teachers’ perceptions of their transitional experiences, including the usefulness and challenges of the MEXT programs, the pedagogical tools learned during their training in their classrooms, and challenges they face in applying the tools presented in the programs to their teaching. The results of questionnaires, which were interpreted using activity theory, illuminated multiple settings which seem to mediate teachers’ classroom teaching and professional development.

The results indicate that teachers considered their training experiences in the MEXT programs beneficial to their current teaching contexts in Japan. They expressed desire for further opportunities in language development, particularly in oral skills. Recently, the Japanese Ministry has extensively promoted educational reforms in English education such as a shift from fact-based pedagogy to communicative-based approaches. Because this shift is a rather recent phenomenon, the teachers who received their teacher licenses in the 1980s and early through mid 1990s are likely to have little experience with communicative-based teaching and learning in their teacher education as well as their formal schools. Given these historical and social conditions of their learning to teach, their desire to further develop oral skills seems to be inevitable. In addition, many scholars in the TESOL field have discussed non-native English speaking teachers’
concerns regarding their target language skills (e.g., Braine, 1999; Medgyes, 1992; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Tang, 1997), and the results of this study demonstrate that Japanese English teachers face similar challenges.

As for pedagogical tools, the teachers generally agreed that the tools presented in the MEXT programs were useful for their classroom instruction. In particular, they had positive feelings about the opportunities to learn cultural and social aspects of the U.S., to reflect on their previously developed teaching beliefs and practices, and to observe classroom instructions at local schools and ESL programs. They also appreciated the opportunities to learn the conceptual tools of English teaching and learning in the programs. If “teacher-generated experience and knowledge” at the site of schools is viewed as a powerful activity setting in constructing teachers’ thinking and practices (Shimahara, 2002, p. 24), then the opportunities to learn conceptual tools associated with English teaching and learning must play an important role for these experienced teachers’ professional development. In contrast to these positive aspects, teachers reported a desire to further develop practical tools during their learning in the programs. For example, more instruction in assessment appears to be a significant need. Given the national reforms which stress communicative-based teaching and learning, these results seem to reflect teachers’ perspective of what it means to be a competent English teacher in the current ELT contexts in Japan.

In terms of teachers’ regard for the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT programs, they reported incorporating aspects of communicative-oriented teaching and learning into their classrooms. This result mirrors the findings of Lamie’s (2001) and Pacek’s (1996) studies. The pedagogical tools teachers reported using were, however,
mainly practical rather than conceptual. This lack of conceptual tools suggests that teachers face difficulties in connecting theory and practice, and hence challenges to transfer the tools to their teaching contexts. These difficulties may partly stem from conflicting goals, values and practice in the multiple activity settings, including ESL and EFL, the MEXT program responding to national reforms of English teaching/learning and teachers’ own teaching sites at school, and their teaching beliefs and students’ expectations. Issues of disconnection between theory and practice have been a great concern among scholars in the teacher education field (e.g., Clark, 1994; Grossman et al., 1999; Kinginger, 2002; Newell, et al., 2001; Smagorinsky et al., 2004), and some teachers in this present study also expressed similar concerns. In addition, the teachers frequently reported their developing self-image as an ELT professional as a result of participating in the MEXT program. As non-native teachers’ self-perceived image has been a concern for their professional development in the TESOL field (e.g., Braine 1999; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Kamhi-Stein 2000; Tang, 1997), this study also suggest an important role that teachers’ self-image may play for their professions.

Teachers also reported that they faced certain challenges or concerns in applying new pedagogical tools presented in the programs. The results reveal that multiple settings contribute to create these difficulties, including classroom, institutional, and national cultures in their teaching contexts, as well as teachers’ learning in the MEXT programs. In addition, teachers’ beliefs about English teaching and learning appear to affect their use of pedagogical tools in particular contexts. Japanese EFL teachers’ learning is particularly complex since their teacher education encompasses various settings (e.g., in/outside their native teaching contexts) and also because these activity settings and their
goals do not always align with one another. In other words, just as these settings can be the sources of their learning to teach, they can also be constraints to limit their efforts to use the pedagogical tools learned in the programs. The teachers’ transitional experiences from the MEXT programs to their own school site, therefore, need to be viewed with examining other relevant activity settings in which their learning to teach occurred. Their learning involves more dynamic relationship among multiple settings.

Finally, this chapter left several questions that need to be explored. For example, what cultural beliefs about teaching do Japanese teachers of English bring to the particular settings? What conceptual tools do they actually employ in their lessons? How do they also actually adopt/adapt practical tools reported in their classroom teaching? In addition, how do they manage the incongruity between values and practices in the different settings? What pedagogical tools are emphasized in activity settings in which their teaching occurs? In what ways is the development of teachers’ professional identities affected by their transitional experiences in their particular teaching settings? Furthermore, how does the impact of the MEXT programs on teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices need to be viewed? These are some of the questions to be explored with selected case study teachers in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:
CASE STUDY TEACHERS’ APPROPRIATING PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS

Activity theory is based on the assumption that individual learning processes occur within social settings which present problem to be solved (Cole 1985; John-Steier & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, 2000; Wertsch, 1981). Following this theory, teachers’ conceptions of teaching and social contexts shape their learning to teach. Three experienced Japanese EFL teachers, whose teaching practices I studied for 8-10 months (summer 2005 - spring 2006), drew on a variety of activity settings to develop their teaching practices in Japanese senior high school classrooms. Those settings include their personal and professional backgrounds as EFL learners, teacher education courses in universities, other professional development opportunities (e.g., the Japanese government-sponsored overseas in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs; study group meetings), teaching sites at school, and broader cultural and social factors (e.g., national policies on English education in Japan; culturally grounded social norms). The wide range of activity settings with particular resources and motives shaped and reshaped the Japanese EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. These three teachers’ cases are complex because they also participated in the overseas in-service teacher training (MEXT) programs in the target language social setting and then returned to their native teaching contexts to continue their teaching. As a result, the MEXT programs
provided these experienced teachers with opportunities not only to rethink their
previously developed teaching approaches but also to consider what and how to
appropriate new pedagogical tools presented in the overseas program to serve their own
students’ needs in Japanese schools. As discussed in chapter two, discrepancies may exist
between what EFL teachers learn in L2 teacher education programs in the Inner Circle
such as the U. S. (Kachru, 1982) and what they may encounter in the realities of practices
in their home countries. The challenges of such a transfer has been of concern among
researchers (e.g., Lamie, 2001; Liu, 1999; Mckay, 2000; Pacek, 1996) as well as the
present study.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the conceptual principle stressed in the MEXT
programs was based on the notion of “language learning as a social construct” at
university A and “change of the course of their [teachers’] teaching” at university B in
order for teachers to better understand communicative-based pedagogy and to help
develop Japanese students’ communicative abilities (Program coordinators, Interviews:
8/8/2005 & 9/13/2005 respectively). Both programs also emphasized the connection
between the two key settings, the U.S. program and the teachers’ own professional
contexts in Japan in terms of English teaching and learning. However, as previous studies
have pointed out (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Smith, 1996), teachers have their unique goals and
understandings that affect their learning in the training experiences. In addition, their
actual teaching settings have their own cultural histories and particular motives that
influence how teachers appropriate the pedagogical tools presented in the program
Thus, teachers’ learning is understood as “both unique to individuals and co-constructed” (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001, p.148).

This chapter will explore the sources and activity settings that shaped the three Japanese EFL teachers’ conceptions of teaching and practices as a result of their participation in the MEXT programs. By highlighting teachers’ transitional experiences from the contexts of the U.S. teacher education programs to English teaching in Japanese school systems, this chapter will also describe how they appropriated the pedagogical tools learned in the former setting within the latter contexts.

The data for this chapter were gathered from classroom observations, interviews with the teachers, their reports, interviews with the U.S. program coordinators and school administrators in Japan, and relevant documents such as final reports written by program coordinators, course syllabi and required reading materials used in the programs. In addition, questionnaire data, which asked the teachers to rank-order their educational and professional experiences, were also used to help me better understand to what extent these settings play key roles in developing their teaching conceptions. Thus, a variety of different perspectives (e.g., teachers; program coordinators; school-based administrators; the researcher) were incorporated into the analysis.

**Appropriating Process**

**From Teacher- to Student-Centered Instruction: Mr. Fujii’s Case**

Table 5.1 shows the list of code and frequency counts that resulted from my analysis of Mr. Fujii’s interviews, classroom observations, and reports on his teaching
practices. The table captures the tendency of his EFL instruction in his school setting in light of the pedagogical tools, the sources of the tools, and the curricular areas in which he used the specific tools. It also shows the problems that he attempted to solve through the use of each tool, which suggest the goal-oriented nature of his instructional decision-making. This section discusses the most frequently occurring pedagogical tools and illustrates other aspects of his teaching such as sources, curricular areas, and problems.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>EFL Teaching at the senior high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking/Listening</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching approach/strategies</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment (including Ss’ own assessment)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson plan, Syllabus, Curriculum</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness and attitude toward communication</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source of Tool</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University entrance exams</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School mandate/culture/expectations (curriculum of English subject at the school)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior experiences/knowledge (e.g., his learning experiences as an EFL learner)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate level teacher education</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self (e.g., applying tools at teaching sites)</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National mandate/policy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEXT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other professional development opportunities</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English tests (e.g., Michigan Test; TOIEC)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tool Conceptual:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving learning</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPD &amp; Mediation through artifacts</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiral learning</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer learning</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language use in real life situation</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating skills/settings/activities</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about communication</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued

Table 5.1: Codes and Frequencies of Mr. Fujii’s Instruction after Participation in the MEXT program
Table 5.1 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about language mistakes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about teaching approach (theory-based decision)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about teaching approach: Introducing goals to Ss</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about teaching strategies: Meta cognitive</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about learning strategies for Ss: Meta cognitive</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about learning strategies for Ss: Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schema</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple intelligences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning strategies: language (<em>eishaku</em>) training</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching strategies: Scaffolding</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching strategy: use of Ss’ ideas to achieve the goals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/Pair work</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson plan/syllabus/curriculum</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing lessons</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worksheet</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual &amp; Auditory aids</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer evaluation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranging Ss seats for participation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Ss with the model of English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’s learning opportunities</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion with colleagues</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing activity</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing revision</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-teaching with ALTs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz/Term-examination</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary/Accent instruction/learning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar instruction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’s feedback on Ss writing</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapid reading</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paragraph Reading/Skimming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading comprehension/Factual reading</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss presentation/report</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Ss responses on the blackboard</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T walking around in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Ss language mistakes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Japanese and English</td>
<td>3</td>
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Continued
Table 5.1 continued

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
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<td>T’s Management</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ss’ management of the process</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ related issues (e.g., interests)</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ learning</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social demands/expectations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School related issues</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application issues</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues related to Textbooks</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for entrance examinations</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of national mandate</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment issues</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s own issues (e.g., English skills)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction/participation in a class</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’s (Ts’) professional development</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences between Japan and U.S.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching related issues</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ts’ goals</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

| Type of Tool
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>166</td>
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</table>
**Problem Solving Learning and Mediation**

Table 5.1 reveals that the centerpieces of Mr. Fujii’s EFL instruction were “problem solving learning” (n = 25) and “ZPD/Mediation” (n = 22). In the reading and writing classes that I examined, he relied consistently on these conceptual tools as a framework for his teaching practices. His primary purpose of using these tools is to foster effective “learning for students” as being reflected in Problem of the table (n = 281). The following excerpt illustrates his actual 12th grade reading lesson with a purposeful use of these pedagogical tools, “problem solving learning” and “mediation, at the conceptual level. By using additional reading material, students engaged in post-reading activities in which they were discussing advantages and disadvantages of a designated world heritage site.

With the knowledge students gained through the [authorized] textbook in the previous lessons, students need to not only understand what it says in the textbook, but also consider what the issues are and what problems the textbook cast about to us. Students cultivate them by using another reading material which shares the given topics described in the [authorized] textbook….. In today’s lesson, rather than focusing on the language and reading comprehension of the additional reading material, I wanted to create opportunities for students to feel like speaking and to realize what they never thought about by connecting their background knowledge, which is what they had learned in the original textbook, and the knowledge they newly gained from today’s reading material. In addition, I created an opportunity for them to express their current views of the issue at the final stage of the chapter. Until we go through the lessons, it is difficult for them to talk about their final opinions and position about the problem they discussed in the classes. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

This comment reveals that the goals of his instruction were to construct new knowledge and to express students’ ideas about the issues by making use of the information in the reading materials (both authorized text and supplement text). In other words, he framed his teaching practice in a problem-solving mode by using an additional reading material as an information resource which he felt necessary to mediate students’ learning.
Prior to the MEXT program, Mr. Fujii was somewhat familiar with teaching grounded in constructivist-based practices by applying Vygotsky’s learning theories. Several years before the program, he encountered the theories at one of the professional development opportunities where a scholar in the TESOL field introduced him to them. High frequency of “other professional development opportunities” (n=141) in the Source of Tool in Table 5.1 suggest how actively he sought for knowledge about EFL teaching and learning before and after the MEXT program. However, he struggled with students’ frequent avoidance of responses such as “I don’t know” in problem-solving activities. He reflected on his previous instructions in the interview that “[he] taught English in [his] own way before the program, but [he] was unsatisfied with himself every day” (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005). Thus, to examine students’ avoidance of communication became one of the major goals for participating in the MEXT program. The interview and classroom observation data as well as his research project reveal how Mr. Fujii further deepened his understanding of the principled way of teaching as a result of the MEXT program. For example, during the program, he relied on conducting a research project as a resource to solve the issue. His discussion in the project illustrates his understanding of problem-solving learning and mediation as a conceptual tool and also knowing how to appropriate the tools to his own teaching settings in Japan. As he discusses:

Output with full emphasis on “what is being said” [rather than “how something is being said” represented by “display activities”] is considered to be extremely important in English education in Japan because the classroom settings push students to test the hypothesis about their expressions and communication strategies. The feedback within teacher or student interaction in response to the content of the message will foster their genuine ideas and original solutions to problems. (Mr. Fujii, 1998, p. 47).
In addition, his following comment suggests that the program contributed to his understanding of constructivist perspectives of learning in order to make students the center of their learning which he greatly valued in his ELT approach. According to him, problem-solving learning is a teaching approach framed by the perspectives:

According to Krashen and Vygotsky [which I read for my project], we should make use of what students already recognized and let students engage in problem-solving activities as much as possible. Problem-solving happens all the time in real life situations. We talk with others to solve a problem. For example, *I have a concern and what should I do?* And I want it [problem-solving] to happen in students’ daily life. Instead of accepting every issue as it is, I want my students to be critical to an issue they encounter. The role I want to play in my class is either a supporter or a mentor. I want to make my students the center of my teaching and create opportunities for them to feel that they want to learn and they are thinking. There must be other ways to make it happen, but a problem-solving activity is one of the strategies for such learning (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

The above excerpts reveal that he engaged in solving a problem using the research project as a resource which the MEXT program made available to him.

His understanding of student-centered learning framed by the problem-solving mode also helped him reshape his sense of professional self. The following comment illustrates his new way of viewing a teacher’s role in EFL instruction from a constructivist perspective. By using the principles as a conceptual framework, he was able to critique his previous teaching approach prior to the program that he believes had to be modified. As he explains:

Prior to the program, I used to think students do not have abilities, and therefore it is my job as an instructor to equip them with the abilities they need by leading them. But I *realized that they have a great intellectual potential and what I need to do is to stimulate the area in which they have abilities* [“to support as a motivator to create environments where they can maximize their potential”]. I think it is important for teachers to feel the moments where students are coming to understand and learn something rather than to explain what they understood again. That is an important role that we as teachers need to play. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006) *[italics mine]*
This data suggest that his understanding of “students-centered learning” based on the principles such as problem-solving learning and mediation helped him reshape his professional identity from an authoritative figure to “a motivator” in consideration of students’ learning. He did so by making use of the MEXT program and teaching sites at his school as well as having a strong sense of goals to solve the problem he faced in his classroom teaching.

**Group/Pair work and Peer learning**

To make students’ learning effectively occur, Mr. Fujii extensively used “group/pair work.” Table 5.1 shows the prominence of his use of the pedagogical tool in his classrooms (n = 22). In his actual reading and writing classes I observed as well as through interviews, “peer learning” was also evident as the conceptual framework of the practical tool (n = 14). Students frequently shared their ideas with peers in a problem-solving mode and exposed themselves to multiple perspectives on the issues promoted by interactions with others. For example, in the 12th grade reading class, students actively discussed with peers their ideas about the “Shiretoko Peninsula” in Japan which was designated as a World Heritage in 2005 (Field notes, 10/19/2005). They prepared for the lesson by reading a variety of reading materials about World Heritage sites and then discussed advantages and disadvantages for becoming such a site. In using the group work activity, he hoped that students could realize the importance of exploring issues from different perspectives. In the interview, he explained this point as follows:
There are many ways to solve a problem. I think this is the principle [of the idea that I am talking about]. What you come up with does not mean that is the final answer of a given topic. And not all the students can get there on their first attempt. Of course, in terms of factual reading and understanding [of the fact], there should not be a gap among students, so I teach them. But when it comes to developing their ideas based on it, I do not set for the absolute answer. By letting them share their differing opinions which naturally come up based on the right understanding [of the fact], I want my students to discover what they share to each other and what they come to newly realize [about the topic]. The joy of discovery is the major point about my lesson. I think it must be interesting if such discovery comes from their peers not from me [as a teacher]. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

The following excerpt also describes how he uses the principle as a tool for enabling students to learn various perspectives on the issue they discuss. The excerpt also describes the rationale behind his instructional decision. Referring to the 12th grade reading class in which students were engaged in problem-solving activities (“running water while washing faces or brushing teeth” “keeping the temperature of their room around 20 degrees” (Mr. Fujii, worksheet), he explains:

Today, I was planning to have a self expression activity based on what students had already learned through the lessons. I also included a writing activity so that they can write if what they found most interesting at the beginning have been evolving and also if they came to have new ideas through the lessons. (Mr. Fujii, Report 3: 1/23/2006)

As evident in this excerpt, the primal goals of his using “peer learning” are to fashion students’ learning that helps them reconstruct their initial ideas about the issues by exposing them to different ideas from their own and then elaborate on their progress in speaking and writing. He did so by considering what activities support such learning for his students.

Mr. Fujii developed his understanding of the power of social interaction for students’ EFL learning as a result of participating in the MEXT program. He particularly depended on his research project as well as opportunities to learn to teach in and outside
the program (e.g., local school visits; peoples’ attitudes toward discussion). In his research project, for example, he emphasized the importance of collaborative learning in task based activities since it enables to bring “higher achievement to students,” “the examination of problem-solving approaches,” “the development of interpersonal skills,” and “a vehicle to process productive skills” (Mr. Fujii, 1998, pp. 56-57). The interview data further show his continuous efforts on appropriating the tool after the MEXT program in reflective and coherent ways. He reported that “[he] started to read many academic books such as “Collaborative Learning” by David Nunan that helped him reassure about the usefulness of peer learning in class (Interview: 10/19/2005).

His interview data also reveal that the principle of peer learning became a tool to consider and critique a problem of a “well established EFL teaching approach” that focuses exclusively on predetermined right answers. As he explained:

Traditional education [in Japan] tends to emphasize display typed questions which have clear yes or no answer and exclude students’ ideas or totally unexpected answers that teachers get from them. But students’ answers that teachers cannot expect is the interesting part of lesson….When students are encouraged to study in peer learning from the first year [of senior high school], I think that they will find that the class is the place for learning. They can also find that English is a tool to think not something they are forced to learn. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 8/28/2005)

This excerpt reveals that Mr. Fujii, who had a strong sense of goals, constructed and was allowed to utilize activity settings (e.g., the MEXT program; teaching sites in Japan) in which he appropriated the new pedagogical tools presented in the program in order to better work for his own teaching contexts in Japan. Reflecting on the time when he moved from the MEXT program to his teaching site in Japan, he commented, “in the previous school, I tried out almost everything of what I had wanted to do and ideas that I
had had in my mind during the program.” (Interview 8/28/2005) After the program, he continued to seek professional development opportunities to foster his teaching approach. A notable way of Mr. Fujii’s appropriating the pedagogical tools is his efforts to connect practical skills (e.g., group work activity) and conceptual tools about English teaching and learning such as peer learning in a principled fashion.

**Visual and Auditory Aids**

Mr. Fujii incorporated a variety of visual/auditory aids into his class, including pictures, figures, work sheets, OHP projector, time watch, pro and con cards, CD, and music (n = 19). My observation notes also described his conscious efforts to include the practical tools such as using a color copied supplemental reading material about Angkor Wat, hand-made flash cards to explain the target vocabulary related to wars and World Heritage sites, and special notes he wrote on the blackboard (use of tables and different color chalk based on the focus of the lesson such as facts and students’ opinions). All of these visual and auditory aids were “the tools to mediate students’ learning about good and bad points of being designated as World Heritage sites” (Field notes: 10/19/2005). The interviews reveal that he did not utilize these teaching aids before participating in the program. However, a challenge that he had faced in his teaching practices contributed to his efforts to study more effective teaching approach to student-centered learning in the program. As he reflects:

I had a desire to improve my lessons. Before the program, I was so into the contents of teaching materials such as worksheet. I thought that including very difficult English expressions made the materials qualitatively high. Then I brought them to my class, but I always felt that they did not contribute to students’ learning progress that matches the efforts I made. In the [MEXT]
program, the instructor did not directly tell us that we should use flashcards and projectors, but we studied in the courses with a premise that we were teachers. We also had classroom observations at local schools. There were so many things [teaching aids] in the U.S. which met my expectations since I was not satisfied with my own lessons. Before the program, I devalued the use of flashcards (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2005).

More specifically, the following excerpt illustrates how Mr. Fujii appropriated the practical tool during an observation of an ESL classroom in the U.S. Note that he understands the significance of drawing by contrasting teaching practices in the U.S. and Japan. It also illustrates his appropriation of the tool by considering theoretical principles (multiple intelligences, peer learning) which guide his instructional decision. As he comments:

When I observed one of the local classes [in the U.S.], I saw students drawing part of the story with friends not working on the whole story individually. For example, A was drawing a river and B a mountain, and then the students eventually created the drawings describing the whole story. During the activity, they were activity discussing to each other saying, “This mountain should be higher and that house should be bigger.” I learned that participatory learning let quiet students actively involve in class. In Japan people tend to consider sitting quietly and listening to a teacher is a good student. But it is important to include students’ preferable learning style in a 50 minute instruction because each student has different learning style. So showing a picture is easier to better understand for some students instead of my orally explaining in English. On the contrary, carefully listening to teachers’ explanation would work for other students who can nicely make an image of the situation. When there are a variety of tools which meet students’ learning styles, students can feel that they are participating in the class. I want to create such lessons. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2005)

The above excerpts reveal that his appropriation process involves several sources and activity settings. To solve an instructional problem he had faced in Japan, he made use of the learning opportunities in the MEXT program and learned pedagogical tools, including multiple intelligences, peer learning, and visual/auditory aids. His new knowledge about the teaching aids grounded in these theoretical principles helped him
reshape his beliefs about ELT approach and eventually led him to appropriate the tools. It is also notable that he adds a comment about culturally established notion of “attitude of a good student” in Japan and critically considers what is best for students’ learning. He does so by applying broad theoretical principles such as multiple intelligences and peer learning, which lead him to challenge the notion of the ideal students as a passive learner and to incorporate visual/auditory aids into his class in order to make learning occur to students with differing learning styles.

**Language Use in Real Life Situations**

Table 5.1 also shows another conceptual tool that Mr. Fujii emphasized in his class, that is “language use in real life situations (n = 19).” The observation, interview, and report data reveal that this tool is intricately interwoven into other principles discussed before such as problem-solving learning, mediation, and peer learning. He considers “language use in real life situation” to be an indispensable pedagogical tool for promoting students’ learning and motivating them to actively engage in problem-solving activities. For example, he reported how he actually used the pedagogical tool in the 12th grade reading class where students discussed the stories about global warming. As a pre-reading activity, students read two other source materials in addition to the authorized textbook, which they were planning to read after the activity. The goals of this pre-reading activity, according to him, were to teach the contents and language of the stories by taking students’ background knowledge into consideration. He also wanted to let them realize their initial opinions in regard to the issues. Through interacting with peers, he hoped that as students considered different ideas about the issues, they also boosted their
interests in reading the main authorized textbook. At the end of the lesson, he assigned homework asking students to write about their current opinions about the issues. The following excerpt illustrates his efforts to create the opportunities of “language use in real life situations” by making their learning relevant to their daily life. As he notes:

After the lesson, as an assignment I was planning to ask students to do an output activity in writing to make students clear what opinions they have about the issue of global warming and how much they consider it as their own problem. To do that, I thought it is important for them to clarify their own ideas about the issue before reading the [main] textbook and to expose themselves to their partner’s opinions which may be different from theirs. I thought that that [pre-reading activities] will create more parts in the textbook in which students can have interests. (Mr Fujii, Report 1, 4/13/2006)

He attributed the original source of this pedagogical tool to a discussion with an expert in the EFL field prior to the MEXT program. As discussed earlier, he was uncertain as to why his students avoided responding to a topic discussed in a problem-solving activity. By utilizing the surrounding environments, he came to believe that making learning relevant to students’ life situations could enable the hesitant students to more actively communicate and to learn. He also explained in the interview that to examine this issue became one of the major goals of participating in the MEXT program.

I came to attempt to make learning relevant to students’ real life situations by discussing in study meetings with a professor and also reading the books by Rod Ellis and Vygotsky. I started to include the idea before participating in the MOE [currently called MEXT] program. I understand what Ellis says, but when it comes to how to use the ideas in class, it is perfectly natural to follow what Vygotsky suggests. So I often provide senior students with a theme of problem-solving. During the activity, however, my students said, “I don’t know;” whenever there was something they didn’t know. What they need to do is to express their actions and reactions that they would make in Japanese society in English. If the topics are related to their own living experiences, students would able to have an image of what they are talking about. I wanted to examine this issue for the 6 months [in the program] and after coming back to Japan, I added more variations according to my students’ level (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)
The interview data also suggest that his previous learning and teaching experiences also contributed to his beliefs about EFL teaching approach that values language use in real life situations. The rationale behind this belief, he explains, is the importance of the connecting what students are engaged in a classroom and what the current society demands. This effort, he believes, eventually leads to meeting his students’ and school’s expectations. When asked the reason why he provided a pro-and con activity in problem-solving learning (Should chewing gum at school be permitted if not in class?) in his 12th grade writing class, he explained the importance of cultivating both sides of the thematic points in seeing any problems in society. As he comments:

[The reason I include “a pro and con activity” in my class] is, although it sounds a little selfish, that is English learning for me. Based on my EFL learning and teaching experiences and the knowledge I have, I believe that students who currently learn English need the perspectives….To let the pro and con activity work, it is useful to critically consider issues and examine them from the both sides. In this current age, there are so many thing that we have to decide. Despite the reality in society, I wonder why schools are separated from society? Schools are a small community and what is done at school has to be applicable to society. That is why, in English classes, we need to consider issues from multiple perspectives and to achieve something. …I think what students learn during the process such as abilities and their viewpoints will probably serve the interests of the students at our school. …. When they engage in the activity [two-way communication in writing and speaking], I expect that students can calmly think about issues instead of deciding [whether they agree or disagree] based on their preference or their perception on who is smart. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

Later, he commented that two activity settings, his previous EFL learning and teaching experiences, shaped the pedagogical idea. Those are his studying experiences in the U.S. as an undergraduate student where he was exposed to an idea about “diversity of cultural
values” and his teaching experiences at the previous school sites where he instructed students “to objectively see and verify their own ideas” in debate lessons (Follow-up Interview, 5/21/2007).

His interview data further reveal that the MEXT program also contributed to the development of his understanding of this tool. When asked about his applications of the pedagogical tools learned in the program in light of the 12th grade reading class, for example, he noted as follows:

Following the empirical studies and theories based on Vygotsky, for example, I try to organize my lesson, which creates “language use in real life situations.” Although [approved] textbooks are given, it is important for teachers to customize their lessons where students can promote their learning by making them realize that it is the issues relevant to their real life situations, not that students passively learn by the text (Mr. Fujii, Self reports: 1/23/2006).

This excerpt mirrors what he discussed in his research project about problems of an EFL teaching approach, which is “a widely and commonly used teaching procedure” in communication focused lessons often employed by Japanese teachers of English. The problems of the approach are display-oriented activities focusing only on students’ inability to reply properly and “lack of personalization or localization of students’ oral work” (Mr. Fujii, 1998, p.42). He problematized this teaching approach from the perspective of students’ learning and their interests.

His appropriation of the tool, “language use in real life situations,” however, involves not only his learning experiences prior and during the program but also the teaching settings at his schools (school responsibilities, interactions with colleagues), the goals that he sets up for his classes (his beliefs), and his desire to fulfill the goals. The following excerpt describes a variety of activity settings which influence his development of appropriating the pedagogical tool. As he comments in the interview:
Well, if I do not make efforts on this [language use in real life situations], the lesson will probably become boring for students. What could I say if they tell me what we do is already written in the textbook? I think that a class is a place where we [teachers] foster students’ abilities that we hope they can develop by using a textbook [approved text book in this case]. Then, we need to discuss with our colleagues whether the goals that an individual teacher sets up reflect the responsibilities that our school has. To develop students’ English abilities based on the goals a teacher has, which embrace the school responsibilities, we constantly need to study appropriate teaching approach to achieve the goals.

(Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

This excerpt suggests that he drew upon a range of sources and settings to develop the pedagogical tool, “language use in real life situation.” The meeting with an expert, his beliefs about ELT teaching, and the MEXT program contributed to his early development of the tool. After returning to Japan, however, he appropriated it by further utilizing other sources and settings available to him. For example, he sought out further opportunities to develop his teaching practices outside school by taking into consideration school contexts for EFL teaching such as school responsibilities, discussion with colleagues about the goals of English courses, and his goals with a strong sense of investment in professional development. Before, during, and after the program, he had access to a rich set of resources shaped by the principle. In other words, these activity settings worked in alignment with one another. Perhaps, this conceptual alignment among settings enabled him to promote his appropriation of the pedagogical tool, clarify his purposes for EFL teaching, and draw upon what he had learned from the program to achieve the goals.

**Integrating Skills across English Courses and Settings**

Table 5.1 shows Mr. Fujii’s frequent use of another conceptual tool, “integrating skills” (n = 16). Frequently coded language relevant skills such as reading, writing,
oral/aural communication, and language, and the balance of his use of these areas show his careful attention to all of these areas and intention to integrate them. In the observations, interviews and reports, this tool consistently appeared in his classes. For example, in 12th grade writing class, students were engaged in a problem learning activity in which they discussed with peers an issue of *whether chewing gum at school should be permitted if not in class*. (My field notes: 10/19/2005) The students were grouped in pair based on the responses of pro and con. At the end of the lesson, Mr. Fujii gave them a writing assignment to discuss their own ideas about the issue, which they needed to individually work by the following class. In the interview, he articulated the purpose of this assignment, which explains why integrating skills is critical for students’ learning.

Even though students talked about the issue in English, they will probably forget what they discussed in three days or so, because during that time, they receive various other information. Pro-team, for example, came up with various ideas about pro with their peers. They gained knowledge from others. In order to prevent wasting the time of the lesson, students make their original writing by incorporating the knowledge. As I promised in the class, I will let them speak what they write in the next lesson. After that, I will collect their assignments and check it [e.g., language accuracy]. I try not to finish an activity with just speaking and just writing, but to integrate all of the skills. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

As evident in this excerpt, Mr. Fujii attempts to integrate all the skills by taking students’ content and language learning into consideration. His efforts to maximize learning for students extended to his another class. In another 12th grade class, he more effectively used this pedagogical tool by teaching two English courses (English II and writing) by himself. According to him, teachers generally avoid teaching all courses of one class by themselves due to “risks both a teacher and students might face” in light of the consequence for the instruction (e.g., results of university entrance examinations) (Self-
report 2: 3/16/2006). With a strong sense of achieving the goals of his instruction, however, he took a risk and created a learning environment that he believes to be good for students.

The interview data show that he became aware of the necessity of integrating skills while participating in the program. In particular, social/cultural differences in English learning between the U.S. and Japan, which he faced during the program, gave him new insights into the importance of skill integration for students’ language learning in EFL contexts like Japan. Due to a limited access to English language in Japan, he began to consider that interconnecting English skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and learning settings (e.g., lessons at school and assignments at home; reading and writing classes) is indispensable. His reservations about whether the ideas about ESL teaching presented in the program would work in Japan allowed him to rethink the issue and also discuss it with other teacher participants during the program. This reflective practice eventually led him to appropriate the pedagogical tools constructed in the ESL contexts in order to better serve Japanese students’ needs. When asked to elaborate on the idea of “skill integration across settings,” he explained as follows:

There [in the U.S.], English is being used outside classroom. When I participated in the program, I always thought “I understand what you are saying, but it would not go that way in Japan.” Japanese language is everywhere in our everyday life. But it does not mean that the ideas and methods developed in ESL contexts are not applicable to English education in Japan. Other participants and I always discussed what we could do to marry the two [ESL and EFL]. Then, an idea came up or the only choice we thought we can have is that, due to a limited English vocabulary and learning environments, we should not think English learning opportunities as a separate activity such as reading as just a reading class and writing as just a writing class. We can allow students to cultivate the idea that what they study in various classes and settings are related to unlimited other learning settings, and that the expressions and ideas they learn in one setting are transferable to other contexts. Then, if students can successfully communicate
with others and have a sense of achievement by deepening their understanding of lessons through participation, they can develop the idea that what they are studying now is organically interrelated to what they learn in other situations. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

This excerpt clearly suggests that differences in English learning between the U.S. and Japan helped him consider and modify what he had learned in the program for his teaching practices in Japan. As can be seen in his above comments, he believes that the principle of “integrating skills across settings” supports students utilizing and applying their knowledge in a range of new contexts. The principle he uses, therefore, is grounded in constructivist perspectives on English teaching and learning.

In addition, the interview data reveal that there is another activity setting which further helped him consider application problems caused by the differences in English learning between the ESL and EFL fields and also the difficulties in putting theory into practice. That is a resource he sought out outside the school after the program. As he explains:

For the last 10 years or so, the texts in Japan have increasingly included the [theoretical] ideas of the ESL and EFL fields. By paying careful attention to the aspects, I examine how to use the ideas [in practice] and make instructional materials such as worksheet. I bring what I made to various study group meetings outside school and discuss them with other EFL professionals. I find that the materials I produce [by using the theoretical ideas in the ESL and EFL fields] is not something unreasonable for teaching. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

This excerpt suggests that Mr. Fujii continued to have professional development opportunities outside school in order to consider and discuss how he can make use of the knowledge constructed in both ESL and EFL contexts. It also implies that his sense of having expertise as a “dual role” (Seidlhofer, 1999) juggling two sets of values and expectations helped him feel confident as an ELT professional.
As revealed in Table 5.1 (see “problem”), he made use of the challenges he faced such as “differences in learning between ESL and EFL” and “application issues” associated with theory and practice in order to appropriate the pedagogical tools learned during and after the program. Although the data show that the process of his appropriation was not always smooth (e.g., his reservations about the applicability of the tools learned; taking a risk at his teaching sites), he did so by using the surrounding environment such as the MEXT program and study group meetings, and creatively appropriated the tools he learned. His continuous access to learning opportunities and his desire to improve his teaching approach allowed Mr. Fujii to test and modify the tools to better serve Japanese students’ needs for their learning.

**Eishaku Training, Cognitive Learning Strategies, and Spiral Learning**

To serve Japanese students’ needs to learn English as a foreign language, Mr. Fujii frequently provided them with language learning opportunities, which he calls “eishaku training” (n = 11), and also implemented conceptual tools, “cognitive learning strategies” (n = 12) and “spiral learning” (n = 16), which comprise a total number of 39 for the language training related tools. *Eishaku* training is to, in his words, “memorize what is useful in reading materials and train students until they can recite it without thinking.” He uses this idea to help students engage in problem-solving activities in the foreign language. My field notes describe his frequent use of the language training in his classrooms. In his 12th grade post-reading class, for example, he brought part of the main textbook called “Read and Look-up,” which also had a Japanese translation of the story. His students already read it before and learned the contents and language in the material.
In the class, he asked students to listen to the model reading with CD and read aloud the English passage of the material in chorus with him, in pair, and further individually. He instructed his students to pay special attention to the English expressions and language order of the passage with the help of the Japanese translation, rather than just read it for the comprehension of the story. Mr. Fujii considers this “language training” to be essential for EFL students to fulfill the goals in his class. As he explains:

Mr. Fujii: About Read and Look-up, I want to let students read a textbook aloud. To repeatedly read aloud a story which they already comprehend helps them create the “circuit” of English language…. Reading aloud a [approved] textbook is like playing catch in baseball. And so without it, any practice and game cannot start. Reading a textbook aloud is at such basic level. Therefore, I want to emphasize it very much in my lessons.

Researcher: What do you mean by “circuit of English”?

Mr. Fujii: I want students to be able to use, write, and speak English. To do so, they have to learn how to wear clothes such as underwear and jacket. If they wear cloths in wrong order, they have something on themselves but it looks strange, doesn’t it? English also has an order and I want my students to learn it. Japanese textbooks take care of this aspect very carefully. Therefore, [to learn a right order] they read aloud the textbook repeatedly. It is just like reciting a sutra [Okyo]. I want to help students to reach the level where they can realize, “I can use this part of sutra in this situation.” That is why I provide students with the time for reading aloud until they can create a “circuit” of English language. I want to have at least five, hopefully ten minutes, for the practice [in one lesson]. I think reading aloud is ultimately necessary. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

He went on to explain how he actually uses this practical tool, “Read and Look-up,” within the broad conceptual framework such as problem-solving learning, language use
in real life situation, and skill integration. He uses the practical tool to enable students to progress toward the goal he established for his class, which is “for students to express their ideas about the problem they were discussing.”

I try to pull what students can use out of reading materials [English I, II, and Reading], and ask them to read it repeatedly. I do it not only just because students can get the points of the story but because they can actually use it [e.g., English expression; vocabulary in the material] in real life situations I establish in my lessons. ….Once students practice it in reading class, I offer students opportunities to actually use the knowledge in writing class by matching the topic of the two courses as closely as possible. That is what I meant by “memorization.” (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

The interview data reveal that his backgrounds as an EFL learner shaped his understanding of this pedagogical tool. When asked to elaborate on the tool, he explained as follows:

Well, this is actually a scary part, but I can only say that this idea came from my own EFL learning experience. I think that English expression that we use is probably not something automatically updated day by day. In a way, we probably open and close our drawer with English knowledge in ourselves. So, when we study something new, you practice it repeatedly until we can take it in in ourselves (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006).

This excerpt suggests that he came to believe the importance of the “eishaku training” based on his prior experiences as an EFL learner. In addition, his concern about automaticity through intentional practice suggests that this pedagogical tool is grounded in cognitive psychology of second/foreign language learning, which views language learning as “a gradual build-up of automaticity through practice” (Brown and Spada, 2003, p.41). In his research project conducted in the MEXT program, by applying this idea, he discussed the effective ways of using an authorized textbook as a language resource. For example, it suggests the use of a practical tool, “sentences to be recited,” by using the textbook to promote students’ positive oral expression (Mr. Fujii, p. 49).
unique aspect of his discussion regarding the practical tool, however, is that he did so by framing his study with the conceptual framework based on constructivist perspectives of learning (e.g., problem-solving learning; ZPD; interconnecting skills and settings; peer learning). Thus, the project illustrates his development of teaching approach by incorporating these ideas into broader theoretical principles such as problem-solving learning and language use in real life situations.

However, the interviews reveal that his appropriation of the pedagogical tool involves not only his previous EFL learning experiences and the training in the U.S., but also professional development opportunities he sought outside school after the program. His conscious efforts to improve his teaching practices were consistent with the highly frequently coded source of tool in Table 5.1, which is “other professional development opportunities (n=141). He continued to learn by having access to resources available to him and incorporated more practical techniques into his teaching practices in order to use broad theoretical principles discussed before (e.g., cognitive psychology; problem-solving learning; language use in real life situations; skill integrations). As he comments:

What students orally express is what they have already known about its meaning. So by repeatedly reading [texts] aloud, I want to provide students with training opportunities in a 50-minute instruction. In the training, I use pair work. I also include individual work to internalize it [English language]. By using such activities, I want my students to learn and remember as good [or useful] English as possible. Then, students can borrow the language from there [texts] and connect the knowledge to their actual utterances. I learned this idea in study group meetings in Japan [after the MEXT program] and keep arranging it myself [at my teaching sites]. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006)

By using both conceptual tools (constructivist and cognitive perspectives of English teaching and learning), he was able to consider and critique “the EFL teaching approach that has been widely used for a long time in Japan,” that is, a sentence-to-
sentence translation from Japanese to English in light of the usability in real life situations. He then implemented an alternative approach by incorporating the pedagogical tool, *eishaku* training, into the framework of constructivist perspectives on learning.

These excerpts illustrated above suggest that after the program, Mr. Fujii with a strong desire for improvement of his classroom instruction continued to develop his EFL teaching approach by utilizing resources available to him (study group meeting outside school). With substantial understanding of the conceptual tools such as constructivist perspectives and cognitive psychology of learning, he cultivated more practical based skills after the MEXT program in order to put the conceptual ideas into practice. He did so in order to make students’ learning more effective. In other words, he was able to connect conceptual tools and practical ones by making use of resources available to him in given contexts. To serve his students’ needs, he also drew on his beliefs about ELT approach (“*eishaku* training”) based on his backgrounds as a foreign language learner. Perhaps, this alignment among the settings enabled him to draw so much upon what he had learned from the MEXT program.

In the language training, Mr. Fujii also appropriated another conceptual tool that he calls “spiral learning” (*n* = 16). In the 12th grade reading class, for example, he brought the reading material that students covered 6 month ago and asked them to engage in an information gap activity with peers to fill in the blanks in the text. He first let students work on the task individually and then read aloud the whole passages with the possible answers with an assistance of their partner (Field notes, 10/19/2005). He explained the rational behind his instructional decision as follows:
I think that making learning spiral contributes to an increase of the information about and better understanding of the issues. If students can come across [the topic] in a spiral manner, they can probably better acquire the vocabulary relevant to the topic. So once students cover the materials, I want students to recall it through a spiral learning and to provide them with opportunities to actually use it instead of asking them to translate it into Japanese again. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 10/19/2005)

This excerpt reveals that to fulfill a central goal of the lesson, which is to enable students to “use the target language in real life situations,” Mr. Fujii incorporated language training opportunities within the conceptual framework of “spiral learning.” At the surface level, his expressions in language training such as “repetition,” “memorization,” “Okyo,” and “storage and retrieval of language,” can be interpreted as second/foreign language learning only from cognitive psychologists perspectives. In his teaching practices, however, “practice” is not viewed as something mechanical or verbatim copying from behaviorist points of views, but as a strategy with which students can progress toward the goal of the class. That is “borrowing” (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006) the language gained through practice and applying the knowledge in various authentic contexts, which is language use in real life situation in the problem-solving mode. Thus, his students are treated “not as a repeater but as a communicative being” to collaboratively construct knowledge (Newman & Holzman, 1993, pp. 151-152).

In summary, Mr. Fujii, with a strong desire for developing his teaching instruction, drew on a range of sources and activity settings available to him to appropriate the pedagogical tools presented in the program. The settings include his backgrounds as an EFL learner and professional, the MEXT program, study group meetings prior to and post the program, and his teaching contexts at school. His purposeful use of these settings mirrors the results of source of tool in Table 5.1 where various settings were frequently
coded, including the MEXT program, other professional development opportunities, and “self” such as his EFL teaching experiences at the teaching site at school. By making use of these settings, he developed conceptual and practical tools to construct an EFL teaching approach in a principled way. In particular, to create student-centered learning environments, he made instructional decisions grounded in a theoretical framework of constructivist perspectives of English teaching and learning such as “problem-solving learning,” “peer learning,” and “language use in real life situations.” To better serve Japanese students’ needs, especially English language learning, he appropriated the conceptual tools learned in the MEXT program by drawing on his own EFL learning experiences. Differences in the English teaching and learning contexts for the U.S. (ESL) and Japan (EFL) also allowed him to consider specific EFL learning issues and helped him appropriate the pedagogical tools learned in the program. His professional identities also shifted during the process of appropriating the tools (e.g., from an instructor to “mentor;” from EFL teacher with self-doubt to EFL teacher playing “a dual role” between EFL and ESL). They were reshaped in relation to the activity settings he drew on in the particular contexts described above.

These findings support Vygotskian’s view of learning that is simultaneously unique to individuals and socially co-constructed (e.g., Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Wertsch, 1998). On the one hand, Mr. Fujii’s beliefs about teaching and learning were rooted in his EFL learning and teaching experiences. On the other hand, his learning to teach emerged through his interactions with the available environments, including the MEXT programs, study group meetings, and his schools back home that are embedded in social settings. In addition, what makes his case special is that these settings supported what he desired to
develop, which was English teaching and learning grounded in constructivist perspectives. Perhaps this alignment among the settings and his goals was the reason why he was able to extensively appropriate what he had learned from the program. It should be noted, however, this is not to suggest that his learning was always a linear path of progress. Rather, it included moments of having self-doubt, taking risks, and gaining a sense of achievement.

With a strong understanding of conceptual tools, he reflected on and critiqued his previous teaching approach and the widely established instructions in Japan, and then considered alternative approaches to EFL teaching. These principles also helped him set up the goals of his lessons. After making a transition from the MEXT program to the teaching sites in Japan, he continued to learn practical tools in professional development opportunities in order to put the conceptual ideas into practice and help his students achieve his instructional goals. When he reflected on his current EFL teaching approach in comparison to the previous one, he explained how his teaching approach was reshaped as a result of MEXT program:

When I use activities in my class, they are not off the top of my head but come from what is behind of the activities based on what I read during the program. I have certain aims of the lesson and there are rationales for having the proposed activities to achieve the aims. I now have a sort of confidence in my instructional decisions. (Mr. Fujii, Interview: 5/12/2006).

As is evident from his classroom observations, Mr. Fujii implemented practical tools grounded in theoretical principles, rather than a series of inconsistent teaching activities. He did so by considering what activities can best serve for students’ learning. His appropriation level, therefore, in Grossman et al’s (1999) words, was “conceptual underpinnings” of pedagogical tools.
From Rambling to Goal-Oriented Teaching: Mr. Suzuki’s Case

Table 5.2 shows the list of code and frequency counts associated with my analysis of Mr. Suzuki’s interviews, classroom observations, reports, and questionnaire. The most frequently coded practical tools used in his classroom instruction include a native English speaking assistant language teacher (n = 9), group/pair work (n = 7), impromptu speech (n = 7), textbooks (n = 7), “writing (post-reading) activity” (n = 6), and “curriculum” (n = 6). These practical tools were grounded mostly in the features of conceptual principles such as “ideas about natural communication” (n = 6), “collaborative learning” (n = 4), and “actual use of language” (n = 4). However, my field notes suggest that he faced challenges in applying the pedagogical tools in a principled way. A variety of activity settings mediated his teaching conceptions and practices, and also helped (re)shape his professional identities. In the rank-ordering and open-ended questions in the questionnaire, he ranked two activity settings, which were professional development opportunities in particular the MEXT program and his teaching sites at schools, the most relevant to his conceptions of teaching. However, the case study results reveal that his educational background as an EFL learner and his participation in continued professional development opportunities after the MEXT program also influenced his instructional decision making. Similar to the previous section, this section discusses the most frequently coded pedagogical tools that Mr. Suzuki employed in his classroom instruction.

It also describes important aspects associated with his use of the tools such as the sources and curricular areas of the tools as well as the problems he attempted to solve in using the tools.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>EFL Teaching at the senior high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking/Listening</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning (syllabus, curriculum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ss’ positive attitude toward communication</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Source of Tool</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prior experiences/knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>National mandate/policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>School mandate/expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>University entrance examinations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
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<td>Professional development opportunities after MEXT</td>
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<td><strong>Tool</strong></td>
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<td>Schema</td>
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<td>Ideas about discourse</td>
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<td>Top-down process</td>
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<td>Collaborative/Peer learning</td>
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<td>Idea about natural communication</td>
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<td>Learning style</td>
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<td>Making tests</td>
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<td>Awareness of readers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideas about teaching techniques and planning</td>
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Continued

Table 5.2: Codes and Frequencies of Mr. Suzuki’s Instruction after Participation in the MEXT program
Table 5.2 continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher role (participant &amp; adviser)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Importance to develop an ability to express ideas</td>
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<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
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**Practical:**

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<td>Reading aloud</td>
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<td>Translation</td>
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<td>Reading activity</td>
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<td>Writing activity</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Impromptu speech</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>ALT</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Visual aids</td>
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<td>Group/Pair Activity</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation/reporting</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Listening activity</td>
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<td>Whole class activity</td>
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<td>Recognition of best project/idea of students</td>
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<td>Textbook</td>
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<td>Use of Japanese</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>Handout</td>
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<td>Language Laboratory (LL) room</td>
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<td>Assignment</td>
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<td>Peer evaluation</td>
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<td>Curriculum</td>
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<td>Professional development</td>
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<td>Quiz</td>
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<td>Praising students’ work</td>
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<td>Individual work</td>
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**Problem**

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<td>Ts’ learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>University entrance exams</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>
Table 5.2 continued

| Management | 4 |
| Ss’ language/communication issues | 28 |
| Term-exams | 1 |
| Ss’ (positive) attitude toward group work | 1 |
| Goals for English education at school | 10 |
| T’s own English level | 6 |
| Teacher identity | 9 |
| Ss’ interests | 5 |
| Differences of learning between Japan and U.S. | 3 |
| Resistance from students | 3 |
| Planning | 3 |

| Type of Tool |  |
| Practical | 90 |
| Conceptual | 34 |

**Impromptu Speech, Ideas about Actual Communication, and Native English Speaking Assistant Teachers**

The most frequently coded pedagogical tools in Mr. Suzuki’s classroom instruction were native English speaking assistant language teacher (ALTs) (n = 9) and those associated with improvisation, which were “impromptu speech” (n = 7) and “idea about natural interaction in English” (n = 6). By employing a team-teaching with ALTs, Mr. Suzuki attempted to fulfill the goals of the Super English Language High School (SELHi) curriculum, which are to “develop students’ English conversation skills” and also to “logically express their own opinions” (Questionnaire, Part III). The most frequently coded language skills in the Area, “speaking and listening” (n = 48), clearly demonstrate his strong intention to achieve the goals by focusing on oral communication through the use of these tools. Drawing on a variety of activity settings, he considered the best instruction in his particular teaching contexts. When he faced challenges to use
certain tools, he modified the goals of his lessons and the curriculum of the SELHi and used alternative tools instead hoping someday the use of the tools would help students achieve the original goals.

For example, at the beginning of his “Communication” course that I observed, Mr. Suzuki gave his nine 12th grade students a topic of impromptu speech, *My dream*, and asked individual students to talk about their dreams for 30 seconds (My field note, 10/27/2005). During the speech, an ALT, Mr. Suzuki’s partner in the class, gave the students comments (e.g., “you are the strangest person”) and also paraphrased and corrected their English. In the post-observation interview, he explained that in every lesson, students engaged in different kinds of impromptu speech, including letting students compete for who can continue to speak for one minute in group. When asked the reason behind the use of this practical tool, Mr. Suzuki emphasized the importance of creating “natural communication environments” to support students’ English development. As he commented, this tool was one of the conceptual principles he used to create the English curriculum at his school:

The syllabus I showed to you was composed with the plan that students will be gradually able to express their ideas or something difficult. Communication 1 to 3 (in four levels of the course), however, are prepared tasks. Students usually prepare for them beforehand and present their ideas. These courses may include impromptu activities, but they usually take a prepared form, so it is not so natural [communication]. Therefore, Communication 4 requires students to promptly express their opinions through naturally talking [with others]. That is why we included improvisation [in our lessons]. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005)

This excerpt suggests that Mr. Suzuki believes that an impromptu activity (level 4 in the curriculum) could equip his students with English skills to handle “natural communication,” which he thinks may not occur in a prepared speech mainly conducted
at the level 1 to 3. A variety of activity settings seemed to shape his appropriation of these pedagogical tools (impromptu speech and natural communication). As he comments:

The rationale [behind these impromptu activities] was my experiences in the U.S. MEXT program where I was exposed to natural English. But, what directly helped me come up with the specific idea [about the impromptu activities] stemmed from my experiences as an interviewer for the oral interview of an English proficiency exam called STEP Eiken. During the exam, I saw that my students, who usually made efforts on prepared tasks [which we commonly require them to do at school], were not able to respond the way they wanted. The oral interview of STEP Eiken is so similar to the impromptu tasks [in which students engage in my lesson]. (Mr. Suzuki, Follow-up interview: 10/26/2005)

He further went on to comment:

The idea [about impromptu speech] came from the speech club organized in the U.S. [base] in which I participate. When I made an impromptu speech there, I found it quite interesting. The reason why I connected it to “the speech” activities we do at school, was [due to differences in English learning between ESL and EFL contexts]. [English learning] tasks in the ESL contexts contain lots of interaction. However, in Japan, students feel shy about talking in English and they are also sensitive to their own English mistakes which create the most serious problem. Therefore, the tasks [which require students to interact to one another] are quite challenging to them. That is why we let our students to do prepared activities as the first step which are a common practice in many other schools. But if students work on only such tasks, they cannot deal with natural interaction. To prepare them for such natural interaction, we use impromptu speech. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 3/23/2006)

While staying in the U.S., Mr. Suzuki was exposed to “natural environments” for leaning English and observed English learning through interaction in the ESL program. These learning experiences in the MEXT program shaped his EFL teaching belief that natural interaction in English promotes language learning. After the program, he continued to develop his English skills by attending a club activity offered by U.S. army base near his home town. In the club, he encountered an impromptu speech activity as a practical tool, which was consistent with the conceptual tool he was exposed to in the program, learning
English in a “natural English speaking environment.” His experience as an evaluator of the English examination further reinforced his belief that prepared speech did not meet the demands of “natural communication.” The goals and practices emphasized in these activity settings (MEXT program, professional development opportunity after the program) seemed to overlap and helped him construct his beliefs about EFL teaching and practices related to improvisation.

As he also pointed out in the second excerpt above, however, this alignment of the settings does not mean that he smoothly began to appropriate the tools after the completion of the program. The excerpt suggests that he faced challenges in using the principle, “importance of having interaction for English learning,” which stems from his students’ hesitation to an “interaction” in English. As can be seen in Table 5.2, this challenge, “the issues related to students’ language and communication,” was one of the problems he faced the most (n = 28). To understand and handle this problem, instead of using the conceptual tool (interaction in English), he implemented an alternative approach of letting his students engage in one-way speech as the first step to achieve the original goal (two-way interaction). He attributed this problem to students’ limited English level as follows:

While making the syllabus, what concerned me a lot was that people often say to interact with others promotes English conversation skills or enables us to speak English. What students do in our lessons is one way. Most of the patterns are students talk in a one-sided manner. Because students’ English level, both a speaker’s and listener’s, is low, it is impossible for them to interact to one another. If it is a talk between a native English speaker and a student, a normal and natural conversation should occur. Therefore, we [colleagues and I] wanted to enable students to speak [one way speech] as the first step. That became the goal of Communication 4. The lesson, which I just showed to you, was the most difficult level in our Communication courses. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005)
This excerpt reveals that instead of transferring the conceptual tool as a framework of his instruction (importance of interaction), Mr. Suzuki modified the goals in such a way that students were encouraged to “speak” but not required to extensively interact with others. In other words, he implemented an alternative tool, “one-way” communication such as an impromptu speech. His comments on interaction with a native English speaker, “if it is a talk between a native speaker and a student, a normal and natural conversation should occur” suggests why Mr. Suzuki actively invited an ALT to his classroom and let him play a major role of interacting with students. Mr. Suzuki describes the ALT as being able to “promptly respond to students” (Follow-up interview: 11/8/2005).

The purpose of this one-way communication also met the school responsibility/students’ expectation to prepare them for university entrance examinations. He commented that the topics of impromptu speech came from the actual essay of the past examinations such as “reasons for applying to the university” and “the most memorable events in your high school education” (Interview, 10/27/2005). The tool, “improvisation,” therefore played a dual role of fulfilling the goals of the SELHi curriculum that stressed “the development of students’ English skills” and “to logically speak their opinions/ideas” as well as meeting the school responsibility to successfully send students to universities. However, it is notable that his modification of the goals of the lessons and curriculum and also the implementation of an alternative tool (one-way communication) to deal with students’ communication issues seemed to make it difficult for them to “collaborative learn with others” which will be the tool to be focused in the next section.
Group Work and Collaborative Learning

“Appropriating conceptual underpinning” (Grossman et al., 1999) means that a teacher understands the assumptions of a pedagogical tool and knows the reason behind his/her instructional decisions in particular teaching contexts. Mr. Suzuki was able to somewhat articulate the features of conceptual principles, but his classroom observations suggest that he faced some challenges in knowing their pedagogical applications, in particular, regarding what his students could benefit from engaging in specific activities.

Table 5.2 shows that Mr. Suzuki’s classroom instruction stressed group/pair work activities (n = 7) by using human resources, native English speaking assistant language teachers (ALTs) (n = 9), textbooks/supplement materials chosen by himself and/or his colleagues (n = 7), and the English curriculum he created with his colleagues to fulfill the goals of the SELHi program (n = 6). A frequently coded instructional area, “speaking and listening” (n = 48), in the table reflects his purposeful use of these tools. The findings of the table also reveal that Mr. Suzuki employed some of these practical tools (e.g., group/pair work) grounded in a conceptual framework of “collaborative learning” (n = 4). In spite of the results developed from multiple data, however, my field notes based on his classroom observations and interviews revealed a challenge he faced in terms of its pedagogical application. He claimed to be engaging his students in “collaborative learning,” the tool being exposed to in the MEXT program, but his implementation of the tool in his classroom instruction and an assignment he provided did not promote the overall concept of collaborative learning’s emphasis on co-construction of knowledge.
This issue, in Grossman’s et al.’s (1999) word, is a challenge to “understand how those features [of a tool] contribute to the conceptual tool” (p.17). The following examples are cases in point.

In his “Communication” class, nine 12th graders presented their opinions in group regarding a question in the discussion focused textbook. Students were given a task of playing a role of “the Budget Department of new South American country of Amazonas” and reported which items on the lists (e.g., agriculture; transportation; police and national guard; education) get what percentage of the budget and the reasons behind the decisions. In the class, an ALT and Mr. Suzuki collaboratively taught the lesson. While the former played a main role of promptly providing students with feedback on their reports and speech, the latter organized the lesson and managed the classroom activities. However, both teachers knew that they could “take part in partner’s role(s) any time (Follow-up interview: 11/8/2005). The main goals of this lesson were “to develop students’ language and communication skills with which they can logically express their opinions,” “to eventually achieve a goal with students’ own efforts through collaborative learning,” and “to reach a consensus within a group in problem-solving task,” (Interview, 3/23/2006). By taking students’ learning (n=48) into special consideration in terms of language development and their abilities to independently achieve something, he let students work on the task-based activity on the textbook and present their opinions in group.

Despite the goals of the lesson, the classroom interaction among Mr. Suzuki, the ALT, and students were quite restricted to an “IRE” discourse pattern (Cazden 1988; Hall, 2002) consisting of teacher’s asking a question to student(s) (Initiation), student’s answering the question (Response), and teacher’s evaluating the answers (Evaluation)
Unlike what he hoped, this mode of interaction did not seem to allow students to collaboratively learn from peers. The following example illustrates one of the IRE discourse patterns of his team-taught instruction with the ALT which shows a challenge Mr. Suzuki faced in implementing the group work activity grounded in “collaborative learning.” When the ALT asked one of the groups to report their decision on the budget distribution, one of the students in the group started to talk. Because the ALT seemed to be surprised at the group’s unexpected response, he quickly responded to it as follows:

Student: We decided to give 9 percent of budget to agriculture, 9 percent of budget to transportation, 9 percent of budget to (student continues to say 9 percent to each item). And we will save the rest of it for the budget next year.

ALT: All 9 percent? All the same percent?

Student: (silence)

Mr. Suzuki: (drawing a table to record each group’s responses on the blackboard)

ALT: OK (Field Notes, 8/27/2005)

This interaction illustrates that, although students indeed had opportunities to present their response to the class in English, neither the instructors nor other students asked the presenters the reasons why they wanted to distribute the budget equally and save the rest, and challenged them in a way they could persuade others or modify their ideas by using support from peers/instructors. The whole presentation period of time (20 minutes out of a 45 minute class hour) were used for student responses to the question, but further
exploration of each group’s different opinions did not occur in the lesson. This example suggests that Mr. Suzuki may face a difficulty in knowing the conceptual principle of “collaborative learning.”

Another example of Mr. Suzuki’s challenges regarding the pedagogical applications of “group work” came from the same communication class I observed, in which he required students to do an assignment. In the assignment, the students needed to work in the same group for the next lesson. The rationale for the assignment (reading a passage and work in pair to respond to the questions in the text) was grounded in “collaborative learning” and “problem solving task” (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 3/23/2006). Although his intention of using the tools was consistent with the assignment, what students were required to do in and outside class did not allow him to know their learning through “group work activities” and “collaborative learning.” When asked about the assignments for the lesson he responded,

At the end of the [previous] class, we read the whole passage [of the unit in the textbook], and students were asked to read it again and think about the answers of the questions in the text with peers in group. I assigned them because it was the topic of today’s discussion” (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005).

Mr. Suzuki’s purpose of letting students work in group was “to expand their knowledge by adding others’ opinions, which are originally unaware to them or different from theirs” (Interview 10/27/2005). As he assumed, outside the class students may have collaboratively worked in group, achieved a consensus of making a decision, and learned something different from their own ideas. However, the process of constructing new knowledge through learning with peers was not paid attention to in this lesson, and the main focus was placed on students’ reporting about their answers to the whole class in
English. In other words, in his lesson, the activities fulfilled one of the purposes of the lesson, which was “to express students’ opinions,” but may not have other purposes (“to eventually achieve a goal with students’ own efforts through collaborative learning,” and “to reach a consensus within a group in problem-solving task,” (Interview, 3/23/2006).

This is because the previous lesson (reading the passage), the assignment (reading it again, discussing the answers with others), and the following lesson (reporting them to the whole class) did not allow Mr. Suzuki to see to what extent students actually “expand[ed] their knowledge” through the group work activities.

In the post-observation interview, Mr. Suzuki explained what activity settings mediated his teaching beliefs about “group work” and “collaborative learning.” As he commented:

The reason behind the activities [group/pair work] is because of the importance of so called “collaborative learning.” When I was there [in the U.S. program], I took a graduate course. In the class, we were often asked to work in group. At the beginning, I did not like it. Since we could choose if we wanted to work individually, in pair, or in group, [I did not choose group work but] I observed my classmate who worked in group. When I looked at their work, however, I realized that the final project did not come from one person’s idea. When three did not agree to one’s idea, I was observing how they handled it. Eventually, three students’ ideas and one’s opinions were nicely integrated in the product. I found it very good because the group work gradually added what you did not know and something different from your idea. It expanded a person’s capacity. Therefore, in my class, I want to include pair and group work as much as I can (Mr. Suzuki, interview: 10/27/2005)

He went on to explain:

In the MEXT program, we experienced something like a teaching practicum such as observing classroom lessons in ESL programs and local high schools. Before participating in the MEXT program, I used pair work in my class. In the first school I worked, my students were academically challenged. If I kept lecturing, it did not work. It was good to let them work in pair because they felt very relaxed by working with their friends. When I had the teaching practicum in the MEXT program, most classes provided students with projects/tasks in collaborative learning. My use of group and pair work most probably comes from these
experiences in the program. Eventually, students can become independent and achieve something by their own efforts. That is why I let my students work in group and pair. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005)

These excerpts suggest that the pedagogical tools (group/pair work and collaborative learning) were constructed in two activity settings, which were the first school sites of his teaching and the MEXT program respectively. Before the MEXT program, he already experimented with group work to adjust his teaching to academically challenged students. His comment, “they felt very relaxed by working with their friends” revealed that he originally implemented the tool to make learning relaxing for academically low students. During the MEXT program, he was further exposed to “collaborative learning,” which became the conceptual framework of group work activities. In particular, observing his classmates’ group work allowed him to see how they expanded their knowledge through an encounter of different ideas from others. Mr. Suzuki’s research project also revealed his exposure to this conceptual tool in the MEXT program. His project emphasized language learning through negotiating meaning and increasing learner autonomy. Drawing on Brown (1994), for example, he discussed that “collaborative learning” is “generating interactive language for practice in negotiation of meaning and for extended conversational exchange” and “promoting learner responsibility and autonomy because it ‘places responsibility for action and progress upon each of the members of the group somewhat equally’” (Mr. Suzuki, p. 14).

Perhaps one of more obvious examples of his challenges in applying the pedagogical tool, “collaborative learning,” occurred when Mr. Suzuki taught reading (English II) with another ALT to 39 12th graders. This case in particular explains that he made efforts to provide the tool in his class, and yet succeeded in doing so only at the
surface level. Due to “university entrance examinations” (n=13) that many of his students would take in the following semester, Mr. Suzuki usually let students work on the workbook that prepared them for the exams. On the day when I observed Mr. Suzuki’s reading class, however, he planned to include an activity with the help of the ALT in which students learned cultural aspects of the U.S. After orally translating new vocabulary associated with Halloween, which the ALT wrote on the blackboard, students were asked to work in group to draw a face on a pumpkin. This activity was related to one of the words presented in the vocabulary, that is, jack-o’-lantern. Mr. Suzuki explained that at the end of the activity, students would be asked to choose the best jack-o’-lantern among all drawings, and a winner would receive a reward from him. This Halloween activity consumed 30 minutes of the total of 50 minutes of the reading lesson, 15 minutes of which students were drawing a face on pumpkin in group. They seemed to enjoy making a product and completed it with peers by talking in Japanese. While their making it, Mr. Suzuki and the ALT were walking around in the classroom to observe students’ work. When asked the reasons behind these activities, he responded as follows:

Well, because we usually study for university entrance examinations, I wanted to relax students for a while and also to develop their cultural understanding. I should have asked the ALT to explain the history of jack-o’-lantern, but I did not talk about it with her beforehand. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005)

Mr. Suzuki further explained his decision on the vocabulary activity with the ALT and the sources of learning the tool. As he commented:

In the methodology course, we were asked to create teaching plans. When we engaged in making a reading lesson, Dr. L explained to us that a reading lesson includes pre-reading, in-reading, and finally post-reading activity. In pre-reading, I learned that it is good to have a task to activate students’ schema. What I did after the activity in my lesson (drawing a face on pumpkin) was nothing to do
with reading. But, since the topic is related to Halloween, I wanted my students to recall what they knew about it. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 3/23/2006)

These excerpts suggest that Mr. Suzuki’s intention for these activities was to activate students’ background knowledge associated with Halloween with a “pre-main activity” and then to learn cultural aspects related to it. However, the activities in which the students engaged, “a vocabulary learning” at first and then “creating jack-o’-lantern” in group, did not provide “a coherent sequence of thought and language” (Newell et al., 1999) to support students’ learning about U.S. culture. After the vocabulary activity, students simply did not have opportunities to use the words in the later group work. In addition, Mr. Suzuki’s use of the practical tool was not grounded in “collaborative learning,” which he viewed as a rationale for using group work.

As these excerpts suggest, in his reading lesson, Mr. Suzuki employed the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program (collaborative learning and ideas about pre-reading activity). However, as he admitted, the pre-reading activity had “nothing to do with reading” and the group work was described as “to relax students.” In other words, the purposes of these activities (e.g., vocabulary learning; drawing a picture in group) were not based on a concern for what his students could take from them to support their learning about language and culture, but rather on occupying students’ attention to create a jack-o’-lantern. Although Mr. Suzuki articulated the features of “collaborative learning,” his classroom observations revealed that he faced challenges in putting the ideas into practice. Some of the examples further suggest that he used the tools, group work and collaborative learning, without a substantial understanding of their principles, as was the case with his use of vocabulary and drawing activities.
Writing Activity and Actual Use of English

Other frequently coded pedagogical tools are “writing (post-reading) activity” (n = 6) and “actual use of English” (n = 4). Mr. Suzuki, who began to appropriate the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program, considered his learning in the MEXT program as “the starting points of what [he] did for the last 6-7 years” (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 8/29/2005). This comment reflects the results of the table in which he highly attributed the source of his tools to the MEXT program (n = 64). Another source of the two pedagogical tools, which was not as frequent as other sources but closely related, was “his prior experiences” (n = 7). In particular, his educational history from high school education to undergraduate studies seemed to be influential for his conceptions of teaching and practices. Because of the challenges he had faced as an EFL learner, he came to believe that “actual use” of what was learned about English language (n = 4) could enable students to be successful English learners:

During my three year high school years, I studied English so hard. Right after entering a university, however, I stopped doing that. In the same summer I planned to take the STEP Eiken (English proficiency exam) and prepared for that. But I found that I did not remember any words in my vocabulary book which I studied just three months ago. The reason for that was because I did not use what I studied. From this perspective, even though we work on workbooks for university entrance exams, it is important to let students actually express [use] what they learned so that it will become their own. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 3/23/2006)

Mr. Suzuki’s comment above suggests that his challenges that all efforts he had made to pass examinations (e.g., memorizing words in vocabulary workbook) when he was a high school student did not contribute to his later English language learning, shaped his principle of English teaching. That is actual use of English knowledge is indispensable for EFL learning.
This conceptual principle was further reinforced in the MEXT program. Mr. Suzuki was exposed to instructional techniques in reading and listening (e.g., pre- and post-reading activities) and the reason behind planning lessons based on the tools (framework in reading and listening instruction). The following excerpts illustrate his appropriation of the tools from the MEXT program, and show that they and another tool he carried on from his educational history (actual use of language) were eventually connected. Reflecting on his 11th grade writing lesson, Mr. Suzuki noted:

Researcher: You noted in your report that the idea about learning English through expressing what you learned came from not only your own experiences in the past but also an influence from Dr. L in the MEXT program. Could you elaborate on that? What sort of experiences in the program actually affected the idea?

Mr. Suzuki: It may not be so directly affected, but I learned about receptive skills which are reading and listening [in her methodology class]. Reading, for example, includes pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. I learned that, instead of completing [reading] just with [while] reading, it is good to include a follow-up activity, which is also applicable to listening skills. For example, students can express their opinions about the same topic or discuss it. The idea [about actual use of English] came from that experience. (Mr. Suzuki, Report 4: 2/2/2006)

It is because I believe that the retention rate will increase if students produce what they learned in an expansive task. With the actual use of language yourself, it becomes real English learning (Mr. Suzuki, Follow-up interview: 5/26/2007)

As can be seen, these excerpts describe how the two activity settings (his educational history and the MEXT program) came together and enabled him to rationalize his instructional decision to support students’ language learning.

As he made a transition from the MEXT program as an activity setting to that of teaching EFL at his school, he held on to these pedagogical tools and eventually implemented them in his instruction. For example, his reservations toward studying
simply for university entrance examinations without the actual use of English knowledge allowed him to reconsider an alternative to teaching to the examinations. In the interviews, the questionnaire, and reports, Mr. Suzuki consistently distinguished “teaching to examinations,” which he considers as a commonly implemented teaching approach for higher grade students in Japanese high schools, and “teaching beyond examinations,” which he and his colleagues attempted to conduct at his school. As Mr. Suzuki remarked,

The main language domains we emphasize in our syllabus are speaking and writing, because we think that what students need to acquire [through English learning] is skills to express their opinions. When I asked my students to logically explain their ideas, they cannot do it even in Japanese. For example, their talk goes different directions or does not have enough explanation in it….In reading and writing course, higher grader they become, more university related workbooks they have to work on. Therefore, in communication courses, they focus on talk and writing about their opinions. In reading and writing courses, however, they work on workbooks for university entrance examinations. What is different from other schools, however, is that as we work on the workbooks, we further require students to write about their thoughts about what they are working on as an additional task. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 8/29/2005)

His comments suggest that ultimate goal of his writing lesson based on the SELHi curriculum was to “develop students’ self expression” for English learning and his lessons were planned to achieve the goals. He also attempted to respond to one of the school expectations, that is, university entrance examinations. The above excerpt also reveals that each course offered to students had its distinct role; while Reading and Writing prepare students for university entrance examinations and also foster their language learning for writing activities, Communication focuses on developing speaking skills and writing skills to express their own ideas.
In the interviews, I also explored how Mr. Suzuki had begun to (re)shape his understandings of and purposes for EFL teaching as a result of the MEXT program. As Table 5.2 shows, the MEXT program (n = 64) and his teaching sites at schools (n = 20 for colleagues; n = 14 for school responsibilities) were highly relevant activity settings for mediating classroom instruction. His retrospective interview and reports also reveal an interactive influence that these settings had on his conceptions of teaching and practices. Because of Mr. Suzuki’s highly positive remarks for the MEXT program such as “I owe what I do now as an English teacher to Dr. L and Ms. W in the MEXT program” (Questionnaire: Part IV), I expected that Mr. Suzuki would have appropriated pedagogical tools presented in the program without experiencing much difficulties. However, as he explained in the interviews, his transitional experiences included moments of disappointments and challenges:

Around that time [right after the participating in the MEXT program], I mainly taught reading classes. I let my students to work on very conventional university-driven workbooks and included, what I called Culture Time, in the interval. During the Culture Time, I let them listen to real news and music, and showed TV commercials. Around the first year after I was transferred to this current school, I taught whatever I wanted to do. Our school was not yet designated as a SELHi. It was like making use of whatever I had learned in the MEXT program. On the second year, our school became a SELHi, but I still continued to do the way I wanted. After my students became the third year, I realized that their reaction toward my teaching became negative. Because I taught English in self-serving way, there were some students who could not follow it. Others showed resentment to my teaching since they thought that I just taught in the way I liked and did not think about anything [my students] at all. Last year, I struggled with it. I thought that my rambling instruction in turn caused this consequence. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 10/27/2005)

This excerpt suggests that for the first several years after the completion of the MEXT program, his inclination toward EFL teaching was to try out “whatever [he] had learned in the [MEXT] program” rather than attempting to develop a broader idea about EFL
teaching. In particular, his incompatible instruction of the two goals, “let[ting] my students to work on very conventional university-driven workbooks and include[ing], what I call Culture Time, in the interval” suggests that he had challenges in appropriating the tools from the program with a broader conceptual framework. The interview data also illustrate that the challenges he faced involved teacher identity. For several years after returning from the U.S., he seemed to play a single player at schools. He reflected on his professional self that “I had been conceited after I came back from the U.S….. If I believed that such and such teaching methods were good, I just used them in my lessons without inhibition” (Interview: 8/29/2005).

As the above excerpt revealed, this resulted in his students’ resistant to his “self-serving instruction.” Through experiencing the dismay, Mr. Suzuki began to appropriate the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program. The interview data also illustrate his transformation of teacher identity around that time. It was in the fourth year after the completion of the MEXT program and the third year after his school was designated as “Super English Language High school” (SELHi). He became a coordinator of the SELHi project and launched enthusiastically into creating the English curriculum with his colleagues as a team. In particular, they collaboratively set up the goals of the English education and the components to be emphasized in instruction (“to develop students’ self expression” and “speech, skit, debate” respectively). As time went by, they revised the curriculum. Mr. Suzuki commented:

Through such experiences, I realized that I [what I believe] was not absolute. We have the curriculum for our English teaching, but I want other English teachers to teach the way they like. We all share the basis as the curriculum, but it is OK to be flexible with how to do it [in their lessons]. I finally started to feel this way from the end of last year. (Mr. Suzuki, interview: 10/27/2005).
This comment suggests Mr. Suzuki’s transformation of teacher identity from a single player as a “self-serving teacher” to a team player as a collaborative curriculum composer. This collaborative work further allowed him to see the benefits of using pedagogical tools he had learned in the MEXT program in his instruction. For example, he explained how the two activity settings, the MEXT program and his teaching sites at school, began to come together and enabled him to base his instructional decision on ways of supporting his students’ learning:

Right after returning to my teaching sites, I was so big on the English teaching approach learned in the U.S., so I just included the approach I considered to be good in my instruction without deeply thinking about it much. Then I gradually realized that there is an order in a lesson consisting of an introduction, a body, and then a conclusion. It is first to motivate students, to go into the actual activity, and then finally to have an evaluation which leads to the next step. What I really failed before was that I let students to do whatever I believed to be good without having any vision of their future with the activities. It ended without any sequence between them. It was like the instructional decision based on my feelings. I think it was very close to such approach. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 8/29/2005)

He further went on to comment:

As far as the teaching order, I learned a framework of ESL instruction from Dr. L’s class. It consisted of the task of activating schema, the main task, and the expansive task to conclude the lesson. In the course, we created lesson plans by using the real textbooks we were using in Japan. (Mr. Suzuki, Follow-up Interview: 5/26/2007)

A short-term plan includes a time span of term-examinations, but a long-term plan refers to a plan for one or three years. It was since I became a head of SELHi program that I realized the importance of making such short- and long-term plans. It was through creating the syllabus of the English courses with other English teachers. (Mr. Suzuki, Follow-up Interview: 5/30/2007).

His comments in the first excerpt illustrates how he transformed his professional self from a teacher who was self-satisfied with his instruction by randomly implementing the tools learned in the program to a teacher who takes students’ learning into great consideration by framing his instruction with teaching goals and process in mind. The
issue of his identity as an EFL professional reflects the results of “the problem” described in the table in which he quite often commented on his teacher identities (n = 9). Other excerpts reveal that Mr. Suzuki’s teaching methodology course in the MEXT program allowed him to realize that there should be a teaching process within a lesson. In particular, composing a specific lesson plan in four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) helped him shape the instruction. After the teachers were exposed to practical and conceptual tools associated with each language domain in the program, they were asked to create a lesson plan with the authorized textbooks used in their own lessons in Japan (Lezhnev, 1998).

In spite of the practices of composing lesson plans in the methodology class, which were the activities taken into consideration Japanese EFL teachers’ actual teaching environments, it took Mr. Suzuki approximately four years to implement the tools presented in the program in his actual classroom instruction. As he noted, the goals and practices emphasized at his teaching sites seemed to make it difficult for him to integrate the two settings in substantial way:

Right after returning to my country [own teaching sites], all I could do was to complete what we had to do with textbooks and workbooks by keeping a pace with other English teachers. This situation continued for the first several years. (Mr. Suzuki, Follow-up Interview: 5/26/2007)

However, he held on to the idea about the process of reading/listening instruction such as pre-and post reading. While making the SELHi curriculum with his colleagues, Mr. Suzuki also realized that he would need alternatives to his previous teaching approach which did not have a sequence of English teaching from both short- and long-term perspectives:
I am now able to teach by considering the future of students into consideration. It includes what would it be after one hour lesson of three credit course as a short-term consideration, and also after one year and also three years as a long-term consideration. It was after I became a head of the SELHi program that I realized the importance of making a long-term plan. It was after I started to make the syllabus of English courses with other English teachers. (Mr. Suzuki, Interview: 8/29/2005)

This excerpt revealed that his appropriation process involved not only his role as a chair of the SELHi project but also collaborative work with his colleagues (n=28) (see the source of tool in the table).

While creating the SELHi curriculum with his colleagues, he began to appropriate the pedagogical tool encountered in the method class (ideas about pre- and post-reading) by combining the tools other activity settings made available to him (“curriculum with short- and long-term goals” and “actual use of language”). In one of his 12th grade reading classes, for example, he let his students engage in writing (post-reading) activity. He explained English grammar points (idioms) in the textbook to students, which often appears in university entrance examinations, and then asked them to write English sentences within 20 words by using each idiom. Students were required to write sentences relevant to their own life stories (Mr. Suzuki, reports 5: 2/9/2006). Mr. Suzuki explained the reasons behind this activity as follows:

If students finished the lesson with learning grammar points in the workbook [a grammar-based book for university entrance examination], they will not have the situations where they can actual use what they learned. When they express English with the knowledge, it finally becomes their own. I offer my lessons based on this idea (Mr. Suzuki, Reports 5: 2/9/2006)

Mr. Suzuki appropriated the pedagogical tool learned from the university instructor in the MEXT program (post-reading activity) to facilitate students’ language learning. When using the tool, he also took into consideration the main goal of the SELHi curriculum (to
develop students’ self expressions), which was collaboratively set up with other
colleagues, and his teaching belief about the “importance of the actual use of language”
learned from a hard experience when he made a transition from his high school to
undergraduate studies. In other words, by using these tools, he attempted to be
responsible for fulfilling the central goal of the curriculum of SELHi, and at the same
time for preparing students for university entrance examinations, which is also one of the
important roles that the school needed to play. To support students’ language learning, he
used practical tools such as post-reading activities being grounded in a conceptual
framework, “actual use of the language” and “process in reading/listening instruction.”
Multiple activity settings interactively mediated his appropriation of these pedagogical
tools. These settings include his EFL learning experiences in the past (from high school
to undergraduate studies), the MEXT programs (methodology course, classroom
observations), and his teaching experiences after the program (students’ resistant to his
instruction, creating the curriculum). Because of overlapping and competing goals and
practices across and within the settings, for the first several years Mr. Suzuki faced
challenges in appropriating the tools in a principled way. However, through experiencing
the difficulties, he began to appropriate the tools presented in the MEXT program by
using resources available to him in particular settings (e.g., designation of the school as
SELHi; colleagues).

To summarize, Mr. Suzuki appropriated the pedagogical tools (e.g., collaborative
learning; natural communication; pre-and post-reading activity; instructional process of
reading/listening) presented in the MEXT program into his classroom instruction. During
the appropriation process of these tools, he drew on various activity settings to conduct
his teaching, including his teaching sites at school, his educational background as an EFL learner, the MEXT program, and language development opportunities outside school after the program. However, approximately four years after he made a transition from the MEXT program to his own teaching contexts in Japan, his teaching had been rather “rambling,” and that sort of instruction eventually created resistance among his students. The reasons why he was not able to appropriate the tools during that period of time involved the different goals and practices the key activity settings emphasized in addition to his inconsistent use of the tools learned in the program. That is “responsibility for the completion of required workbooks” at his school and use of communicative-based teaching approaches based on “his own desires.”

Through collaboratively creating the SELHi curriculum with other teachers in the English department at his school, he began to enthusiastically appropriate the pedagogical tools presented in the program into his classroom lessons. His teacher identity was also transformed around that time from a single player to a team-player as an English teacher. To adjust his instruction to his students’ English language level and also to respond to the responsibility of the school such as university entrance examinations, he modified the goals of the English education of the school and implemented an alternative tool as the first step to reach the original goals in the future (from two-way to one-way interaction). His classroom observations also revealed that he faced challenges for the pedagogical application of tools (e.g., group work; collaborative learning), especially in regards to how to implement a certain activity in a principled way. One of the possible sources of his challenge was related to his surface level of understanding of the tools as was in the case of “drawing a face on pumpkin” in Halloween activities.
“Going Back to My Original Teaching”: Mr. Kato’s Case

In this section, I will present another teacher, Mr. Kato who contrasted sharply from the previous teachers (Mr. Fujii and Mr. Suzuki) with respect to how he appropriated the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program. Table 5.3 shows the list of codes and frequencies developed through his interviews, classroom observations, repots on his teaching practices, and responses to the questionnaire. It reveals the tendency of his EFL instruction in his teaching sites at school. Mr. Kato indicated in the rank-ordering question on the questionnaire that the most influential social context that shaped his beliefs about EFL teaching was the U.S. MEXT program in which he participated in 2003. However, the qualitative data suggest that his pre-training experiences/knowledge and teaching sites at the current school also had strong effects on his appropriation of pedagogical tools. Various sources and settings contributed to his learning to teach. For example, unlike the previous teachers, Mr. Kato’s school setting did not support his experiments with the pedagogical tools in the way he desired. His limited understanding of the conceptual underpinnings of instructional tools seemed to be another source of challenges he faced, in particular, when it came to their pedagogical applications. By describing the tools he frequently employed in his classroom instruction, this section discusses the ways in which various sources and activity settings (re)shaped his understanding of EFL teaching and practices. Additionally, I explore the tensions discussed above to better understanding how settings mediated Mr. Kato’ appropriation of pedagogical tools that were presented in the MEXT program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>EFL Teaching at the senior high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking &amp; Listening</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching approach/strategies</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness/attitude toward communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s language knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source of Tool</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University entrance exams developed by universities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School mandate/culture/expectations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior experiences/knowledge</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National mandate</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Board of Education</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEXT</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kumon</em> learning method</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tool</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Intelligences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a practical subject</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer learning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about reviewing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas about performance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making learning relevant to students’ life</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting students to contents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplement text</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worksheet</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filling out activity</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Codes and Frequencies of Mr. Kato’s Instruction after Participation in the MEXT program
Table 5.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing grammar points</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing extra points</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read aloud (word/sentence level)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar instruction</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining students English expressions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English skills gained in the program</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALTs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching to university entrance examinations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividing students into classes based on their future course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study group meeting with colleagues</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus/Grade-based Curriculum</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-reading Activity/Warming-up activity</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Japanese</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful order of using supplement texts/worksheet</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-based activity (reading) questionnaire</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ related issues (e.g., motivation; English level)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ learning</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School related issues (e.g., goals; mandate)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application issues</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues related to Text</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National mandate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking students’ learning (e.g., English; mistakes)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment issues</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching approach with workbooks/worksheet</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues’ related issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom interaction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of his instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued
Table 5.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Tool</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text, Grammar Instruction, and Attracting Students to Contents**

Mr. Kato most frequently used “texts” (n = 8), “grammar instruction” (n = 7), and “attracting students to contents” (n = 8) as pedagogical tools in his classroom instruction. His classroom observations reveal that these pedagogical tools were closely interrelated to one another and used to achieve the central goal of the school, which is, according to him, to successfully send students to universities. The texts used in both 11th grade writing and 12th grade elective (reading) courses were workbooks for high school students who take university entrance examinations. The contents of the workbooks mainly consisted of multiple choice questions that had actually appeared in real examinations in the past. In his grammar instruction, to get a right answer of the questions, Mr. Kato created an “IRE” (Cazden 1988; Hall, 2002) interaction pattern consisting of his asking a question in the text (Initiation), student’s answering the question (Response), and his evaluating their answers and adding the explanations of key grammar points (Evaluation) (Field notes, 10/17/2005). The following is an example of the IRE interaction pattern that Mr. Kato created with his student in his 12th grade writing lesson:
Mr. Kato: (reading the sentence of the question in the text)
He may have a (pause) tongue but he really is a good person.

Student: (telling the teacher the answer of the question) C.

Mr. Kato: Can you say it in English?
Student: sharp

Mr. Kato: Right (then providing an explanation of the word, “tongue”)
(reading the whole sentence) He may have a sharp tongue but he really is a good person. (translating the sentence into Japanese)
彼は口が辛いかもしれないがとてもいい人間だ。

Both of his lessons moved forward with this IRE pattern, where the ultimate learning goal was to learn key grammar points by getting the questions right.

In the post-observation interview, however, Mr. Kato commented that he felt obliged to use these workbooks in the classes. There were forces acting collectively on teachers in the English department to fulfill the established school expectations, in particular, to prepare students for university entrance examinations. A high frequency of “school related issues” (n=37) in Table 5.3 illustrates this particular expectation of his school. He explained in the interview that the “workbooks” stressing English grammar and related questions are an effective way for achieving the goal. Therefore, it is hard for the English teachers to abandon the grammar instruction based on the text, and change it to communicative oriented teaching approach that he was exposed to in the MEXT program. As he comments:

An issue is whether we can fully handle university entrance exams through communication-focused instruction. We will not be able to move to the direction if that is not promising. As long as there is an argument [among the English teachers] whether we can really handle it or not, we cannot change it [to more communicative-oriented teaching]. I do not think that communication-focused instruction does not help students gain English knowledge, but we do not know
whether the instruction can handle the current pattern of the exams and, how much it can handle them. I think, if we pursue the way [communicative-oriented teaching], we can make it to some extent. But there is an argument if it is really all right [for us] to get rid of the conventional way of grammar teaching and the workbooks, which have worked [for the exams] quite successfully. We can never fail in this matter. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

This excerpt reveals that there are collective forces among English teachers to meet a school expectation which is to prepare students for university entrance examination in the “conventional” grammar teaching approach with the texts/workbooks. However, it is also notable that he quickly adds a comment about his mixed feelings saying “if we pursue the way (communicative-oriented teaching), we can make it to some extent.” This comment suggests that he felt torn between two activity settings because of their seemingly distinct values and practices: communication focused teaching approach presented in the MEXT program and “the conventional grammar teaching instruction” with workbooks stressed in his school.

Mr. Kato further pointed out that another school requirement, “term-examinations,” also played an important role for his decision making of his grammar lessons. That was the reason why he continued to use the specific workbook despite his contention that the textbook presents various problems for students’ English learning.

Referring to his 12th grade writing class, he commented that:

I took over this class from the previous instructor all of the sudden [due to his physically illness]. After the following two teaching practices, the students will take a mid-term exam. Therefore, I thought that I needed to do something similar to what the previous instructor did. Otherwise, the students would be in trouble.” (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

In the interviews, however, he expressed concerns about the negative impact that “teaching to term-examinations by workbooks” possibly may have on students’ English
learning. That is, they only “memorize” the answers of the questions in the textbook to get high scores on term examinations. Referring to the same class, he explained it as follows:

Students would not learn if a text is not suitable to their English level and if they deal with the multiple choice questions by recalling just symbols of the answers [e.g., A and B]. For term-exams, they would patiently memorize the questions of the text to some extent and so they may be able to get some points on the exams. But they would not learn out of it. They may lose their interests in studying English. If students cannot get into the content and cannot find it interesting, useful, and understandable, that would create negative impact on them. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

This excerpt suggests that he considered that “the use of the specific textbook” (text to prepare university entrance examination for this particular group of students) and “memorizing” the answers of the questions in it do not promote students’ English learning. Therefore, he expressed a concern about the choice of the textbook based on its content, students’ English level, interests, and usability of what they can learn from the text. Mr. Kato’s remarks regarding these issues were illustrated in the frequently coded “problems” in Table 5.3, which are “students’ learning” (n = 53) and “students’ related issues” (n = 52).

To deal with these challenges, Mr. Kato appropriated the pedagogical tool, “attracting students to contents” (n = 8), which he had learned from the MEXT experience. In the grammar instruction largely consisting of IRE interaction patterns, he often made short comments on the meaning of words and sentences that appeared in the textbooks. He did so to take students’ English learning into consideration. For example, in the 12th grade wiring class, right after students learned an English expression “have a sharp tongue” in the text (see the above excerpt illustrating the interaction between Mr.
Kato and his student), he quickly added, “You know tan in Japanese [which he considers has a similar sound of “tongue”]. It is a part of grilled beef which is the shita (tongue) of a cow, right?” (Field notes, 10/17/2005). He made these sort of comments several times in each grammar lesson. When asked the rationales behind the comments and the sources of the pedagogical tool in the post-observation interview, he explained learning of the tool came from the conversation with one of the instructors in the MEXT program when preparing his mock teaching to ESL students. As he comments:

What I reaffirmed and have always kept in mind since then [the MEXT experience] is what the instructor said to me….. While studying teaching materials for some mock teaching in the ESL program, I said to him, “In Japan people argue that there are two views of using a [authorized] textbook - one is to teach English by the text and the other is to teach the text. And this time I am going to teach the ESL class in the former way.” Then he said back to me, “But in the end, if students do not find the contents of a text attractive, teaching by the text would not create effective results. You cannot even teach with a text if students do not go into the contents.” Then, I thought what he said was absolutely right. ….. It was a story about a snow man. By using the story, we were supposed to teach how to read it and increase students’ vocabulary knowledge. But if students cannot go into the story about a snow man, they cannot develop reading ability. I thought that was right. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

This excerpt illustrates that by making a comment on the contents of the text, he appropriated the tool, “attracting students to contents” presented in the program in his text-bounded grammar instruction. In doing so, he hoped that students could “learn” grammar instead of “memorizing” it only for term-examinations.

Despite the highly rule-bound teaching sites at his school, he attempted to make an improvement of the 12th grade writing course by employing the pedagogical tool. In the post-observation interview, Mr. Kato used the tool as a principle for his instructional decisions and was able to critique the “inorganic” textbook that the previous instructor chose for the students. One month later, he reported on his teaching practices of the same
The report reveals that after the mid-term examination, he changed the text used in the class and modified the contents of the lessons based on the conceptual tool, “attracting students to the contents.” More specifically, in the lesson, he chose a story about hurricane, which was a timely discussion of the international news around that time. He also introduced students to proverbs in the hope that they could learn about life lessons from them (Mr. Kato, Report 1: 10/28/2005) This report reveals that Mr. Kato used the tool as a principle of planning his lesson, especially to decide what materials students read for their English learning.

**Providing Extra Points, Assignment, Performance, Reviewing, and Worksheet**

Table 5.3 shows that other primary tools Mr. Kato used in his classroom instruction were “providing extra points” (n = 6), “assignment” (n = 6), “performance” (n = 5), “ideas about reviewing” (n = 5), and “worksheet” (n = 5). All of these pedagogical tools were closely interconnected to one another and the practical tools (“extra points”, “assignments,” and “worksheet”) were implemented as being grounded by the conceptual tools (“performance” and “reviewing”). “Performance,” or what he calls “sagyo,” is understood by Mr. Kato as practice requiring actual use of English or physical action with English in order for learners to be able to use the target language. When asked to elaborate on the meaning of sagyo, he provided the following explanation:

Well, in my school, there is a course called Music. For example, when the students learn music, having the knowledge of music theories and being able to understand music notes only do not enable them to play the piano. As they see the notes, and of course already understand them, the students need a practice by actually striking the keyboard in order to play the instrument. It needs the most tremendous efforts and time to get from being able to understand a note to being able to actually play a piece with emotions. So if I associate it [sagyo] to music, it
is to strike the keyboard, which is the area where you actually move your body. That is *sagyo* in English instruction (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)

This excerpt suggests that by associating EFL learning with playing the piano, he viewed the mastering of English as consisting of two parts, students’ understanding of the “knowledge about English” (music notes) and their “actual practice” of the knowledge (striking the keyboard of the instrument). He especially emphasized the latter in learning a foreign language, which he believes requires more efforts and time than developing the former.

Another closely related pedagogical tool with *sagyo*, which Mr. Kato also emphasized in his classroom instruction, was “ideas about reviewing” (n = 5). He articulated in the interview that learning English is “not just to store knowledge in the brain but to establish it through doing actual work *over and over as sagyo* [actual use of language]” (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005 p. 19) [*italics mine*].

Although he considered that this view of teaching is highly relevant to his learning experiences in the MEXT program, the source of constructing these conceptual tools (“actual practice of English knowledge” and “reviewing”) can be traced to his pre-training experiences and knowledge. For example, in one of his reports submitted to me after his classroom observations, he explained the possible source of his instructional decision based on an idea of *sagyo* (“actual practice” of language knowledge). His comments implied that his professional experiences prior to the MEXT program, which was working at a night school as his first teaching site, is related to the source of the tool. In his writing lessons to academically challenged students, for example, he let them engage in translating work, which he considered to be “*sagyo*.” As he noted:
In this class, there are many students who do not think of English as being necessary [for their future course] and who are not so much good at it. So I could not expect effective learning results from a lecture styled teaching by giving the students lots of knowledge. Therefore, I decided to use an effective learning method that I had used when I worked at a night school before. That is to let students acquire the most basic skills of learning English through *sagyo*. To get the information they want to know about the story, they did translating *sagyo* by actively using a dictionary [writing down the translation of story in Japanese on the worksheet he prepared] and adding a sense of competition a little bit. (Mr. Kato, Report 1: 10/28/2005)

This excerpt suggests that prior to the MEXT program, Mr. Kato already implemented an instruction grounded in the tool “*sagyo*” (practice) by taking into account English learning for academically low achievement students.

With regards to “reviewing” as *sagyo*, he attributed the sources of the tool to his own personal backgrounds as “a Japanese speaker with a local dialect” and the idea about “humans’ memory retention” that he had learned in literature in the past. As he explains:

The Japanese dialect that I am speaking now is not the one I used to speak in the place where I was born. When I went back to my home town, I found it hard to speak my home dialect. When you do not use it, you won't be able to use it anymore. I learned it from my own experiences. I also often talk with my students about Hermann Ebbinghaus’ Forgetting Curve, which illustrates humans’ memory retention in a graph. As it describes, we naturally forget what we learned before. However, as time goes by, if we consciously review it, the forgetting curve will decrease. I have talked about this idea to my students even before participating in the MEXT program. To do something over and over is one of the important approaches in my teaching practice, since we even forget Japanese which we use every day. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/28/2006)

These excerpts suggest that his personal and professional backgrounds prior to the MEXT program play a role of constructing his English teaching belief about “reviewing.”

While his participating in the MEXT program, these previously shaped EFL teaching perspectives on *sagyo* and reviewing seems to have a significant effect on his learning and understanding of what was presented in the MEXT program. For example,
interview data revealed that his learning and teaching experiences in the ESL course work in the program further reinforced his belief about EFL approach to “reviewing through *sagyo*.” As he pointed out:

> Well, before the participation in the program I have already felt that English has some similarities or is close to practical subjects such as music, physical education, and actual cooking in home economics. Then, I actually further felt it [English as a practical subject] when I observed the classes offered in the ESL program in the university (MEXT program). I was there as a student and had a chance to teach in the ESL program, and so I saw ESL students’ reactions to and attitudes toward English learning and also reflected on how I actually learned English. In the class, we did not learn grammar only from a grammar book, but learned [English] through actual writing, actual reading, and actual presentations. By doing so, [these practices] gradually became ingredients. I actually experienced and saw how ESL students coming from various countries learned English there. It is not just teachers’ lecturing but students’ doing actual *sagyo*. I felt stronger that it is very important to be able to actually use it…..Through doing *sagyo* [practice] over and over, students will be able to come to use it [English].

(Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)

This excerpt describes how his prior knowledge about “*sagyo*” and “reviewing” played a role to understand what he saw in the ESL courses in the program. Although he appears to have some understanding of the importance of “actual use’ of language, which he describes as “not just teachers’ lecturing but students’ doing actual *sagyo*,” his own conceptions of EFL teaching and learning based on “practice” and “reviewing” remained strongly as what he commented at the end of conversation, “through doing *sagyo* [practice] over and over, students will be able to come to use it (English).”

The idea of “*sagyo*” or “actual practice of language” was further reinforced by another conceptual tool, “Multiple Intelligences” (n = 3) that was presented in the MEXT program. In the interviews, he mentioned that he had learned about “Multiple Intelligences” by observing local school teachers’ practices and also conducting the research project in the program. Although not as frequent as other tools like *sagyo* and
reviewing (see Table 5.3), the interview data revealed that Multiple Intelligences was the central reason why he made an instructional decision based on “sagyo” and “reviewing.” Similar to the appropriation of these tools discussed before, Mr. Kato interpreted “Multiple Intelligences” in a way that was consistent with his previously constructed view of English teaching— that is importance of learning English through sagyo [actual practice of language]. Reflecting on his grammar lessons I observed, he explained the importance of including sagyo in his classes which was grounded in Multiple Intelligences:

The idea of Multiple Intelligences is probably the ultimate origin of “sagyo.” It is not just I orally explain and write it on the blackboard and students copy it, but it is students themselves who actually move, vocalize, discuss something with peers, and listen to sound. These things [various learning styles] should be included [in my class]. My students probably feel a sense of satisfaction and pleasure by doing so. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)

These excerpts suggest that before participating in the MEXT program, Mr. Kato constructed EFL teaching conception based on sagyo and reviewing. In particular, his personal and professional backgrounds prior to the MEXT program played an important role in shaping the development of these conceptual tools. During the MEXT program, these pedagogical tools were further reinforced by observing and participating in the ESL classes and also seeing the classroom instruction at local schools. For example, his understanding of the importance of “actual practice of language over and over” based on sagyo and reviewing was validated for him in what he took from the MEXT program. In other words, his prior histories greatly influenced his understanding of and learning about the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program.
During the interviews, Mr. Kato explained how he began to modify the purposes of teaching English when he made the transition from the MEXT program to his teaching site in Japan. In spite of his positive comments about his learning experiences in the program, the case study data revealed his struggles to appropriate the pedagogical tools learned in the program to his own teaching setting at school. The difficulties he faced appear to be due to the inconsistent goals and practices stressed in the two settings, his school and the MEXT program, and also his limited understanding of the pedagogical tools in a principled way. In terms of the former, unlike other case study participants, Mr. Kato could not continuously try out what he had learned in the program in his teaching sites and ended up relinquishing some of the tools to accommodate the goals of his school. When I visited him, which was two years after his participation in the MEXT program, the professional roles he played at the school also appeared to contribute to supersede the values and practices emphasized in the program. Thus, he was struggling with being torn in seemingly incompatible goals between the two settings. The results of Problem in Table 5.3, especially “school related issues” (n = 37) and “identity” (n = 14), reflect his struggles that he went through in the process of appropriating the pedagogical tools. Regarding the latter, his challenges in appropriating the tools in his teaching sites also seem to stem from his limited understanding of the features of the tools at the conceptual level. In particular, when it came to their pedagogical applications, his classroom observations revealed that he faced some challenges in understanding how the features of the tools contribute to the conceptual whole.

The following comments illustrate an influential effect his school contexts had on Mr. Kato’ instructional decision, in particular, his appropriation of the tools learned in the
MEXT program. Right after the completion of the program, he tried out group work activities in the program in his 11th grade reading lesson. In the activity, his students checked right answers with peers for reading comprehension and discussed them if the answers differed from others within the group (Mr. Kato, Report submitted to the MEXT). However, he eventually stopped using group work since he believed that the collective forces toward examinations at his school did not match the features of the practical tool.

He reflected on the lesson conducted two years ago:

Right after I came back from the U.S., I started to use group work in my reading class. I thought that I should try that anyway, since that was one of the topics [of my project in the MEXT program] and I wanted to try it out since I needed to write a report [to the Ministry of Education]. I was wondering what it would be like, if students engage in group activity. It was the second graders in the last quarter of the school year. Then I thought that I should have done it a little earlier. It did not go very well since I needed to finish the expected teaching part quickly and also to keep a pace with other English teachers. So I did a group work activity in my class once, but stopped using it since first year students were not always assigned to me….In the end, group work did not wok well in Japan due to the reality of university entrance examinations. I discussed it [group work] in my research project during the program, but what I wrote in the project and the teaching instruction to the exam do not match so well. Beside even for the first year students, there were only 5 hour English lessons. Therefore, I was wondering how could I make it [group work activities] during such a short period of time? (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

Mr. Kato went on to explain more specifically what he had to emphasize in his class in order to prepare students for university entrance examinations which was the ultimate goal of the school:

The highest expectation of my school is probably to successfully prepare students for university entrance examinations. Since we have to produce an effective results within the given time line, it is difficult to offer students time for presentation, discussion, and drawing pictures. Once we are done with one story, then we begin to work on the next one. When we read it, our focus is on how to read effectively and how we can read to answer questions about the story. I cannot teach them how we can enjoy reading the story (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)
These excerpts reveal that various expectations at his school (e.g., keeping a pace with other English teachers; assigned teaching grades; university entrance examinations) made it difficult for him to continue to implement group work presented in the MEXT program. The excerpts also reveal that his focus on English teaching for university entrance examinations stemmed from his professional responsibilities necessary to adopt the prevailing values and practices at the school. “School related issues” (n = 37) were a frequent problem in Table 5.3, which mirrors his efforts to maximize the goals of the school as an activity setting. As a result, the purposes of his teaching EFL and his way of appropriating the pedagogical tools were reshaped to focus on what would work in his school rather than how to analyze and adapt them in a broader principled way underlying the tools. As he commented:

Right after I came back from the U.S., I frequently conducted teaching practices that emphasized these approaches [e.g., group work; actual writing]…. I am losing my positive attitude [toward the use of these tools] because I eventually started to think what would be useful in my school and what would be appropriate to meet the school expectations. It is disappointing, but I am settling down the idea of what can be used in the situation where teachers need to handle university entrance examinations and keep a pace with others. I use instructional ideas (the tools presented in the MEXT program) only if they do not delay my teaching plan compared to those of other teachers and also if I can handle students’ potential questions about different activities in which they may engage in my class from those of other English teachers. Then my teaching is getting nothing special. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)

In his actual classroom lessons, therefore, the ideas of “what can be used in the situation [at his school]” seemed to lead to his instructional decision making. For example, in his 12th grade writing and 11th grade reading classes that I observed, he prepared worksheets (n=5) in which students wrote down the answers of the questions of the textbook and key grammar points Mr. Kato explained. His students in each lesson engaged in an activity of
filling-in the worksheet, which he considered as “sagyo.” As he mentioned in the above excerpt, he based this tool (worksheet) on some features of Multiple Intelligences because it worked out in his school setting, where conformity to its established rules and expectations were greatly stressed. My journal log illustrated how he used the worksheet in his 12th grade writing lesson:

The purpose of using the worksheet was to write down the key points of the lesson and the Japanese translations [of English words/expressions], which were also important points of the lesson. At the beginning and middle of the class, he pointed out the importance of filling in the worksheet thoroughly. For example, he said “If you carefully listen to the lesson, you can fill-in all the [blank] parts in the sheet” and “You need to fill-in all the square sections on the sheet.” In the interview after the class, he told me that English is skills rather than knowledge, which have same features of music and physical education (Journal log: 10/17/2005).

Along the use of worksheets, Mr. Kato also incorporated another frequently used practical tools, “providing his students with extra points” (n = 6) when they eventually submitted the worksheet to him as an “assignment” (n = 6). In both writing and reading classes, he offered students extra points along with the points they get based on the results of their regular term-examinations. He frequently mentioned to students in the classes that “If you do not fill-in the handout completely, I will return it to you with a stamp for resubmission” (Field note: 10/17/2005). The interviews and his self-reports illustrated multiple problems that he tried to solve through the use of these practical tools. Among them, school expectations to deal with student related issues are evident:

Students who cannot work independently are not able to prepare for term-exams, so I let them concentrate on the class. By submitting the handout, students also can get points. This means that they paid attention to the class and did sagyo [filling in the handout as actual practice of language]. They can also use the handout to prepare for term-exams. By taking the students’ attitude [toward studying] into consideration, I decided to include such sagyo in their classes. (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)
Because there is a gap in students’ [English] level, [we] guarantee that students can get a certain score if they did sagaio and complete to fill-in the handout (Mr. Kato, Report 2: 2006/1/17)

These excerpts illustrate Mr. Kato used the tools, “worksheets” and “providing extra points,” to maximize the goals of the school, including to prepare students for term-examination and to protect students with low motivation for studying English from failure. He did so because the points students gained from such as submitting the worksheet and term-examinations directly related to their future courses (e.g., entering universities) that the school stressed. These excerpts revealed, therefore, how greatly his classroom decision making was shaped by the expectations/requirements of his school. It is notable that he also commented on “sagyo” or “actual practice of English” as a conceptual framework of these practical tools. Challenges of his understanding of this conceptual tool and its pedagogical application are the topic to discuss from now.

His process of appropriating pedagogical tools was not only shaped from his school sites as an activity setting discussed above but also partly from his own limited understanding of the pedagogical tools in a principled way. For example, although he articulated the features of sagaio in that “It is not just teachers’ lecturing but students’ doing sagaio [actual writing, actual reading and actual presentation]) (Interview, 5/27/2006), what he understood by “actual use of language” appeared to be limited to learning to get right answers rather than using English for negotiating meaning which I originally expected. Recall that he let the students engage in fill-in worksheet activities for both writing and reading lessons. As discussed before, this tool emerged in an IRE interaction pattern between Mr. Kato and his students in both lessons and dominated each class hour approximately for four fifths of the total. In the interviews, he explained that
he made this instructional decision based on the conceptual tool, “sagyo,” which he
believed the MEXT program helped him further understand it from “actual use of
language” perspectives. Elaborating on this point, he made the following comment:

As a result of participating in the program I feel that it would be better if I teach
English from a perspective of letting my students do sagyo [practice] rather than
learn something. After the program or maybe during the program, I started to
think that being able to do [something] and use it would be more important than
developing and increasing knowledge. So, that is sagyo – to write something once
through filling-in-the handout [e.g., writing down what he explained and the
answers of the questions] as sagyo rather than from a perspective of learning
something. Then, students need to check whether their paper work was
completely done themselves before submitting it to me. Then, once it was
returned to them, they should check again why some parts on the paper were
marked with a read pen. Before a term-exam, they check the paper again. So, it is
most important to review it over and over. It is to establish [English language
skills] by reviewing, actually using, actually writing, and actually doing. It is not
just to store knowledge in the brain but to establish [knowledge] through doing
something over and over as sagyo. Then, I sometimes check my students to see
whether they understand what we have done. It is through the MEXT program
that I can organize my class in this large framework (Mr. Kato, Interview:
10/17/2005)

His comments reveal that he valued “being able to do [something] and use it (English)”
to master English. However, his pedagogical application of this idea based on sagyo was
to “write something once through filling-in-the handout” by asking students for right
answers of the questions. Recall that the 12th graders in the writing lesson engaged in
writing down what Mr. Kato explained and the answers of the questions on the worksheet.

Mr. Kato went on to comment the reasons behind the activity (fill-in worksheet):

There are many reasons why I eventually made the handout. First of all, I can
check how much students understand what we are doing in class, since they write
key points and submit the handout later. While I was teaching, I did not know
their level of understanding. In addition, the grammar text [that we use in the
class] is a workbook. It endlessly goes on saying “Choose a right answer.” When
we keep answering these questions, students often lose concentration. Therefore, I
talk and write something on the blackboard and they write down the key points on
the handout. This helps students prepare for term-exams because these key points
are the important part of the exam. To let students work on the handout also has the function of *sagyo*. Many reasons are involved in it.
(Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)

One of the challenges Mr. Kato faced appeared to be his limited understanding of what it meant by “understanding” of what was presented in lessons. Based on the excerpt above, he assumed that if students successfully filled in the worksheet, they already understood the key grammar points of the lesson. As he commented, the reasons to use the tool, filling-in worksheet activity, was partly because “[he] can check how much students understand what we are doing in class, since they write key points and submit the handout later [to me].” Another challenge seemed to be due to his surface level of understanding of what it means by “actual use of language.” As the first excerpt above suggests that he let his students engage in the fill-in worksheet activity with the assumption that if they successfully fill-in-all empty parts on the sheet, the students actually “write” or “use” the language. Ironically, what students engaged in his class turned out to be EFL teaching practices he critiqued before. As he commented:

“It is not just I orally explain and write it on the blackboard and students copy it, but it is students themselves who actually move, vocalize, discuss something with peers, and listen to sound” (Mr. Kato, Interview: 5/27/2006)

In addition, the activity in which students engaged in his lessons, “filling-in worksheet” rather than “actual writing,” validated for him in learning about Multiple Intelligences presented in the MEXT program. In the interview, he explained:

Actual writing that students do in my class is based on this idea [Multiple Intelligences]. Some students can understand by just listening, but others need to physically move to get it. There are also some students who need to vocalize. *sagyo* such as writing work and everything that I have just mentioned came from Multiple Intelligences.
(Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005)
As can be seen in this excerpt, Mr. Kato claimed that the filling-in handout activity was grounded in Multiple Intelligences as a conceptual principle. Perhaps he applied a kinetic aspect of the tool by letting his students “physically move” their hands through writing down the answers of the questions in the text, the translation of English words/sentences, and key grammar points which he explained on the worksheet. However, these activities were not grounded in a broader conceptual principle to support students’ learning but rather used as a solution of more immediate problems he faced, including students’ concentration issues and to prepare them for term-examinations.

In the interviews and his reports, Mr. Kato frequently expressed his concerns about the impacts that his instruction may have on his students’ learning. For example, he reflected on his 12th grade reading lesson that emphasized university entrance examination by incorporating various pedagogical tools discussed above such as grammar textbook, worksheet, assignment (submitting the worksheet), providing extra points, sagyo, and reviewing:

I often wonder if my students feel learning English enjoyable and meaningful by taking my lessons. As long as I offer a lesson to them and then give them an exam, my students can get points. But it is a fact that to be able to get points has been a priority rather than to feel fulfilled through being enjoyable, meaningful and useful in learning English. As a result, I am worried that I am creating students who patiently study English even though they suffer and hate to learn it. (Mr. Kato, Report 2: 1/17/2006)

This excerpt suggests he faced struggles with incongruity of values and practices stressed between the two key activity settings, the MEXT program and his teaching sites at school. He had professional responsibilities at the school where conformity to the established rules and expectations were emphasized to successfully send students to universities. Although he had a desire to incorporate the pedagogical tools based on communicative-
based teaching presented in the MEXT program (e.g., group work; listening and
discussion based on Multiple Intelligences), he gradually gravitated toward the values
and practices emphasized in the school culture. He did so without having a solid
understanding of the conceptual principles of pedagogical tools. Reflecting on his
transitional experiences from the MEXT program to his teaching sites at school, he often
commented on reshaping his professional self:

I returned to Japan with a feeling that I want to conduct this kind of practices and
that kind of practices. I also thought what teaching I could offer to my students
with the English skills I had developed [in the program]. But the environments
surrounding me have not changed. Therefore, [my instruction] is gradually going
back to the original teaching. I still wonder whether the environments around me
are really not going to change. My inner sides have greatly changed, but I feel that
there are not so many things which appear outside (Mr. Kato, Interview:
10/17/2005)

Although he expressed positive side of participating in the MEXT program in light of
teacher identity, “gaining confidence of his English language skills,” the above excerpt
revealed that he has felt disappointed with realizing that there were not so many tools he
could try out at his rule-bound school. After the MEXT program, in the particular school
culture in which he worked, he also had few opportunities to explore how to appropriate
the pedagogical tools in a principled way and to reflectively examine his teaching
practices to best support students’ English learning.

In summary, the case study data revealed that Mr. Kato’s EFL teaching
conceptions and practices were (re)shaped by several activity settings in which his
learning to teach took place. The key settings include his personal and professional
experiences prior to the MEXT program (e.g., his teaching experiences at a night school),
the MEXT program (ESL program; conversation with the instructor; classroom
observations at local schools), and his teaching sites at school in Japan (e.g., school expectations and goals). Due to their overlapping, competing, and conflicting motives, these settings supported and constrained to various degrees how he appropriated the pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program. His understanding of EFL teaching approach based on “sagyo” (actual practice of language) and “reviewing,” which were constructed by his prior experiences, played a key role of his learning the tools presented in the MEXT program. In particular, through observing the ESL courses where the “actual use of a second language” took place, he strengthened his view that English learning should be conceptually grounded in “practice” and “reviewing.” This teaching approach was further reinforced by his learning Multiple Intelligences in the program. As he commented, “It is not just [he] orally explain and write it on the blackboard and students copy it, but it is students themselves who actually move, vocalize, discuss something with peers, and listen to sound.” At the conceptual level, therefore, he mostly took from the MEXT program the values and practices that seemed to be consistent with those developed through his professional and personal backgrounds.

Once he resumed EFL teaching in Japan, his instructional sites at school became a key activity setting that affected his appropriation of the pedagogical tools. The ultimate goal of the school was to successfully send students to universities, which established a tightly rule-governed school culture (e.g., teaching pace with colleagues; “conventional” EFL teaching approach). The school culture guided his actions to achieve their main goal and ultimately affected his appropriation of the pedagogical tools. This eventually let him focus on what would be usable and effective within the culture. One of the examples of his selective use of the tools was a kinetic aspect of Multiple Intelligences, which he
combined with the concept of *sagyo* and reviewing ("filling-in-worksheet" and "copying key grammar points on a worksheet"). These concepts were developed prior to the program and further reinforced during the program. He did so because he believed that these activities worked within the school culture, and also considered such activities (e.g., copying) as "an actual use of language though writing" although in reality it was not. This episode illustrates that he made an instructional decision without having stronger conceptual ideas through which he could promote the broader learning principle to teach English. In another occasion, however, by implementing a tool learned in the MEXT program, which is "attracting students to contents," he critiqued his colleague’s decision of choosing the textbook and eventually changed it to other reading materials by taking students’ interest and English language levels into consideration.

These findings suggest that after Mr. Kato made a transition from the MEXT program to his teaching sites at school, he faced challenges due to competing values, motives, and practices emphasized in the two settings. In addition, his limited understanding of the conceptual principles of the instructional tools created challenges to him to make their pedagogical application. Unlike other participants (Mr. Fujii and Mr. Suzuki), Mr. Kato did not receive continued professional development opportunities inside/outside school after the MEXT program. Perhaps, this lack of examination of his teaching practices in a reflective manner was partly due to his commitment as a manager in the general affair department (*Somu*) which "took [him] most of his professional time" and "made it difficult for him to design the curriculum of English education as an main English teacher for certain graders (Mr. Kato, Interview: 10/17/2005).
Cross Case Analysis

This chapter explored three Japanese EFL teachers’ conceptions of teaching and classroom instruction, activity settings which (re)shaped them, and their appropriation of the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program into their teaching sites at Japanese schools. Drawing on Grossman et al.’s (1999) work, I examined each teacher’s degree of appropriation of the tools. The purpose of examining these modes was not to rank teachers’ teaching practices or propose a sequential stage, but to better illustrate what sort of process they went through as they made a transition from the MEXT program to their own teaching sites. In this section, I will compare and contrast the findings of each teacher’s appropriation process to examine the similarities and differences among them. The findings are summarized in Table 5.4 and 5.5

Degree of Appropriation, Teachers’ Conceptions and Practices

Through the examinations of three teachers’ conceptions of teaching and practices, I identified different degrees of their appropriation of the pedagogical tools in teaching EFL at their own teaching contexts (See “Mode of appropriation” and “Main pedagogical tools used in lessons” in Table 5.4 for the summary of this discussion). For Mr. Fujii, for example, EFL teaching included instructional decision making based on conceptual principles, which is what Grossman’s et al. (1999) call “appropriating conceptual underpinnings.” A variety of practical and conceptual tools he used in his classroom instruction included “problem solving learning,” “language use in real life situations,”
“peer learning,” “group work,” and visual/auditory aids. These tools were grounded in a theoretical framework from the constructivist perspectives to support students’ learning and their English development.

For Mr. Suzuki, EFL teaching involved the use of both practical and theoretical tools which have some characteristics of constructivist perspectives of learning (e.g., group work; collaborative learning; actual use of language). However, his partial understanding of the principles of these tools made it difficult for him to make an instructional decision in a principled way (“appropriating surface features”). Recall his implementation of “group work” in Communication class in which students presented their opinions about budget distribution in group. In the lesson, students reported their answers to the whole class in English, but they were not allowed to co-construct knowledge about the topic by exploring similarities and differences of their responses across the groups.

Finally, teaching for Mr. Kato was based on the ideas of “practicing (or training) over and over” that greatly affected what he took from the MEXT program. Although he seemed to misappropriate the tools as “an actual use of language” which was presented in the MEXT program (“lack of appropriation”), the notion was validated in his learning another tool in the program, Multiple Intelligences, which valued kinetic aspects for learning as one of students’ various learning styles (“appropriating surface features”). His conceptions of teaching based on “practicing over and over” made it hard for him to reflectively examine his instructional decision making and consider other learning principles.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Mr. Fujii</th>
<th>Mr. Suzuki</th>
<th>Mr. Kato</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode of Appropriation</strong></td>
<td>- Appropriating conceptual underpinnings</td>
<td>- Appropriating surface features of pedagogical tools</td>
<td>- Lack of appropriation - Appropriating surface features of pedagogical tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main pedagogical tools used in lessons</strong></td>
<td>- Constructivist perspectives - Problem solving learning - Peer learning/group work - Visual/Auditory aids - Integration of skills - Language use in real life situations - Psychological theories of learning</td>
<td>- ALTs - Group/pair work - Impromptu speech - Textbooks - Idea about natural communication - Curriculum - Writing activity (post-reading activity)</td>
<td>- Textbooks/Worksheet - Assignments - Grammar instruction - Extra points - Attracting students to contents - Practice - Reviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of appropriation</strong></td>
<td>- His educational/professional backgrounds - Professional development opportunities before &amp; after the MEXT program - MEXT program (A) - Teaching sites at school</td>
<td>- His educational/professional backgrounds - MEXT program (B) - Teaching sites at school - Professional development opportunities after the MEXT program</td>
<td>- His personal/professional backgrounds - MEXT program (A) - Teaching sites at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges for appropriation</strong></td>
<td>- Dissatisfaction with his teaching approach (e.g., handout; students’ avoidance of communication) (before the MEXT program) - Differences in learning situations between ESL and EFL (during the MEXT program)</td>
<td>- Different goals across settings (MEXT program [communicative oriented teaching and learning] &amp; his teaching sites at school [keeping pace with colleagues]) - Differences in students’ English level between ESL and EFL</td>
<td>- Different goals across settings (MEXT program &amp; Teaching sites at school) - Limited understanding of the principles of tools - Few opportunities to try out the tools in his teaching sites in Japan</td>
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Table 5.4: Case Study Teachers’ Mode/Source of Appropriation, Challenges, Negotiation, & Transformation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges for appropriation (real or perceived by teachers and observed by researcher)</th>
<th>Attempts to deal with problems</th>
<th>Transformation (real or perceived by teachers and observed by researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Limited understanding of the principles of tools  
- Limited opportunities to reflect on application (for the first 4 years after the program)  
- Few opportunities to reflect on his instruction/application  
- Professional roles other than an EFL teacher at school | - Using various strategies/settings available to him (MEXT program, teaching sites to try out the tools, other professional development opportunities after the program)  
- Reconstruct the tools to adjust to his teaching contexts (e.g., integrating skills; language training within constructivist perspectives on learning; integrating English courses & settings)  
- Using various strategies/settings available to him (e.g., making curriculum with colleagues; professional development outside school; team-teaching with ALTs)  
- Modifying the goals to adjust to his teaching contexts  
- Using alternative tools to achieve the modified goal and hoping that students can eventually progress toward the original goals  
- Each course has its distinct role (e.g., listening & speaking in Communication)  
- Using some features of the tools which work at school (e.g., Multiple Intelligences)  
- Relinquishing the use of tools (e.g., group work)  
- Covert resistance to the values of his school (e.g., teaching to exams) | - Changing teaching approach from teacher-to students-centered instruction  
- Changing teacher identity from an instructor to facilitator/motivator  
- Playing a dual role between ESL and EFL contexts  
- Changing teaching approach from rambling to goal oriented instruction  
- Changing teacher identity from a solo player to a team-player  
- Going back to his “original teaching approach”  
- From hope to disappointment  
- Changing identity from a less competent English speaker to more competent speaker |
Sources of Varying Degree of Appropriation: Individual and Social Contexts

There does not seem to be a single explanation for the reasons why these teachers developed certain teaching conceptions and practices and also participated in varying degrees of appropriation. However, activity theory offers a useful framework to better understand the complexity of teachers’ learning to teach. This theory proposes that “a person’s frameworks for thinking are developed through problem-solving action carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been developed through historical culturally grounded actions” (Grossman et al., 1999, p. 4). Following this theory, teachers’ learning to teach is both unique to individuals (e.g., histories; experiences; goals) and co-constructed in social settings (e.g., university level teacher education programs; teaching sites at schools; broader cultural and social factors such as national policies).

In Mr. Fujii’s case, for example, his efforts to participate in professional development meetings outside school were sustained by his strong desire to improve his EFL instructions (e.g., concerns about what students took from classroom activities; pedagogical implications of conceptual tools). During the MEXT program, for example, he further developed an understanding of the conceptual tools he brought with him (e.g., problem solving learning; language use in real life situations). At the same time, his actions were also supported by the schools where he previously and currently worked as activity settings (e.g., colleagues; students; the goals of the schools). In other words, some aspects of the settings allowed him to exercise his desire to improve his teaching practices in order to solve instructional problems he faced. Mr. Suzuki’s appropriation was also socially co-constructed by his desire to change his less sequential classroom
instruction between examination-oriented teaching practices and communicative-based teaching approach, which created much resistance from his students. His efforts to solve the problem were simultaneously supported by his colleagues and school, where they collaboratively composed the English language curriculum for the English-focused high school. It was approximately this time, 4 years after the participation in the MEXT program, that he enthusiastically started to adopt the pedagogical tools presented in the program into his lessons and the English curriculum. Mr. Kato’s case also illustrates an interrelated relationship between individual and social settings. A unique aspect of his case was that his appropriation of tools did not occur as apparently as Mr. Fujii’s and Mr. Suzuki’s cases. One of the possible reasons for Mr. Kato’s lack of appropriation was due to his professional experiences prior to the MEXT program in which he constructed a behaviorist-based principle of EFL teaching. He carried it over during the MEXT program and integrated it with another tool he learned, which he calls “actual use of language.” After shifting from the program to his current teaching sites, he continued to use the tool, “practice over and over” as “actual use of language” in his instruction because this teaching approach accommodated both his desire to adopt the tools he took from the program and the school responsibilities to prepare students for examinations as key activity settings.

These findings reveal that the case study teachers’ learning to teach was not a solo individual endeavor but more dynamic process involving a confluence of individual teachers’ histories and activity settings in which their learning to teach occurred. The findings of sources and activity settings which shaped their learning to teach and their appropriation are summarized in Table 5.5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Mr. Fujii</th>
<th>Mr. Suzuki</th>
<th>Mr. Kato</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key experiences before the MEXT program</td>
<td>Professional development opportunities -problem solving learning -language use in real life situations</td>
<td>Experiences as an EFL learner -actual use of language</td>
<td>Professional/personal experiences -practice (training) over and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of the MEXT program</td>
<td>Program A -Language development -Communicative based teaching approach -cultural/social aspects in the U.S.</td>
<td>Program B -Language development -Communicative based teaching approach -cultural/social aspects in the U.S.</td>
<td>Program A -Language development -Communicative based teaching approach -cultural/social aspects in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School characteristics &amp; Goals</td>
<td>Previous school: -English focused course Current school: -“Power to live” -University entrance examinations</td>
<td>-Cooperative -English focused school (SELHi curriculum) -University entrance examinations</td>
<td>-Rule-bound for examinations (term-examinations, university entrance examinations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom instruction</td>
<td>-Constructivist perspectives of learning -Included English training within the perspectives -Many opportunities to try out the tools learned in the MEXT program</td>
<td>-Some aspects of constructivist perspectives of learning -IRE discourse pattern -Many opportunities to try out the tools learned in the MEXT program</td>
<td>-“Practice” &amp; “Training” based teaching -Emphasis on kinetic aspects of learning -IRE discourse pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>-Well communicated -Willing to accommodate his desire</td>
<td>Independent → Cooperative (different group)</td>
<td>-Grade (10th-12th) based decision making -Discrete (curriculum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size Teaching subjects Students’ characteristics (reported by the participants)</td>
<td>-24 (11th grade reading) -41 (11th grade writing) -Academically high -Students who hoped to enter universities</td>
<td>-39 (12th grade reading) -9 (12th grade communication) -Students who are interested in English/hoped to enter universities</td>
<td>-27 (12th grade writing) -27 (12th grade reading) -Students who planned to go to vocational school -Average/Above average Students who hoped to enter college/private universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development after the MEXT program</td>
<td>Many times -Study group meetings -Open classes -Reflection</td>
<td>Many times -Distance education -Open classes -English language club</td>
<td>Few reported -helped with a 5 day training for local EFL teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General relationship across/within settings</td>
<td>Mostly overlapping</td>
<td>Overlapping &amp; Competing</td>
<td>Competing &amp; Conflicting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Activity settings of the Focal Teachers’ Learning to Teach
Support and Constraints Created by Activity Settings

As briefly mentioned above, activity settings provided both support for the teachers’ efforts to improve their EFL instruction and constraints that limited their actions. Each setting has its own unique motive, values, and practices. As such, when there was an incongruity across and within the settings, the teachers tended to encounter challenges when trying to appropriate the tools. Perhaps the two most contrasting examples illustrated in this chapter were the cases of Mr. Fujii and Mr. Kato (See “General relationship across/within activity settings” in Table 5.5). Mr. Fujii, who came from a constructivist background, further reinforced the principle in the MEXT program. When returning to his teaching site in Japan, he became a main teacher for students enrolled in the English focused program at his school and was able to try out the pedagogical tools presented in the program to great extent. He continued to improve his teaching practices in order to explore the pedagogical implications of the conceptual tools learned in the MEXT program by attending various professional development meetings outside school as another activity setting. It should be noted, however, Mr. Fujii’s appropriation processes were not always a peaceful process, but included moments of uncertainty such as his self-doubt about his own EFL teaching practices.

In contrast, Mr. Kato had opportunities to try out some of the tools (e.g., group work; some features of Multiple Intelligences) presented in the MEXT program right after he returned to his own teaching contexts. However, due to the examination-driven EFL teaching stressed at his school, he stopped using them. He then started to make an instructional decision based on what was usable in the specific school culture. Interestingly, at the conceptual level, his inclination for a learning principle, “practice
(training) over and over” did not change before, during, and after the MEXT program, even though that was not the central principle the program emphasized. However, what he took from the program were practical tools and some features of conceptual tools mainly based on communicative-based teaching approach, which appeared to make him difficult to make instructional decisions in a principled way.

Both Mr. Fujii’s and Mr. Kato’s schools had great responsibilities for successfully sending their students to universities. However, the different ultimate goals of each school (“Power to live” and examinations, respectively) inevitably created overlapping and/or competing motives between the MEXT program and their teaching sites, thus affected their appropriation process. In addition, activity settings prior to the program (e.g., professional experiences at schools; professional development opportunities) further made the process more complex. That is, in cases of inconsistent motives and practices among these settings, the teachers faced more challenges in appropriating the pedagogical tools.

**Cross Cultural Aspects: Challenges and Negotiation**

Because the teachers crossed cultural boundaries between the U.S. and Japan, their appropriation processes were complex. Not only did they transfer the tools but also they considered and negotiated how the two settings differed in terms of learning English. The challenges they faced included institutional and national established cultural norms of “what is good learning,” the exposure of the target language outside classroom, and students’ English levels in the ESL and EFL contexts. The findings of the study described how the teachers encountered these challenges and attempted to work them out to meet
their own teaching situations, which were closely linked with their appropriation of the pedagogical tools into their classroom instruction (See “Challenges in Appropriation” and “Attempts to deal with Problems” in Table 5.4 for the summary).

For instance, Mr. Suzuki and Mr. Fujii often reported challenges they faced due to differences in English learning situations between the ESL (the U.S.) and EFL contexts (Japan). To solve the problems, both made efforts to negotiate the differences and eventually adapted the tools presented in the program. Mr. Suzuki, for example, wanted to let students interact with peers to promote their English learning, which he had learned in the MEXT program. Due to his observation that Japanese students’ English skills were more limited than those of ESL students, he found it difficult to use the tool, the importance of interaction in English, and eventually modified the goal of the curriculum from two-way communication to one-way speech as a step for students to reach the former level in the future. A challenge that Mr. Fujii faced was related to English learning in the EFL contexts where students have few opportunities to expose themselves to the target language beyond classrooms. To promote students’ learning using group work in a problem-solving mode, Mr. Fujii provided them with English training opportunities in a spiraled way, and prepared them to interact with peers by using the language they had just learned through the training. In addition, he intentionally integrated English learning settings (e.g., writing and reading courses; students’ work inside and outside classroom) in order for students to be able to apply the knowledge they learned in other occasions.

Both Mr. Fujii and Mr. Suzuki attempted to negotiate the problems derived from differences of English learning between the U.S. and Japan. Mr. Fujii’s case, however, is
an example that constraints actually provided the teacher with the further structure to produce productive activities that support Japanese students’ English learning within the problem-solving framework, which he desired to employ (Grossman et al., 1999). Thus, these findings reveal that the teachers’ appropriation of the tools is subjected to the relations of activity settings (e.g., ESL and EFL contexts). Yet at the same time, they can (re) shape activity settings where they reconstruct new knowledge about EFL instruction to meet their own students’ needs and situations.

**Understanding of Tool Principle, Pedagogical Application, and Reflection**

The findings of the case study also illustrate that the teachers’ degrees of appropriation is also affected by their understanding of the conceptual principles of pedagogical tools (limited understanding), knowing their pedagogical applications in a principled way through opportunities to try out the tools (pedagogical application), and having opportunities to critically reflect on their application (reflection). Teachers seemed to struggle appropriating pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program if they missed any of these components in their learning to teach (See “Challenges for Appropriation” in Table 5.4 for the summary of this discussion).

For instance, Mr. Fujii, who grasped the conceptual underpinnings of tools, was able to utilize and adapt the tools in his teaching contexts by taking his students’ needs into consideration. He did so by having enough opportunities to try out the tools at his schools, continuously learning how to put the theoretical ideas into practices in professional development opportunities, and critically examining his classroom instruction by making use of resources available to him (e.g., sending the video of his
teaching practices to a university professor in TESOL). In contrast, Mr. Suzuki faced challenges in fully understanding the learning principles underlying the pedagogical tools (group work; collaborative learning). Therefore he struggled with their applications as was in the example of letting his students draw a jack-o’-lantern on pumpkins in group. Right after the program, he tried out what he had taken from the program but struggled with its application. It took him approximately four years to realize the potential sources of the problems (limited opportunities to critically examine teachers’ pedagogical application).

Mr. Kato also had challenges because of similar reasons to Mr. Suzuki. What he took from the MEXT program was mainly based on practical tools and some features of conceptual ones. Therefore, he had limited understanding of the conceptual underpinnings of the tools. During the program, he was not allowed to realize the tensions between his framework of learning based on “practice/training over and over” and that of the program based on communicative-oriented teaching and learning. After making a transition from the MEXT program to his own teaching sites at school, he had few opportunities to try out the practical tools he had learned due to his main responsibilities of the school (e.g., examinations). At the same time, due to his limited understanding of the principles underlying the practical tools, he struggled to see how the “features contribute to the conceptual whole” (Grossman et al., 1999, p.17). Recall his use of group work to get a right answer from his students. During the pedagogical application, he had few opportunities to critically examine his own teaching conceptions and practices. This lack of intervention seemed to another source why he continued to struggle with his appropriation of the tools.
**Reciprocal Relationship between Identity and Appropriation of Tools**

The focal teachers’ appropriation process involved not only adopting and adapting pedagogical tools but also constructing their professional self within the activity settings in which their learning to teach occurred. One of the noticeable themes that emerged in the case study data was “the reciprocal relationship between the individual teachers’ appropriating the tools and their sense of professional self” developed as they applied the tools to their classroom instruction in Japan (G. E. Newell, personal communication, March, 2007) (See “Attempts to deal with problems” and “Transformation” in Table 5.4 for the summary). In other words, their teacher identities simultaneously shaped and were shaped by their appropriation of the tools in a particular context.

Mr. Kato, who struggled with the competing primary motives between his school and his desire to use the tools learned in the MEXT program, stopped trying out some of the tools and eventually developed a sense of doubt about his own teaching approach. This relatively negative identity that he constructed seemed to make it more difficult for him to appropriate the tools in the school culture. In contrast, Mr. Fujii, who tried out the tools learned in the program to a great degree and received positive feedback from his students, developed an identity as a competent EFL professional (e.g., a motivator and the person who plays a dual role between the ESL and EFL contexts). The positive identities he constructed seemed to make him more actively participate in professional development opportunities inside/outside school. Interestingly, Mr. Suzuki’s experiences illustrate that the reciprocal relationship between these two (teacher identities and their appropriation of pedagogical tools) can shift to different directions over time. Mr. Suzuki, who originally viewed himself as a solo teacher with “self-serving instruction,” faced
challenges in appropriating the tools and resulted in creating resistance among his students regarding his teaching approach. Through this hard experience, he started to view himself as someone whose ideas are not always right, and developed a collaborative relationship with his colleagues. In turn, his changing identity promoted him to actively use the tools in more sequential way and seek further professional development opportunities inside and outside school. These findings suggest that teacher identities and appropriation of the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program influenced one another in a dynamic and reciprocal fashion.

**Issues of Non-Native English Speaking Teachers**

Finally, during the focal teachers’ appropriation of the pedagogical tools, non-native English speaking teachers’ issues such as English language competence were not salient themes as a challenge they faced, compared to their EFL teaching approach, activity settings, histories, culture, and identities. One reason for this seems to be related to their identities as competent EFL professionals in the given teaching contexts as a result of the MEXT program. For instance, Mr. Fujii expressed his desire to further develop his English language skills: “[he] felt a sense of crisis because [he] is using up all [his] savings [English skills]” (Interview: 5/12/2006). However, he also insisted that “the important thing is that students understand [what we do in the lesson] and achieve the goals.” (Interview: 8/28/2005). Therefore, instead of speaking “difficult English” or adhering to “native-like English,” he hoped that his English would become a model for students to know what sort of English is possible to speak (Interview: 8/28/2005). Mr. Kato, who was frustrated with his own English skills which prevented him from creating
an equal professional relationship with ALTs before the MEXT program, developed an identity as “confident English user” and “equal team-player with an ALT” as a result of the program (Interview: 10/17/2006).

Another possible reason was that these teachers were able to make use of English language-related resources (e.g., ALTs) available to them in the given contexts in order to achieve the goals of their lessons. Both Mr. Suzuki and Fujii reported that they received support from ALTs, but Mr. Suzuki’s experience is a particularly compelling example. Despite his positive identity about his English language competence stemming from his participation in the MEXT program and other professional experiences overseas (e.g., an escort teacher), he actively received linguistic support from an ALT in team-teaching activities. Reflecting on one of his lessons with an ALT, for example, he explained that “it [Communication 4] requires us to promptly react to students and he [ALT], who is a native speaker and also good at responding to them, play the major role for that.” (Follow-up interview: 11/8/2005).

All these teachers have more or less experienced challenges in their English language competence in their EFL teaching practices. However, in appropriating the tools presented in the MEXT program, they did not seem to encounter insecure feelings or a marginalized role due to their status of non-native English speaking teachers. Perhaps they did not feel so because of their positive professional self as an English user partly as a result of their participation in the MEXT program and use of recourses (e.g., ALTs; other training opportunities) available to them in the given contexts.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Research on L2 Teachers’ Learning to Teach

In this study, I have explored the nature of L2 teachers’ learning to teach by examining Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriating pedagogical tools presented in the Japanese government sponsored (MEXT) in-service teacher education program into their own teaching contexts in Japan. Through integrating the findings of both qualitative and quantitative data, this section presents the summary of key results according to the guiding research questions of the study: the most useful aspects and the areas of challenges in the MEXT program, teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices, their various degrees of appropriation of pedagogical tools, and sources and settings influencing these degrees of appropriation. In doing so, I will also discuss theoretical implications of the study by revisiting the theoretical discussion related to L2 teacher education described in Chapter 2. This chapter also provides pedagogical implications for L2 teacher educators, Japanese EFL teachers, and the Ministry of Education (MEXT) that continues to send teachers abroad for their professional development. Finally, the directions for future research and the limitations of the study will be discussed.
Aspects Teachers Found Useful and Desired to See Improved

This section summarizes the effect of the MEXT program from Japanese EFL teachers’ perspectives. The guiding research questions were: What aspects of the U.S. in-service teacher education programs do all the Japanese secondary school EFL teachers consider the most useful for their current teaching professions? and What areas in the programs did they suggest more improvement? I was especially interested in teachers’ transitional experiences from the MEXT program to their own teaching sites in Japan, whose settings have particular linguistic, social, and cultural environments. These issues were examined mainly through questionnaires. There are four major findings of the issues. First of all, Japanese EFL teachers in the questionnaires considered language development opportunities in the MEXT program, particularly in oral skills, beneficial to their current teaching practices. However, they also demonstrated a desire for further opportunities to develop their oral skills. Second, questionnaire participants often reported that they developed an identity of being a more competent EFL professional in areas of English skills, teaching practices, and their beliefs about English teaching and learning. These results mirrored the findings of the case study: that is, although the case study teachers had more or less expressed challenges in their own English skills, they all developed a teacher identity as “a competent English user in their own teaching contexts” and also made use of various resources and strategies (e.g., native English speaking assistant teachers; language training opportunities) available to them in order to achieve the goals of their lessons.

Third, the teachers in the questionnaires generally agreed that the pedagogical tools presented in the program were useful, in particular, in regards to the opportunities to
learn cultural and social aspects of the U.S., reflection on their previously developed
teaching beliefs and practices, classroom observations, and the opportunities to learn the
conceptual tools of EFL teaching and learning. However, they also reported a desire to
further develop practical tools, especially more instruction in assessment.

Finally, in terms of the issues related to pedagogical application, approximately
one-third of the questionnaire participants indicated that they wanted more opportunities
to consider the application of pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program to their
own teaching contexts. However, only a few teachers reported a need to have more
teaching practicum opportunities in the program. Unique cross cultural aspects involved
in these teachers’ learning to teach, in particular, differences in ESL and EFL teaching
situations, may have contributed to these complex results (See “Dynamic Process of
Teachers’ Appropriation” for this discussion).

Japanese EFL teachers considered the MEXT program as greatly beneficial to
their own language development and learning ELT pedagogical tools. They also became
more positive about professional self as a competent EFL professional as a result of
participating in the program. Non-native teachers’ low self-perceived image has been a
great concern for their professional development in TESOL (e.g., Brain, 1999; Brutt-
Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 2000; Tang, 1997) and this study suggests a
critical role that the MEXT program played in this aspect. Teachers’ positive self image
as EFL professionals may partly be a reason why the issues of non-native teachers’
language proficiency, which has been discussed among many researchers (e.g., Carrier,
2003; Liu, 1999; Medgyes, 1999; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Seidlhofer, 1999), did
not emerge as a major challenge during the process of their pedagogical application in
both questionnaire and case study data. However, the teachers’ desire to learn more about oral aspects of English and practical tools about ELT, especially in the area of assessment, needs to be paid special attention for their professional development. This result seems to be understandable given the historical and social conditions of their learning to teach. More specifically, there has been a shift of English education in Japan from fact-based pedagogy to communicative-based teaching approach, and perhaps the teachers had less experiences of the latter in their formal schooling and undergraduate level teacher education courses in Japan.

Current line of the knowledge-base of L2 teacher education from sociocultural perspectives has been challenged since, according to the scholars, it tends to take teachers’ learning of subject matter for granted (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Reagan, 1997; Widdowson, 1997; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). However, drawing on activity theory as a theoretical framework, this study explored Japanese EFL teachers’ use of pedagogical tools to mediate their learning to teach, which led to an examination of their “content knowledge” and also “pedagogical content knowledge” in the given contexts (Shulman, 1987). The study, for example, illuminated the subject areas that the teachers desired to further develop, including English language skills, instructional tools, and also importantly the pedagogical application of the tools. By using activity theory, therefore, these areas that are considered to be neglected but vital for EFL teachers can be incorporated into the current work of the knowledge base of L2 teacher education.
Various Paths of Teachers’ Appropriation Process: Conceptions and Practices

This section summarizes the findings of the second and third research questions in the study: What are the teaching conceptions and practices of Japanese EFL teachers who participated in the U.S. in-service teacher education programs? and What various degrees of appropriation take place when Japanese EFL teachers in case study adopt conceptual and practical tools presented in the U.S. teacher education programs into their classroom instruction? The results of the study reveal that teachers followed various paths in their appropriation of pedagogical tools as they shifted from the program to their teaching sites in Japan. The findings of the qualitative case study, which closely examined three Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation processes, provide a deeper explanation of the results found in the questionnaires. The followings are two main findings derived from both questionnaire and case study data. First of all, in the questionnaires, teachers reacted differently to their application of the tools to their Japanese classrooms. They reported more practical tools than conceptual ones, which were associated with communicative oriented teaching approach (e.g., “authentic materials;” “visual/auditory aids;” “use of English in classroom;” “group/pair work;” “the knowledge of social and cultural aspects in the U.S.”). In addition, there was a substantial difference among the number of tools each teacher reported for use.

Second, the focal teachers in the case study took different paths in appropriating the pedagogical tools presented in the MEXT program into their own teaching sites. The different degrees of appropriation identified were “appropriating conceptual underpinnings,” “appropriating surface features,” and “lack of appropriation” (Grossman et al., 1999, pp.16-18). In “appropriating conceptual underpinnings,” the teacher used the
pedagogical tools grounded in the theoretical principles. For example, Mr. Fujii’s classroom activities in a problem-solving mode (e.g., group work; visual/auditory aids) were shaped by a constructivist philosophy of EFL teaching and learning. In “appropriating surface features,” the teacher knew some characteristics of pedagogical tools, but his partial understanding of the principles underlying the tools made it difficult for him to teach in a principled way. For instance, although Mr. Suzuki articulated student-centered learning philosophy in EFL instruction (e.g., eliciting students’ ideas to develop their English proficiency), his use of partial features of tools such as “group work” in “collaborative learning,” did not create learning situations where students could elaborate and restructure their current knowledge collaboratively with peers in English.

Finally, another mode, which was associated with two types of degrees, was “lack of appropriation” and “appropriating surface features.” The teacher did not appropriate certain pedagogical tools, and at the same time he grasped some features of other tools but did not understand how they “contribute to the conceptual whole” (Grossman et al., 1999, p. 17). For example, despite the values and practices emphasized in the MEXT program (“language as a social construct”), Mr. Kato continued to hold on to behaviorist principles of English teaching and learning. Although he attempted to appropriate the tools learned in the program (e.g., attracting students to contents; Multiple Intelligences; group work), his limited understanding of the conceptual principles underlying these tools seemed to create a tension between his EFL instruction (e.g., filling-in handout activities) and the rationale behind the instructional decision (actual use of language). He eventually abandoned some of the tools in his classroom instruction (e.g., group work).
This study lends support to the view of teachers’ appropriation process based on activity theory in that teachers follow various paths in appropriating pedagogical tools as they made a transition from a teacher education program to their teaching sites (e.g., Grossman et al., 1999; Johnson, 2003; Newell et al., 2001). The findings of the case study illustrate such processes in which some teachers’ appropriation represented more depth of understanding of a particular tool in their “pedagogical content knowledge” (Shuman 1987), while other teachers showed less understanding. Because of activity theory’s focus on the relationship among settings, it has helped illuminate how teachers understood, adopted/adapted, and appropriated practical and conceptual tools in given contexts.

One of the interesting findings in this study is that the degrees of teachers’ appropriation can be inextricably intertwined at different levels. For example, Mr. Kato grasped some of the features of Multiple Intelligences (“appropriating surface features”) but did not appropriate a pedagogical tool, “actual use of language” (“lack of appropriation”). Mr. Fujii’s internalization process can be a combination of “appropriating conceptual underpinnings” and “achieving mastery.” If the latter is considered as “‘knowing how’ [to do something] as opposed to ‘knowing that,’” as Herrenkohl and Wertsch (1999, p.418) put, Mr. Fujii’s use of a pedagogical tool with a good understanding of its conceptual principle seems to be partly achieving the “mastery” level. Given his background who somewhat knew a constructivist perspective of English teaching and learning, he achieved the current level after several years of teaching practices.
With regard to teachers’ use of pedagogical tools, the results of this study are consistent with those of other researchers using activity theory as a theoretical framework (e.g., Cook et al., 2002; Johnson et al., 2003). That is, teachers incorporated more practical tools (teaching skills, techniques) than conceptual tools (theoretical ideas, principles) into their classroom instruction. More specifically, Japanese EFL teachers reported in the questionnaires that they more frequently implemented practical tools associated with the communicative-oriented teaching approaches presented in the MEXT program. This result mirrors those of Lamie’s (2001) and Pacek’s (1996) studies in which the participants in the Japanese government-sponsored in-service teacher education programs in the U.K. reported that after participating in the program, teachers introduced communicative-oriented teaching approaches such as “more English in classroom,” “use of authentic materials,” and “group/pair work.”

However, the results of Lamie’s and Pacek’s studies need to be carefully interpreted because the implementation of practical tools related to communicative-oriented teaching approaches does not guarantee that teachers provide EFL instruction in a principled way. As been pointed out before, Mr. Suzuki frequently used “group work activities” in his lessons which he believed were grounded in “collaborative learning.” However, he faced challenges in understanding how these tools contributed to the conceptual whole. Mr. Kato also believed that the activities in which his students engaged in his lessons (“filling-in-handout” “translating work”) were based on a conceptual tool, “actual use of language,” which was in fact a narrowly defined use of language. These findings suggest that rather than focusing on static internalization of propositional knowledge transmitted during/after the program, which many studies on the
impact of teacher education programs investigated, it is necessary and critical to examine how teachers understand and make the tools their own by exploring why they went through various paths in their appropriation processes, which will be the focus on the next section.

**Dynamic Process of Teachers’ Appropriation**

This section addresses the fourth research question, “What sources and activity settings have influenced the degrees of Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation?” and also summarizes a dynamic process of Japanese EFL teachers’ appropriation. Five key findings of the issues in the case study and questionnaires will be described below, which are followed by the theoretical implications. First of all, the qualitative case study reveals that teachers’ learning is simultaneously unique to individuals and socially co-constructed (e.g., Lantolf, 2006; Wertsch, 1998). On the one hand, their learning to teach was rooted in their histories, experiences, goals they brought to the MEXT program. On the other hand, their learning emerged through their interactions with the social contexts available to them. These settings include the MEXT program (e.g., what teachers took from the program; what pedagogical tools the program made available to them), their teaching settings for pedagogical application, school culture (goals; students; colleagues), and teachers’ continued professional development opportunities after the program (e.g., reflection on their application). In other words, these activity settings and sources were mutually connected with one another, and shaped and reshaped teachers’ learning to teach. (See Table 6.1 for the summary of this relationship among the activity settings).
Second, the goals, values and practices emphasized in the key settings shown in Table 6.1 overlapped and competed across and within the settings in dynamic way, and thus their relationship affected the case study teachers’ appropriation processes. The results of the questionnaire, which examined teachers’ perceptions of challenges they faced in applying the tools, also reflected this finding. Teachers’ transitional experiences from the MEXT program to their own school sites, therefore, need to be viewed with
examining other relevant activity settings in which their learning to teach occurred. When there is an alignment between activity settings, the case study teachers were able to draw on what they had learned from the MEXT program. On the contrary, in cases of competing goals and practices among the settings, they faced challenges in appropriating the tools into their own teaching sites.

As discussed in Chapter 2, an ongoing debate in the L2 teacher education field is whether teachers’ learning to teach should be viewed largely as passive internalization of transmitted knowledge or a more complex process of meaning construction (Crandall, 2000; Freeman, 2002; Johnson 2006; Roberts, 1998). Obviously, this study suggests that teachers’ learning to teach is “situated” activities which are complex and dynamic processes of co-construction (Lantolf, 2000, p. 47). The case study teachers’ various ways of appropriating pedagogical tools depended upon their histories and goals as well as school culture and relationship with colleagues in the given contexts. Therefore, it is unproductive to treat individuals and social contexts as a separate entity and to interpret the phenomenon. This finding supports the Vygotskian’s perspectives of learning that humans’ cognitive development is simultaneously unique to individuals and socially co-constructed (e.g., Cole, 1985; John-Stein & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, 2000, 2006; Wertsch, 1998).

The interconnected relationship among activity settings (or circumstances including individuals with their different histories and social contexts) described in Table 6.1 also provides an implication for the knowledge-base of L2 teacher education. An ongoing scholarly discussion within the field is, simply put, what constitutes a professional knowledge-base to develop effective programs for English language teachers
(e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Grabe, Stoller, & Tardy, 2000; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). By using activity theory as the main theoretical framework, this present study has helped us better understand the nature of teachers’ learning to teach. That is, the effects of teacher education programs need to be viewed with other relevant sources and activity settings in which their learning to teach took place. This view allows us to bring together diverse research findings of L2 teachers’ professional development such as the issues of implementing CLT in the EFL contexts (e.g., teachers’ [self-perceived] language needs; identities; pedagogical challenges; broader educational and cultural factors) and provides more meaningful theoretical framework to explain L2 teacher education phenomenon.

The activity settings illustrated in Table 6.1 were the sources of the teachers’ learning to teach, but these settings were also constraints to limit their efforts to use the pedagogical tools learned in the programs in their own classroom teaching. In Mr. Fujii’s case, for instance, he extensively appropriated what he had learned from the program due to the alignment among settings (his own goals, MEXT program, school culture, and other professional development opportunities). In contrast, Mr. Kato faced great challenges due to incompatible goals across and within main activity settings (communicative-oriented teaching presented in the MEXT program which satisfied the Japanese government’s requirements and his school culture which stressed “conventional grammar-focused instruction”). Mr. Suzuki also found himself being torn between the two settings which led him to conduct an incoherent sequence of classroom instruction between communicative activities and examination-oriented practices. In other words, if the values, goals, and practices of activity settings were diverse and competing, and even
conflicting, teachers’ appropriation involved challenges (Grossman et al., 1999; Newell et al., 2001). It should be noted, however, these teachers’ appropriation was not always a static either/or process, but constantly involved successes and struggles across time and space.

This interconnected relationship among activity settings, however, raises an important question, which is related to the third key findings in this section: How can we understand the influence of the MEXT program on Japanese EFL teachers’ conceptions of teaching and practices? The appropriation processes of the case study teachers provide evidence for understanding the roles of the program. The MEXT program can play a critical role to (re)shape teachers’ teaching conceptions and practices, if it provides them with activity settings to: (1) articulate and examine teachers’ beliefs or assumptions about EFL teaching and learning (e.g., tension between teachers’ prior knowledge and the values of the program); (2) understand the conceptual principles underlying pedagogical tools; (3) try out the tools in teaching sites, and (4) reflect on their pedagogical application in their appropriation processes.

As many studies demonstrate, teachers’ prior knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning play a powerful role in their learning from teacher education programs (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Freeman 1996; Smith, 1996). My case study also illustrates that the Japanese EFL teachers brought deeply ingrained beliefs about EFL teaching approach to the MEXT program, which affected their learning in the setting. Mr. Kato’s experience was one of the compelling examples of such cases. Despite the focus of the program which stressed constructivist English teaching and learning (“language as co-construct”), he held on to an ELT approach based on behaviorist principles
(“practicing and reviewing over and over”) which he had developed in his first teaching sites at Japanese school. This principle, from his perspective, was validated in the program. This example suggests that without having opportunities to articulate and discuss such tension between different views of teaching and learning, teachers may choose and adapt pedagogical tools in ways that are consistent with their belief about EFL teaching.

Another important setting is related to how pedagogical tools are introduced in the program. If tools are presented without their conceptual principles, teachers may appropriate only “what is available, that is, the label and surface features [of the tools]” (Grossman et al., p.19). Mr. Fujii, for example, had a goal to study social constructivist principles based on Vygotsky. Despite the program’s focus on practical aspects of teaching rather than theoretical ones, he sought opportunities to learn the concepts related to sociocultural perspectives such as “peer learning” and “the zone of proximal development,” by taking a graduate level class as an elective course and reading related books to conduct a research project as a requirement of the program. By utilizing the resources which the program made available to him, Mr. Fujii further deepened his understanding of conceptual principles of ELT and eventually appropriated them in a way of handling his own teaching situations. This case illustrates the importance of creating situations in which teachers understand the conceptual principles of pedagogical tools in the program.

In addition, the findings reveal that activity settings which allow teachers to experiment with what they learned in the program are crucial for their learning to teach. As been described in Chapter 5, Mr. Suzuki and Mr. Kato needed some interventions
when they applied the tools learned in the program to their classroom instruction. Mr. Suzuki, for instance, encountered challenges in using “group work” in “collaborative learning” mode in his lessons. Mr. Kato also faced difficulties in implementing a conceptual tool, “actual use of language,” in behaviorist principles. The results of the questionnaires reveal that the teachers appreciated the opportunities to learn conceptual tools, but did not report many of them for use compared to practical ones. This suggests that the pedagogical application of the tools was one of the challenges they faced in their appropriation processes. These findings suggest that “teachers cannot learn to teach without engaging in the activities of teaching” (Grossman, et al., p. 25). However, it should be noted that perhaps because of cultural boundaries between ESL and EFL contexts (e.g., differences in learners; English learning situations), only a few teachers in the questionnaires reported a need to have more teaching practicum opportunities during the program. Therefore, these settings inevitably need to be beyond the contexts of the MEXT program: that is, teachers’ own teaching sites in Japan. (See “Aspects Teachers Found Useful and Desired to See Improved” for the discussion about teachers’ perspectives on pedagogical application opportunities.)

Furthermore, the case study data also suggest that the teachers need activity settings which allow them to reflect on their pedagogical application of the tools. Mr. Fujii, who enthusiastically sought opportunities to critically analyze his classroom teaching inside and outside school, was able to solve instructional problems he faced when appropriating the tools (e.g., language training). In doing so, he continued to learn specific practical tools grounded in the conceptual tools learned in the MEXT program and made a connection between the two. For him, therefore, “reflective teaching” was a
way to mediate the two settings, the MEXT program and his own teaching contexts in Japan. Recently a disjuncture between theoretical course work and a teaching practice/practicum has been a great concern among scholars and teacher educators (e.g., Clark, 1994; Johnson, 1996; Kinginger, 2002; Newell et al., 2001) and this study suggests that reflective practice can play a critical role to work with the issue (e.g., Flowerdew, 1998; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Richards, 1998).

Fourth, Japanese EFL teachers’ experiences of learning to teach are particularly complex since their transitional experiences from the MEXT program to their teaching sites in Japan involved not only transferring the tools but also negotiating cultural boundaries between the two settings (e.g., teachers’ cultural beliefs; newly constructed assumptions about English teaching and learning, broader historical and cultural conditions of teaching in Japan). In the questionnaires, the teachers expressed that they found themselves being torn between the two key settings due to differences of English teaching and learning situations between the ESL and EFL contexts. However, the case study data reveal that the focal teachers negotiated such differences (e.g., level of English exposure; cultural norm of what is “good learners;” students’ English levels) to make the pedagogical tools work for their own teaching contexts. In other words, the teachers’ appropriation processes were subjected to the relationships of activity settings (e.g., ESL and EFL contexts). Yet, at the same time, they (re)shaped the settings where they reconstructed new knowledge about EFL teaching to meet their own students’ needs and expectations.

This finding suggests that the teachers are not passive subjects who immerse themselves in the given contexts, the MEXT program and school culture in their teaching
sites in Japan, because of their “internal goal-oriented actions” within the setting (Donato, 2000; Grossman, et al., 1999; Lantolf, 2000). For example, Mr. Fujii’s understanding of the differences between the two contexts evolved as he generated and tested hypotheses about the problems (e.g., integrating English courses to create opportunities where students can apply knowledge in various contexts). Mr. Suzuki also came up with speech-focused learning to deal with Japanese students’ limited English proficiencies. In both cases, the teachers did not simply choose one cultural aspect of English teaching and abandon another one, but positioned themselves as what Shiedhoffer (1999) calls “a mediator” of playing “double roles” to construct “context-sensitive” ELT approaches (Canagarah, 1999; Ellis, 1996; Kinginger 2002; Sullivan, 2000). It was through this problem solving process that they modified and reconstructed new knowledge about EFL teaching to meet their own students’ needs. In these cases, constraints they faced in light of cross-cultural boundaries were “a positive set of limitations that provides the structure for productive activity” (Grossman et al., 1999, p. 7). As Mr. Kato experienced, however, cultural negotiation was not always a creative process when teachers were confronted with a strong influence of school culture. He eventually relinquished some of the tools due to the discrepancy between the two settings.

Fifth, the case study also revealed that teachers’ appropriation processes involved not only adopting and/or adapting pedagogical tools but also constructing teacher identities within the activity settings in which their learning to teach occurred. The following is a recurrent theme related to teacher identity that emerged in my case study: The teachers’ professional identities simultaneously shaped and were shaped by their appropriation of pedagogical tools in particular contexts. In other words, there was a
dynamic and reciprocal relationship between their sense of professional self and their appropriation of the pedagogical tools learned in the MEXT program as they applied the tools to their classroom instruction in Japan.

Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasize that broader social relationships and identity are constantly interacted and mutually constitutive. The findings of my case study also revealed this reciprocal relationship between teachers’ appropriation processes and their identity construction. In addition, instead of assuming a unitary, fixed, and stable notion of teachers’ identities, this study found that the relationship between their appropriation of tools and identities was constantly negotiated due to its situated nature and teachers’ agency as “intentional beings” (Varghese et al., 2005, p.23). Mr. Suzuki’s transformation from “a solo player” to “a team-player” in relation to his social practices such as resistance among his students and collaborative work with colleagues is one of the compelling examples of the fluidity of relationship between the two. In other words, the process of his appropriation of the tools (e.g., defining a problem; engaging in solving the problem; using resources available to him) contributed to and also resulted from his identity construction.

**Pedagogical Implications of Teachers’ Learning to Teach**

By using activity theory as a main theoretical framework, this study has revealed the complexities involved in EFL teachers’ learning to teach. In particular, their transitional experiences from the L2 teacher education program in the U.S. to their own teaching sites in Japan made their appropriation processes more complex. I have, therefore, emphasized the importance of viewing teachers’ learning to teach as situated
practices that involve various negotiations among their histories, goals and expectations, relationships with social settings, identities, and a set of tools available to them. Based on the findings of the study, pedagogical implications will be drawn regarding how to foster teachers’ appropriation processes and how to develop effective L2 teacher education programs for EFL teachers.

**Suggestions for the Japanese Ministry of Education**

This section offers implications for the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) which sponsors the MEXT programs for Japanese secondary school EFL teachers. Suggestions will be made at the conceptual and practical level. First, at the conceptual level, it appears to be important for the MEXT to be aware that the nature of teachers’ learning to teach is both unique to individuals and socially constructed. Rather than assuming that individual teachers simply teach according to their abilities and knowledge, the MEXT needs to consider what teaching conceptions and practices teachers have constructed and how these elements are shaping and being shaped by their interactions with social environments such as school culture (e.g., colleagues; goals; prior experiences in formal schools), teacher education (e.g., university course work), and broader cultural and national factors (e.g., goals of the MEXT; cross cultural negotiation). To acknowledge this “situatedness” of teachers’ learning to teach is critical to develop effective teacher education programs (Lantolf, 2000, p.47). This is because the influence of programs can only be viewed with other relevant sources and activity settings in which
teachers’ learning to teach occur. Therefore, it is not productive to consider that providing teachers with training automatically promotes change in their thinking and behavior.

The MEXT has sent Japanese EFL teachers overseas for their professional development since the direction of English education in Japan shifted to a communicative-oriented teaching approach. Although teachers benefit from participating in this overseas program to a great extent, they also experience challenges. On one hand, it is beneficial because teachers were offered an opportunity to develop their English skills and pedagogical tools related to communicative-oriented teaching approaches, which have been extensively promoted in English education in Japan. On the other hand, the setting also produces constraints in terms of pedagogical application due to cross cultural boundaries between the MEXT program and their own teaching contexts in Japan. A key problem here is that during the program, teachers cannot try out the pedagogical tools with their own students in Japan. Given that the focal teachers faced challenges in appropriating the tools, in particular, the surface level of appropriation, this problem needs to be taken into serious consideration.

One suggestion for the MEXT at the practical level, therefore, is that it seems to be more effective if the MEXT provides teachers with follow-up settings for pedagogical application. This training is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to examine whether teachers make use of the pedagogical tools presented in the program in a principled way within individual teachers’ particular teaching contexts. If the MEXT and the local governments use a network of teachers who have participated in the MEXT programs in the past, they can decide who provides support to teachers in the follow-up training.
Given that the focal teachers in the case study presented different levels of appropriation of pedagogical tools, to gain support from fellow teachers seems reasonable and helpful. In fact, two teachers in my case study enthusiastically expressed a desire to share their learning experiences in the program with other teachers. By providing such follow-up settings, the MEXT can also better understand teachers’ appropriation processes in given contexts, and thus examine the effects of the program which they must concern. Given cultural boundaries between the two contexts, it seems necessary to include a follow-up training after the program in order to foster teachers’ appropriation processes.

Another practical suggestion for the MEXT is related to the goals of the program they propose. Based of the requirements from the MEXT, individual hosts coordinated the programs which stressed practical aspects of ELT rather than conceptual ones. At first glance, the focus on practical tools seems reasonable given that the participants of the programs are ELT practitioners who need to know instructional strategies and techniques for their classroom teaching. However, this might create a problematic situation if a tool is presented without its conceptual principles. That is, teachers’ learning of pedagogical tools is potentially limited to surface features, which can make them difficult to apply in a new context and in a coherent way (Grossman et al., 1999). Therefore, rather than focusing on immediate utility for classroom instruction, the MEXT needs to place more importance on broad conceptions of ELT with which teachers can guide their instructional decision and also on a connection between the two. This suggestion may also apply to other teacher education programs that the MEXT promotes.
Suggestions for L2 Teacher Educators

Several suggestions for L2 educators can be drawn from this study. First of all, as EFL teachers enter a teacher education program in English speaking settings, they bring various assumptions, values, and beliefs about English teaching and learning which might be culturally specific and/or evolve as they learn to teach in a new environment. Since teachers’ prior knowledge most probably plays a powerful role in their learning in teacher education programs, instructors need to provide them with activity settings in which teachers can articulate and discuss their own ELT beliefs and assumptions with relation to the values and practices stressed in the program and let them realize similarities and/or differences between the two settings. Importantly, through the interventions (e.g., discussion; journals; giving feedback), instructors need to examine how EFL teachers’ ideas about ELT evolve in the processes and the products of their thinking. It is critical for instructors to employ a variety of assessment strategies to understand this evolving process of teachers’ thinking. If teachers are not offered the settings to understand tensions between what they brought to the program and what they learn in the program, teacher education course work may not be effective in (re)constructing their conceptions of teaching.

Second, this study points to a possible challenge in teachers’ appropriating pedagogical tools if tools are presented without their conceptual principles. In such cases, teachers may appropriate only the label or surface features of a tool and not understand the rationales underlying it. Grossman et al., (1999) assert that providing an overview of teaching ideas and techniques without their conceptual underpinnings, which we sometimes see in some textbooks in the field, may create situations where teachers’
learning of pedagogical tools is potentially limited to the surface level, which inevitably makes it difficult for them to solve instructional problems in new teaching contexts. The overall goals of the MEXT program were already proposed by the Japanese government, which stressed practical aspects of ELT rather than theoretical ones. These established goals must create some difficulties in making adjustments of the program curriculum from the hosts’ points of view. However, given the choice that the programs have in terms of course contents (e.g., courses they offer; reading materials; activities in class), instructors may be able to provide more activity settings in which teachers can understand how the features of specific tools contribute to the “conceptual whole” (Grossman et al., 1999, p. 17). To do so, the programs can effectively make use of available resources such as undergrad/graduate courses as a supplement. During the program, two focal teachers in the case study took a graduate course offered in the TESOL and/or linguistics fields in each university, which eventually helped them further understand the conceptual principles of certain pedagogical tools.

Third, teachers’ learning must be more effective if teacher education programs can provide them with both learning and teaching settings. This is critical given that many of the teachers in the questionnaires seemed to have challenges in connecting the practical and the conceptual tools presented in the program. The focal teachers’ challenges in using tools in a principled way also allow us to make this suggestion. Japanese EFL teachers’ concerns about cross-cultural issues, such as differences of English learning situations between ESL and EFL, need to be well taken when it comes to pedagogical applications. One of the program coordinators also expressed a similar concern (e.g., different group of students in the ESL program and teachers’ own classes...
in Japan). However, it seems necessary to include actual experiments with the tools during the program in order to support teachers’ learning of conceptual principles underlying the tools. Without such settings, they may return to their own teaching sites without knowing their pedagogical application. Due to the teachers’ and instructors’ concerns about cross-cultural factors, I would suggest that they can focus on selected tools (e.g., group work; collaborative learning) for limited teaching practicum opportunities to examine whether they make instructional decisions based on the conceptual principles. This practice will help instructors understand the depth of teachers’ understanding of the particular tools they focus on.

Finally, the study also suggests that reflective practices need to be included in conjunction with other activity settings in the program such as learning pedagogical tools and teaching activities. One of the important elements to (re)construct teachers’ knowledge about ELT was their critical examinations of the pedagogical application of tools. This is especially important given that EFL teachers experience two key activity settings, the MEXT program and their own teaching sites, which emphasized varying and sometimes competing goals and practices. In cases of the incongruity between the two settings, teachers generally faced challenges in appropriating pedagogical tools into their own teaching contexts. It must be difficult to provide these three components (learning pedagogical tools, trying out the tools, and reflecting on their application) throughout the program. However, to include reflective practices during the time when they learn instructional tools and/or engage in teaching activities in the program must be a great opportunity for teachers to mediate the two settings and possibly to construct new knowledge about ELT, which is “context-sensitive” teaching approaches (Kinginger,
2002). One of the focal teachers in the case study, for example, commented that discussing how to integrate between the ideas they learned in the program and the realities in their own teaching contexts with fellow teachers (e.g., lack of English exposure) during the program helped him reconstruct ELT knowledge (e.g., integrating four language skills across English courses at school). Therefore, I will suggest that one of the crucial roles that L2 teacher education programs need to play for EFL teachers is to help them cultivate their roles as a “mediator” between the two contexts by providing them with opportunities to confront their potential tensions or differences through reflective practices (Seidlhofer, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999)

**Suggestions for EFL Teachers**

I have several suggestions for EFL teachers who participate in L2 teacher education programs in English speaking countries for professional development and eventually return to teach in their own teaching contexts. These suggestions are made in light of two essential aspects: the nature of teachers’ learning to teach and practical strategies they can use to facilitate their appropriation processes.

Regarding the former, the nature of teachers’ learning to teach, teachers may benefit from understanding their appropriation of pedagogical tools not simply as adding new ways of thinking and doing but as complex processes of interacting with social contexts, teachers’ own histories and goals, identities, and tools available to them (Newell, et al., 2001). Recognizing this aspect of their learning to teach may help them better understand, examine, and handle the tensions and challenges that they may face in their appropriation processes. Teachers are also encouraged to see themselves as active
meaning constructors of ELT rather than passive recipients of transmitted knowledge. The teachers who developed such a perspective of their professional role were able to appropriate the pedagogical tools by making use of resources available to them in particular contexts (e.g., colleagues; university professors in TESOL; professional development opportunities). Finally, it may be helpful for teachers to understand their transitional experiences from the MEXT program to their own teaching sites in Japan as “a generative and transformative process” in order to deal with potential challenges they may face (Morita, 2002, p.183; see also Shen, 1989). In the case study, all of the teachers indicated that learning to teach across the two settings created challenges or concerns in appropriating the tools. However, it was through this process that they genuinely explored how to mediate the two settings and (re)constructed ELT knowledge. This process also helped teachers understand their changing professional self.

In terms of the latter, practical strategies teachers can use to facilitate their appropriation processes, it seems effective for them to get access to various resources available to them in order to critically reflect on their pedagogical application as well as gain a deeper understanding of the conceptual principles underlying instructional tools. Based on the focal teachers’ experiences, resources include professional development opportunities (e.g., personal, institutional, local, and national), collaborative work with colleagues, and discussions with fellow teachers who participated in the MEXT program. One of the focal teachers in the study, who continued to participate in professional development opportunities even after the program, was able to connect theory and practice and make instructional decisions based on conceptual principles. He also had access to various networks (e.g., university professors) to critically examine his lessons.
For him, having access to these resources was a tool to create the best possible EFL learning environment for his students which were guided by conceptual principles rather than intuition or routine.

Finally, in terms of issue related to teachers’ own English learning, which has been one of the concerns among nonnative English speaking teachers (e.g., Kamhi-Stein, 1999; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), continued access to training opportunities may also help teachers overcome the issue. For instance, another focal teacher in the case study continued to attend various language training opportunities after the program (e.g., English club; speech contests; overseas teacher training program as an escort teacher), commenting that these opportunities allowed him to further develop his language skills. While teachers wanted to actively seek opportunities for their professional development (e.g., forming a study group with colleagues), some participants in the case study expressed that their heavy work load limited their access to such resources. We can surmise, therefore, that institutional, local, and national support is necessary to ensure their continued access to professional development opportunities.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The primary purpose of this study was to illuminate EFL teachers’ learning to teach, in particular, the process of appropriating pedagogical tools presented in L2 teacher education programs into their own teaching sites. This study suggests the value of examining teachers’ learning to teach by using activity theory as a theoretical framework. It seems particularly useful to demonstrate that teachers’ appropriation processes involve not only acquiring knowledge but also dealing with various values, motives, and practices.
emphasized in activity settings in which their learning to teach takes place. By examining teachers’ actions within the social frameworks, the study illustrated a variety of sources and activity settings involved in the effects of teacher education programs. These factors allow us to recognize various research findings in the L2 teacher education field in a more unified way (e.g., issues of theory and practice; issues of the implementation of CLT). In addition, by closely looking at Japanese EFL teachers’ transition from the L2 teacher education program in the U.S. to their own teaching contexts, this study shed light on these teachers’ unique experiences and needs and helps us understand the complexities involved in their appropriation processes.

One apparent direction for future research is, therefore, to continue to explore the nature of EFL teachers’ learning to teach from the activity theory perspective. This can reveal how teachers’ progression through a series of activity settings mediates their teaching conceptions and their classroom practices, which will help us better understand the roles and effects of teacher education programs. These efforts can create more meaningful theoretical frameworks to explain the L2 teacher education phenomenon, and contribute to the current ongoing discussion in the field regarding what constitutes a professional knowledge-base to develop effective programs for English language teachers (e.g., Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Yates & Muchisky, 2003). Inquiry into EFL teachers’ transitional experiences is also important given that a growing number of teachers from the EFL contexts participate in teacher education programs in English speaking countries for their professional growth and eventually return to their own teaching contexts (Liu, 1999; Nunan, 2003).
While this study explored a particular teacher education program designed for Japanese EFL teachers, future research can examine different types of professional development for EFL teachers, including university sponsored pre-and in-service teacher education programs and voluntary-based participation in teacher training organizations. Identifying the consequences of various types of activity settings can help us understand effective teacher education settings (Grossman, et al., 1999). Examining EFL teachers who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds may also provide useful insights into the issue. Furthermore, exploring not only EFL teachers who participate in overseas teacher education programs but also those who attend domestic programs in their own teaching contexts can also offer useful insights into the appropriation process. This is an interesting area of research in light of the effects of programs since teachers may be able to experiment with pedagogical tools within their own classrooms while participating in the program.

Future research should also examine the nature of teacher’s learning to teach by including students. It was beyond the scope of this study to explore their voices and learning. However, if we take the view that teachers’ learning is situated social practices, as activity theorists assume, it is important to examine how teachers appropriate pedagogical tools presented in teacher education programs as they interact with their students. In addition, it is also important to expand the current line of teacher education research by examining the effects of teachers’ classroom instruction on students’ learning (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001).

Another area that deserves an examination is course instructors. As the number of EFL teachers who attend overseas teacher education programs increases, programs need
to consider how they meet EFL teachers’ needs and at the same time those of domestic students (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999). If we take the position that teachers’ learning to teach is a two-way relationship, it must be important to investigate how L2 teacher educations and their members may be appropriated as they interact with EFL teachers. More in-depth inquiry into instructors’ practices and perspectives will be valuable.

In terms of research methods, future research can consider a longitudinal, in-depth investigation of EFL teachers’ learning to teach. This is not meant to restrict teacher education research to any single paradigm. Scholars urge us to keep the teaching and teacher education field complex through multiple voices and methods of inquiry (e.g., Florio-Ruane, 2002). However, a context-sensitive approach seems useful to account for teachers’ gradual development of appropriating pedagogical tools, especially EFL teachers who cross cultural boundaries between overseas teacher education programs and their native teaching contexts. Given the dynamic process of teachers’ learning to teach, such a research approach will also help us better understand under what circumstances particular kinds of changes take place (Grossman et al., 1999)

**Limitations of the Study**

A major limitation involved in this study is the issue of generalizability or transferability. Regarding the questionnaire findings, the use of purposive sampling by examining selected programs (N = 66) inevitably limits the generalizability of the results to the population, Japanese teachers of English who participated in the U.S. MEXT programs from 1998 to 2003 (N = approximately 200). In addition, great caution needs to be taken when transferring the findings of the qualitative case study due to the
researcher’s use of an “intensity sampling” strategy (Patton, 1990) and the voluntary basis of participants’ selection. In other words, among the teachers who expressed their willingness of participating in the case study, I selected three teachers and intensely examined these information-rich cases in more depth. I attempted to establish validity of this inquiry by employing triangulation of research methods (reports, interviews, observations, and document analysis) and data sources (teachers, host programs, and administrators at each teacher’s school), and also provide as detailed descriptions of data as possible. Moreover, during data analysis, member checking was conducted as the single most crucial technique to verify multiple realities that the participants present (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, with a small group of participants, any attempt to generalize the findings of the case study to, for example, Japanese teachers of English, EFL teachers, or non-native English speaking teachers in general, needs a great caution. The ultimate decision maker of applicability and transferability of the case study is, therefore, on those who receive the information (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

In addition, teachers’ reports on and observations of their classroom instruction do not necessarily represent all of their daily practices. No matter how thick the description of the examined cases appears to be, situated studies always involve partiality. Given the complexities of teachers’ learning to teach, however, the researcher takes the position that “having a partial, local, historical knowledge is still knowing” (Richardson, 2000, p. 928).
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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE
QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers’ Post-Overseas Training Experiences

This study is being conducted with the support of the MEXT program at Georgetown University and The Ohio State University.

Your responses and background information (e.g. your name, school, address) will be kept entirely confidential. Your name, email addresses, the program you attended and so forth will be used only to organized the data with which you will provide me. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate it if you are honest in your responses. To complete this questionnaire, you will spend approximately 30 minutes of your time.

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The Ohio State University
Part I Background

START HERE

The first section asks you about your background as an English teacher. Please check the most appropriate response or fill in the blanks.

1. Which MEXT program, either 6-month or 12-month, did you participate in?
   - 6-month program
   - 12-month program

2. When did you participate in the U.S. MEXT program?
   From _____________, ________ month ________ year
   To ______________, ________ month ________ year

3. How did you decide to participate in the MEXT program?
   - The local board of Education and/or the principle appointed me to attend the program.
   - I applied for the program on my own.
   - Other (please explain)

4. How many years have you been teaching English in public schools (private school if any)? Please answer for both before and after participating in the MEXT program.
   _________ years prior to participating in the MEXT program
   _________ years after participating in the MEXT program

5. What professional roles are you currently playing?
   - Teaching English in a Junior or senior high school
   - Both teaching English and doing administrative work at the school and/or local community levels
   - Mainly doing administrative work at the school and/or local community levels
   - Others (please specify them)

6. What level do you teach or belong to? (if you teach or belong to more than one level, please answer for the level at which you work more hours.)
   - Senior High School Please continue
   - Junior High School Skip to No. 9
   - Neither one of the above

Only For High School Teachers

7. Please choose the closest characteristics of your current high school.
   - A university preparatory school
   - A technical school
   - Other

8. Please specify the percent of students who enter universities (including 2-year colleges) in your high school.
   ________ %
For All Teachers

9. What grade level of students are you teaching now? (Choose all that apply)
   - □ 1st Year
   - □ 2nd Year
   - □ 3rd Year
   - □ I am not currently teaching → Skip to No. 12

10. What English courses are you teaching now? Please specify the course titles (e.g. English I, Oral Communication I)

11. On average, how many students do you have in your English class? If it depends on courses, please specify the course titles (e.g. English I) on the right blanks.
   - □ less than 24 ______
   - □ 25 – 30 ______
   - □ 31 – 35 ______
   - □ 36 – 40 ______
   - □ 41 – 45 ______
   - □ more than 46 ______

For All Teachers

12. Which of the following areas describes your current working place?
   - □ Hokkaido
   - □ Tohoku
   - □ Kanto
   - □ Chubu
   - □ Kinki
   - □ Chugoku/Shikoku
   - □ Kyushu

13. What degree(s) have you earned and what was your major(s)?
   - □ BA major__________
   - □ MA/Med major__________
   - □ Ph.D major__________
   - □ Other (Please specify the following two)
     - degree________________
     - major________________

14. Have you ever studied/stayed in English speaking countries (Please exclude any short-term personal travels and the MEXT program in which you participated.)
   - □ YES
   - □ NO → Skip to No. 16

15. Please specify the reason(s) and the lengths of the stay
   Reasons (including the place(s) you studied/stayed)
   __________________________
   How long?
   __________________________

16. What is your gender?
   - □ Male
   - □ Female
Part II  Professional Development

1. This section asks you about how useful your various learning experiences with the MEXT program is for your current English teaching practices. Please circle the number that best describes the extent to which you found the following aspects useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Usefulness</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1) How useful was the language development opportunities throughout the program in:

| 1a) Listening skills                                               | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1b) Speaking skills                                                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1c) Reading skills                                                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1d) Writing skills                                                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1e) Pronunciation                                                  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1f) Grammar                                                       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
| 1g) Vocabulary                                                     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |

2) How useful was being exposed to theoretical ideas about English teaching and learning

| 2                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

3) How useful was being exposed to practical ideas about English teaching and learning

| 3                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

4) How useful was engaging in discussion about English teaching issues and concerns with fellow participants

| 4                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

5) How useful was considering (discussing) the application of the ideas presented in the program to your teaching situations in Japan

| 5                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

6) How useful was engaging in teaching practicum, if any, to test the new ideas presented in the program courses in actual classes

| 6                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

7) How useful was having opportunities to reflect on your own teaching beliefs and/or practices developed in the past

| 7                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

8) How useful was conducting a research project in your areas of interest

| 8                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

9) How useful was being exposed to cultural and social aspects of the U.S.

| 9                                             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

10) How useful was observing teaching and learning environment of the U.S. (e.g. instructors’ teaching practices in the program/visiting schools

| 10                                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |

11) Others (please specify them)

| 11                                            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | NA |
|                                               |   |   |   |   |    |
2. Now, I would also like to know which areas you would have liked to develop by having more instruction while participating in the MEXT program.

2a) First, from the following English language skills, please choose the areas that you would have liked to receive more instruction in the program (choose all that apply).

- Listening skills
- Speaking skills
- Reading skills
- Writing skills
- Pronunciation
- Grammar
- Vocabulary

2b) Next, please share your opinions on the pedagogical tools and the application. From the following aspects, please choose the areas that you would have liked to receive more instruction in the program (choose all that apply).

- Conceptual ideas about (English language) teaching and learning
  (e.g. What is communicative language teaching? What is language learning?)
- Practical ideas about English teaching methodology (e.g. oral communication, reading, writing)
- Practical ideas about testing of students’ English proficiency (e.g. oral communication, reading, writing)
- Opportunities to be exposed to various aspects of U.S. culture and society
- Opportunities to observe instructors’ teaching practices in the program and/or visiting schools
- Discussion (exchange) about English teaching & learning issues with fellow teachers
- Opportunities to reflect on your teaching beliefs and/or practices developed in the past
- Discussion about how to apply the ideas presented in the U.S. program into your teaching situations
- Practicum opportunities to test the new ideas presented in the program in actual teaching situations

2c) If there are any other areas that you would have liked to receive more instruction, please specify them.
Part III Teaching Principle

1. In this section, I would like to know your daily English teaching practices and beliefs or principles in teaching. Please provide your answers in the space below each question.

1a) First, I would like to know your typical English lesson. Please describe how you recently go about teaching English in class? Please try to be specific.

1b) Please explain why you teach that way? Please be sure to include your own beliefs (e.g. principles, values) as a teacher.
2. Please recall your formal education experiences in learning and teaching English. To what extent do you think each of the following experiences have affected your beliefs as English teacher? Please circle the number that best describes the level of effect with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Affected;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Did not affect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Great Deal;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Some Extent:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only A Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Secondary school courses when you were a student ................................................. 4 3 2 1
2) Undergraduate (graduate, if any) level (teacher education) courses 4 3 2 1
3) Teaching practicum conducted during the undergraduate teacher education program ................................................................. 4 3 2 1
4) Teacher development opportunities other than No. 2 (e.g. domestic short-terms trainings, overseas MEXT programs, conferences) ...... 4 3 2 1
5) Teaching experiences at school environments (e.g. school, students’ parents, and/or administrators’ expectations, colleagues) ............... 4 3 2 1
6) National policies described in “The Course of Study” ......................... 4 3 2 1

3. Please describe the most influential event(s) (including any other life experiences) that has affected your beliefs as an English teacher?
Part IV  Appropriation of Teaching Tools

Start Here

In this section, I would like to know how you apply the teaching tools presented in the program to your teaching practices. Please check the most appropriate response or fill out the spaces below.

1. Overall, to what extent do you think the teaching tools you were exposed to in the program are relevant to your teaching practices?
   - [ ] Very Great Extent
   - [ ] To Some Extent
   - [ ] To Small Extent
   - [ ] Not At All

2. What teaching tools you were exposed to in the program, if any, do you use for classwork, tests, and/or homework? Please specify the tools that you most often use.

3. Please describe the most rewarding experience(s), if any, you had when using the teaching tools from the program courses.

4. To what extent have you faced any challenges or had any concerns when applying the teaching tools you were exposed to in the program to your teaching practices?
   - [ ] Very Great Extent
   - [ ] To Some Extent
   - [ ] To Small Extent
   - [ ] Not At All

5. Please explain the reason(s) why you think that you have not faced any challenges
6. To what extent has each of the following aspects created any challenges or concerns when you apply the teaching tools that you were exposed to in the program to your teaching practices? Please circle the number that best describes the degree of challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of challenges</th>
<th>4. Very Great Extent; 3. To Some Extent; 2. A small Extent; 1. Not At All; NA. Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) A lack of your understanding of the concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Your own English teaching styles/beliefs developed over the years</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) A lack of your English language proficiency</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) A lack of your knowledge about the cultural and social aspects of other countries relevant to English teaching and learning</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) A lack of students’ minimum level of English proficiency</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Students’ unfamiliarity to collaborative learning activities</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Difficulties in assessing students’ communicative knowledge</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) A lack of collaboration/interaction among colleagues</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Teachers’ roles expected in teaching practices at school</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Large class size</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) High-stakes testing for high school/university admissions</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Less satisfactory contents of prescribed textbooks</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Individual teachers’ limited autonomy in selecting contents in the class</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) A lack of support for instructional innovation from the administrators</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Differences between students’ actual expectations/needs in English learning and your ideas about English teaching</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) A lack of support for instructional innovation from parents</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) Others: Please specify the reasons</td>
<td>4 3 2 1 NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Did you have any opportunities to reconsider some of your assumptions about (English) teaching and learning, during and/or after participating in the program?

☐ YES ➔ Please continue
☐ NO ➔ Skip to No. 9
If YES
8. Please explain how your assumptions about (English) teaching and learning changed.

For All Teachers:
9. I would like to ask you to volunteer to participate in a more in-depth study which is planning to be conducted mainly during the second semester. The study will involve interviews, short reports, and observations of your classroom teaching with your and school administrators’ permission. (Please see more a detailed explanation of this plan). The interviews and reports will be conducted via either email or mail (Telephone interviews could be conducted only if you prefer it). Are you willing to participate in the study?

1. YES
2. NO

If YES, please provide your email and mail addresses or phone number (if you prefer) to conduct the interview.

Name: __________________________________________
Email address: __________________________________
Mail address: ____________________________________

Phone number (optional): ____________________________

Thank you very much for taking your time to complete this questionnaire. For my appreciation of sharing your valuable opinions and information, I am sending you an Ohio State University coaster. I thought that you may use it when you have tea at school. If there is anything else you would like to tell me about this questionnaire or study, please do so in the spaces provided at the back of this page. Please return your completed questionnaire by July 25th in the pre-addressed envelope provided or via email (kurihara.3@osu.edu) as an attachment.

Yuka Kurihara
APPENDIX B

INVITATION LETTER FOR TEACHERS
(QUALITATIVE STUDY PARTICIPANTS)
INVITATION LETTER FOR TEACHERS

Dear (Name of teacher)  

Hello. I, Yuka Kurihara, am a doctoral student studying in the Second and Foreign Language Education Program at The Ohio State University (OSU). I am writing to invite you to participate in my dissertation research titled “Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.” In particular, the focus of the study is on those who participated in the government sponsored overseas in-service teacher education (MEXT) programs in the United States from 1998 to 2003. The main purposes of this study are to examine (1) teachers’ experiences of learning to teach and (2) their needs for professional development. By asking teachers to reflect on their post-training experiences, the study will explore such issues in relation to teachers, their classroom practices, school contexts, and education policies (I do not have any intention to evaluate teachers’ practices). Therefore, your participation of this study is very important and appreciated to develop better teacher education programs for Japanese teachers of English.

This research consists of two parts: The first part of the study is a questionnaire which will be distributed to you in July. The second part of this study contains a more in-depth study with teachers who express their willingness to participate in it. I hope that it will be conducted from August through the second semester, 2005 (please see a more detailed description of the second part of this study below). At the end of the questionnaire, you will be asked if you are interested in the second part of this study. If you are not interested in the in-depth study, please skip the description letter below and the consent form.

Any information that you provide for this study will be kept strictly confidential. Your background information (e.g., name; school; the program in which you participated) will be coded so that you and school will be assured of anonymity. All the data will be disposed once the study is complete. In addition, your participation in this study is voluntary. Therefore, you have the right to refuse to answer questions that you do not wish to answer, and to refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without negative consequences.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact me at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. You can also contact the principle investigator of this study, Dr. Keiko Samimy, at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. For questions about you rights as a participant in this study, please contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

At the beginning of the study, as a token of my gratitude toward your valuable response to the questionnaire, I would like to offer you a gift, OSU coaster. To those who will
actually participate in the second part of the study, I would also like to send you a gift, a $100 gift certificate for my appreciation of sharing your valuable opinions and time. Finally, it is my hope that I can provide some support for participants in this study as it goes along.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yuka Kurihara

DESCRIPTION OF THE SECOND PART OF RESEARCH

TITLE: Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Dr. Keiko Komiya Samimy
Associate Professor
Foreign/Second Language Education
School of Teaching & Learning
The Ohio State University
223 Arps Hall, 1945 North High Street, Columbus, OH, USA, 43202
Tel. (phone omitted) Email: (email omitted)

CO-INVESTIGATOR
Yuka Kurihara
Ph. D Candidate
Foreign/Second Language Education
School of Teaching & Learning
The Ohio State University
Tel. (phone omitted) E-Mail: (email omitted)

PURPOSE: The purpose of the second part of this study is to gain a better understanding of Japanese teachers’ post-overseas teacher training experiences in school settings. In particular, by asking teachers to reflect on their learning experiences in the MEXT program and current teaching practices, the project explores the impact of the teacher education program on their teaching beliefs and practices, and their needs for professional development.

PARTICIPANTS: I am looking for six Japanese teachers of English for this project. If more than six teachers express interest, we will use a “maximum variation sampling strategy” for the selection of participant. That is, the factors such as the same number of the participants from both the 6 and 12 month programs, both junior and senior high schools, and both relatively experienced and highly experienced teachers will be taken into consideration.

RESEARCH DURATION: From August, 2005 to December, 2005
PROCEDURE:
1. Two formal interviews (during the summer break and at the end of the semester)
2. Five short reports on your classroom teaching (during the second semester)
3. Two-three classroom observations with your and school administrators’ permission. (in October)
4. A debriefing session in which we will share the findings of the study with you and ask for your feedback.(around spring, 2006)

* The researcher may contact you after each interview due to the need for clarification and/or elaboration on specific issues.
* If observations are permitted, you will also be invited for short pre-and post-observation discussions.
* Your school administrator will also be interviewed once with your and their permission.
* Interviews, reports, and debriefings will be conducted mainly via email. However, telephone could be used if you prefer it. In the case of phone, you and the second investigator will carefully set up the time and date.
* Phone and face-to-face conversations will be audio-recorded with your permission.

Once participants have been selected, these plans will be carefully negotiated among teachers, school administrators, and the second investigator.

TIME: The following are the approximate amount of time required for this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Each interview (August &amp; December)</th>
<th>30minutes ～1hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up conversations (after interviews, if necessary)</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reports (during the second semester, five times)</td>
<td>30 ～40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each pre-observation discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each post-observation discussion</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A debriefing session/member check</td>
<td>30～40minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount of time required</td>
<td>Approximately 8 hours plus classroom observations (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Interviews with school administrators will take approximately 30 minutes.

HONORARIUM: For an appreciation of sharing your valuable opinions and time, six teachers who will actually participate in this study will receive a gift certificate ($ 100.00) at the end of the study (December, 2005). If you withdraw from the study, you will only receive part of the original incentive (e.g., $ 50.00 for 50 % of the time).
APPENDIX C

INVITATION LETTER FOR PROGRAM COORDINATORS
(QUALITATIVE STUDY PARTICIPANTS)
INVITATION LETTER FOR PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Dear (Name of school administrator) 

Hello. I, Yuka Kurihara, am a doctoral student studying in the second and foreign language education program at The Ohio State University. I am writing today to invite you to participate in my dissertation research titled “Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.” The main purpose of this study is to explore teachers’ post-government sponsored teacher training (MEXT) experiences at their own teaching settings. In particular, the study focuses on teachers’ appropriation of practical and conceptual tools that they were exposed in the program. For their continuing professional development, your perspectives on the program as an experienced host are very valuable and important. Therefore, in this project, I would like to include not only teachers who participated in the U.S. MEXT programs from 1998 to 2003 but also the hosts which offered the programs during the period of time.

The research method to be employed is an interview via email, telephone or face-to-face conversation (if applicable). I hope that I will be able to have an opportunity to interview you at your convenience between July and August, 2005. Please see a more detailed description of this study below. If you are not interested in this study, please skip the description letter below and the consent form.

Any information that you provide for this study will be kept strictly confidential. Your background information (e.g., name; school) will be coded so that you and school will be assured of anonymity. All the data will be disposed once the study is complete. In addition, your participation in this study is voluntary. Therefore, you have the right to refuse to answer questions that you do not wish to answer, and to refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without negative consequences.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact me at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. You can also contact the principle investigator of this study, Dr. Keiko Samimy, at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. For questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

I was an English teacher in Japan at the high school level and am currently studying at the university which offered one of the U.S. MEXT programs for Japanese English teachers. Therefore, I have been very interested in their professional development for a long period of time. It is my hope that this study will provide the host programs with the information about Japanese teachers’ current teaching experiences (e.g., their beliefs; practices; use of ideas acquired from the programs) since the completion of the program.
Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Yuka Kurihara

**DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY**

**TITLE:** Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**
Dr. Keiko Komiya Samimy
Associate Professor
Foreign/Second Language Education
School of Teaching & Learning
The Ohio State University
223 Arps Hall, 1945 North High Street,
Columbus, OH, USA, 43202
Tel. (phone omitted)
Email: (email omitted)

**CO-INVESTIGATOR**
Yuka Kurihara
Ph. D Candidate
Foreign/Second Language Education
School of Teaching & Learning
The Ohio State University
Tel. (phone omitted)
E-Mail: (email omitted)

**PURPOSE:**
The purpose of this study is to examine Japanese English teachers’ post-overseas teacher training experiences of their English language teaching. In particular, this study explores teachers’ current teaching beliefs and practices, teachers’ appropriation of conceptual and practical ideas learned in the U.S. in-service teacher education (MEXT) program, factors influencing the degrees of appropriation, and their needs for professional development.
The main purposes of conducting an interview with program coordinators are to better understand the U.S. in-service teacher education (MEXT) program from hosts’ points of view and to obtain another set of perspectives on Japanese teachers’ training experiences. The specific topics covered in this interview include characteristics of the program and Japanese teachers, pedagogical modification if any, roles of program coordinators and instructors, expectations for Japanese teachers, and positive aspects of and challenges in offering the program.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Four program coordinators from the hosts of the MEXT programs

**PROCEDURES:**
1. An interview (sometime in July or August, 2005)
* A follow-up interview may be conducted for clarification and/or elaboration of the interview.
* You will be asked your mode preference of this interview which includes e-mail, phone, or possibly face-to-face conversations. If you choose a phone or face-to-face interview, the investigators will ask you about your convenient time and date via e-mail, and then call you or visit a place where you appointed.
* The phone or face-to-face interviews will be audio-recorded only with your permission.
* Once the investigators find the results of the interview data, you will also be invited to a debriefing session in which the investigators will share the findings of the study with you and ask for your feedback. This will be conducted mainly via email.

**TIME:**
The following is the approximate amount of time required for the study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An interview (July or August)</td>
<td>Approximately 40-50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A follow-up conversation (if necessary)</td>
<td>15 minutes (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A debriefing session/member check</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount of time required</td>
<td>Approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* From August, 2005 to December, 2005 required for this study with Japanese English teachers
APPENDIX D

INVITATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
(QUALITATIVE STUDY PARTICIPANTS)
INVITATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Dear (Name of school administrator) __________________, 2005

Hello. I, Yuka Kurihara, am a doctoral student studying in the second and foreign language education program at The Ohio State University. I am writing today to invite you to participate in my dissertation research titled “Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.” The main purpose of this study is to explore teachers’ post-government sponsored teacher training (MEXT) experiences at their own teaching settings. For their continuing professional development, your perspectives on teaching and learning as a school administrator are very valuable and important. Therefore, in this project, I would like to include not only teachers who participated in the U.S. MEXT programs from 1998 to 2003 but also the school administrators with whom the participant teachers are working. (I do not have any intention to evaluate teachers’ practices).

This research consists of two parts: The first part of the study is a questionnaire which has been already completed by cooperating teachers. The second part of this study contains a more in-depth study with teachers and school administrators who express their willingness to participate in it. The research methods to be employed in this study include cooperating teachers’ classroom observations and a face-to-face interview with school administrators. I hope that I will be able to conduct the observations and the interview sometime in October (please see a more detailed description of the second part of this study below). If you are not interested in the in-depth study, please skip the description letter below and the consent form.

Any information that you and cooperating teachers provide for this study will be kept strictly confidential. Your background information (e.g., name; school) will be coded so that you and school will be assured of anonymity. All the data will be disposed once the study is complete. In addition, your participation in this study is voluntary. Therefore, you have the right to refuse to answer questions that you do not wish to answer, and to refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without negative consequences.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact me at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. You can also contact the principle investigator of this study, Dr. Keiko Samimy, at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. For questions about you rights as a participant in this study, please contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.
I was an English teacher in Japan at the high school level as well as a graduate student at the university which offered one of the overseas teacher education programs for Japanese English teachers. Therefore, I have been very interested in their professional development. It is my hope that this study will provide the teachers with a great opportunity to reflect on their current teaching practices and also help the hosts develop more effective teacher education programs for Japanese teachers. Finally, it is also my hope that I can provide some support for participants in this study as it goes along.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Yuka Kurihara

DESCRIPTION OF THE SECOND PART OF RESEARCH

TITLE: Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Dr. Keiko Komiya Samimy
Associate Professor
Foreign/Second Language Education
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CO-INVESTIGATOR
Yuka Kurihara
Ph. D Candidate
Foreign/Second Language Education
School of Teaching & Learning
The Ohio State University
Tel. (phone omitted)
E-Mail: (email omitted)

PURPOSE: The purpose of the second part of this study is to gain a better understanding of Japanese teachers’ post-overseas teacher training experiences in school settings. In particular, by asking teachers to reflect on their learning experiences in the MEXT program and current teaching practices, the project explores the impact of the teacher education program on their teaching beliefs and practices, and their needs for professional development.

PARTICIPANTS: Six Japanese teachers of English who participated in the MEXT program from 1998-2003 and six school administrators from the teachers’ respective schools

RESEARCH DURATION: From August, 2005 to December, 2005 (in October both for teachers’ classroom observations and an interview with school administrators)
**PROCEDURES:** The following are the research procedures for collecting data. These plans, however, will be carefully negotiated among you, teachers, and the second investigator.

**School administrators**
1. An interview (sometime in October)

   * The second investigator may contact you after the interview due to the need for clarification and/or elaboration on specific issues.
   * In the case of face-to-face and possibly phone conversations, you and the second investigator will carefully set up the time and date. The investigator will then call or visit you at the place you appointed.
   * Oral conversations via phone and face to face will be audio-recorded with your permission.

**Teachers**
1. Two formal interviews (during the summer break and at the end of the semester)
2. Five short reports on their classroom teaching (during the second semester)
3. Two-three classroom observations with your and teachers’ permission (in October)
4. A debriefing session in which teachers and the second investigator will share the findings of the study with them and ask for their feedback (around spring, 2006)

**TIME:** The followings are the approximate amount of time required for this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School administrators</th>
<th>Time Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An interview (October)</td>
<td>Approximately 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up conversations (after interviews, if necessary)</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount of time required</td>
<td>Approximately 1 hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Time Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each interview (August &amp; December)</td>
<td>30 minutes – 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up conversations (after interviews, if necessary)</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reports (during the second semester, five times)</td>
<td>30 – 40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each pre-observation discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each post-observation discussion</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A debriefing session/member check</td>
<td>30 – 40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount of time required</td>
<td>Approximately 8 hours plus classroom observations (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR
TEACHERS, PROGRAM COORDINATORS & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
(QUALITATIVE STUDY PARTICIPANTS)
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR
TEACHERS, PROGRAM COORDINATORS & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Protocol title: Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program

Protocol number: (number omitted)

Principal investigator: Dr. Keiko Komiya Samimy
Co-investigator: Yuka Kurihara

I consent to my participation in the second part of the research being conducted by Dr. Keiko Samimy and her advisee, Yuka Kurihara, of The Ohio State University.

The investigators have explained the purpose of the study, the procedures that will be followed, and the amount of time it will take. I understand the possible risks and benefits, if any, of my participation.

I know that I can choose not to participate without penalty to me. If I agree to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

I consent to the use of audiotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.
Yes__ No__

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigators, Yuka Kurihara at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone as well as Dr. Keiko Samimy at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. For questions about my rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, I may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Participant

I have read this document and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this consent form. I will be given a copy of this signed document for my own records.
Investigator

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A signed copy of this consent form has been given to the participant.

Witness - May be left blank if not required by the IRB
APPENDIX F

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL
LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL

Date_________________

Name of school
Name of school administrator

The Ohio State University
Department of Education
Principal Investigator: Dr. Keiko Komiya Samimy
Co-Investigator: Yuka Kurihara

Request of permission to conduct my dissertation research:
Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL
teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program

Dear Principal:

I am writing a letter today to ask you permission to conduct my dissertation research
“Appropriating pedagogical tools: A case study of Japanese secondary school EFL
teachers returning from the overseas in-service teacher education program.” The below is
an outline of the research project. I would greatly appreciate it if you could examine the
outline below and permit me to conduct the planned research. If there are any questions
or concerns about the study, please feel free to email Yuka Kurihara at (email omitted) by
Email or (phone omitted) by phone. You can also contact the principle investigator of this
study, Dr. Keiko Samimy, at (email omitted) by Email or (phone omitted) by phone. For
questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact Ms. Sandra
Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yuka Kurihara
E-mail: (email omitted)
Phone: (phone omitted)

Outline of The Second Part Of The Study

Research Participants:
- An English teacher
- An administrator
**Research Duration:** From August, 2005 to December, 2005

**Data Collection Methods:**
- Two-three observations of the teacher’s classroom practices (if applicable, sometimes in October, 2005)
- Two interviews with the teacher (one in August and the other in December, 2005)
- Five reports on their English teaching practices (from September through December, 2005)
- An interview with a principal (if applicable, sometime in October, 2005)
- Collecting English teaching documents used in the teacher’s practices (on-going)

**Others:**
Their participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn without prejudice to them at any time.
The data gathered will be coded so that the cooperating principal and teachers, and the school will be assured of anonymity. All the data and the audiotapes of interviews will be disposed once the study is complete.

When you give the researcher permission to conduct the study described above, please fill out the blanks in the box below (signature of a principal, school’s name, and date) and send this back to Yuka Kurihara. A pre-addressed and stamped envelop has been enclosed with this letter.

---

I agree and support the dissertation research: “EFL teachers’ post-overseas teacher training experiences: A case study of Japanese secondary school teachers of English” to be conducted in my secondary school.

I also give the investigator, Yuka Kurihara, permission to observe the classroom practices conducted by the cooperating teacher and also interview me.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printed name of principle</th>
<th>Signature of principle</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Name of School ___________________________ Date ___________________________
APPENDIX G

REPORTS
REPORTS

Instruction:
As you complete this report, please choose one class that you recently taught and base your answers on the particular lesson.

Part 1. Class
- Date __________________
- Title of the course? (e.g., English I) __________________
- Is this class “required” or “elective”? __________________
- How would you best describe students’ English abilities in this class: “mixed,” “above or below average,” or “average”? __________________
- Students’ grade level? _______________
- Class size? __________________
- Please list titles and publishers of the textbook (supplementary books) used in the class.
____________________________________________________________________
- Please list, if any, the teaching materials/resources other than the above (e.g. tapes, computers, an assistant language teacher[ALT]) you had for this class
____________________________________________________________________

Part 2 Goals of the Class
- What were the goals or objectives of the lesson?

Part 3 Class Activities
- Please describe how you went about teaching English in class? (e.g., my lecture on A, students’ small group or individual work on B, class discussion about C, dictation or translation of D). Please try to be specific.
- Please explain why you taught that way? Please be sure to include your own beliefs (e.g., principles; values) as a teacher.

Part 4 Assignments
- What assignment(s), if any, did you ask students to do before and/or after the lesson?
- What were the purposes behind the assignment(s)?

Part 5 Interactions
- Did you have any questions and/or comments from students?
- How, if any, did you respond to them?
- Why did you respond this way? If you drew on any experiences, beliefs, or theories to respond to them, please describe them.

**Part 6 Adjustment**
- Were there any adjustment that you had to make during the lesson?

- Why did you think that the adjustment was appropriate? If you drew on any experiences, beliefs, or theories to respond to them, please describe them.

**Part 7 Language Use**
- To what extent did you use Japanese and English in the lesson?

        Japanese __________%   English __________%

- Were there any reasons you used the languages this way?

**Part 8 Self-evaluation of the class**
- What were the most successful aspect(s) of English teaching in the lesson?

- What were the least successful aspect(s) of English teaching in the lesson?

- How was students’ understanding of the lesson in general?

- What parts, if any, would you like to change for the next lesson?

**Part 9 Appropriation of teaching tools in the MEXT program**
- Did you draw on any practical and/or theoretical ideas acquired in the MEXT program?

**Part 10 Other Comments**
- Are there any other thoughts on the lesson?

- Are they any other thoughts or concerns about your teaching practices in general?

**Teaching Samples**
If this class used any teaching materials that you developed or used, please include photocopies of the materials in the pre-addressed and stamped envelop, and send them to me. Or please attach the documents with this report. Thank you very much.
APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1st Interview

Background:
1. Please tell me about your educational and teaching background as an English teacher?
   - How did you learn English language? Please tell me any memorable experiences as an English learner.
   - What were your favorite and least favorite undergraduate (graduate) courses? Please tell me the reasons.
   - Any memorable learning experiences in in-service teacher training programs?

Views of Teaching and Learning English:
2. What are the most important reasons for teaching English to secondary students?
3. Why do you think that secondary students should study English?
4. Why do you think that students would think they should study English?
5. How do you motivate them to study English?
6. How do you describe yourself as an English teacher? What is your vision of yourself as a teacher?
7. What (English) teaching and learning experiences do you think contribute to this vision of yourself as a teacher the most?

Other comments on yourself:
8. Are they any other information that you would like me to have about yourself?

Professional experiences after the completion of the program:
9. What were your initial impressions of your reentry to your own teaching contexts (e.g., school; your colleagues; your teaching practices; your students)? Did anything surprise you?

10. Did you experience any school transfer after completing the program? If so, please describe your previous school (e.g., students; teaching courses; institutional expectations)? Are those similar to your current situations?

11. Are there any significant (most interesting/challenging/rewording) events that happened to you about your English teaching profession since you returned home from the U.S.?

12. Have you found any change in your professional roles at the school and local community (national) levels? Do you play different roles since you completed the program?
Change in teachers’ vision:
13. How, if at all, has your vision of teaching English changed during and/or after the completion of the MEXT program? Why do you think they changed? Please tell a story about an experience that you had in the MEXT program which you think has been the most influential or memorable to you? / Why do you think they did not change so much?

14. Consider the time from the completion of the program through the time of the current teaching practices. Did the effects of the program on your view of English teaching and learning change over the years? If so, how did they change and why do you think they changed?

Professional/English abilities:
15. What professional skills and abilities do you think have been improved since the completion of the program? Why do you think they improved? Do you make any special efforts to improve your professional skills/abilities inside and outside school?

16. What concerns, if any, do you have about your professional skills and/or abilities? Do you make any special efforts to improve the skills and/or abilities inside or outside school?

17. What opportunities do you have to use English (speak/listen/read/write) inside and outside school?

Other issues:
18. Do you have any other related issues that you would like to comment on?

2nd Interview
Self-evaluation of your lessons over several months:
1. What were the most successful aspect(s) of English teaching in the lessons? Please describe a specific example(s). Why do you think that they were successful?

2. What were the least successful aspect(s) of English teaching in the lessons? Please describe a specific example(s). How did you deal with them, if any? Why do you think that they were less successful?

Effects of the MEXT program:
3. Were there any areas which overlap between the program course work (conceptual and practical ideas) and your teaching practices in the school setting? What are your perspectives and thoughts when you appropriate the ideas in your teaching situations?

4. Were there any areas which do not seem to overlap between the program course work and your teaching practices in the school setting? How did you, if any, deal with the situations?
5. Does the use of their conceptual and practical ideas differ across different courses? If so, how different and why do they differ?

Others’ reactions:
6. What observations, if any, do you have about your students,’ other English teachers,’ and/or the institution ’s reactions to your views and practices of teaching English?

Professional/English abilities:
7. What concerns, if any, do you have about your professional skills and/or abilities? Do you make any special efforts to improve the skills and/or abilities inside or outside school?

Suggestions for participants involved in the programs
8. Based on your professional experiences since the completion of the program, what advice or suggestions, if any, would you like to offer to your fellow teachers who shared or will share similar experiences to yours?

9. Based on your professional experiences since the completion of the program, do you have any suggestions for the MEXT teacher training program?

10. What kinds of institutional and/or (local) government support do you think would be helpful to the teachers who experienced the MEXT programs like you?

Future plans:
11. What are your future plans about your professional career?

Participation in this research:
12. Do you have any comments about your participation in this research project?

Other Comments
13. Do you have any other comments on the issues that we have discussed?
APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROGRAM COORDINATORS
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Characteristics of the program:
1. What were the main goals of your program? Were there any special areas that your program focused on? In the specialization, what kind of courses did the program offer?

2. Were there any theories or principles of teaching English mainly employed or valued in the MEXT program?

Pedagogical modifications:
3. During the time you offered the program, did you make any pedagogical modifications in your program? Can you explain what modifications did you make? When did it happen? Why was it necessary?

Roles of program coordinators and instructors:
4. How would you describe your role as a coordinator of the program?

5. What would you say about the roles of teacher trainers (instructors) in your program for Japanese teachers

Characteristics of the participant teachers:
6. How would you characterize the participants of Japanese teachers of English overall? Did you see any difference in teachers’ characteristics over the years?

7. Was there anything special about the teachers that influenced the way you coordinated the program between 1999 and 2003?

Expectations for teachers:
8. What expectations did (do) you have about Japanese teachers before, during, and after the participation in the program?

9. Were the participant teachers evaluated? If so, how were they evaluated and what were the criteria for the evaluation? Do you see any issues related to the criteria? If no, do you have any suggestions about the issue?

Benefits and challenges:
10. Were there any positive aspects of having Japanese teachers of English in your program? If so, what were they?

11. Did you experience any challenges in offering the program? If so, what were they, and how did you deal with them?
Difficulties experienced by Japanese teachers/suggestions for them:
12. What kinds of challenges did you see Japanese teachers of English face while they participated in the program?

13. What advice or suggestions did you offer (would you like to offer) to teachers who had such difficulties?

Professional development:
14. Did you see any professional needs for Japanese teachers?

Evaluations of the program:
15. What aspects of the program do you consider as successful for Japanese teachers’ professional development?

16. Are there anything that you would have liked to change if you were given to provide them with the program again?

Roles of in-service teacher education programs:
17. What roles do you think in-service teacher education programs like yours can play for experienced EFL teachers’ professional development?

Other issues:
18. Do you have any other comments on the issues that we have discussed?
APPENDIX J

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

**Background:**
1. Please tell me about your professional background as a teacher and school administrator?

**Characteristics of the school:**
2. Could you explain the characteristics of your school (e.g., goals; approaches to teaching and learning promoted in your school; the students; parents; teachers)?
3. Please describe the district culture?
4. What is it like for teachers at your school district and school?

**Views of teaching and learning in general:**
5. What are the most important reasons for teaching English to secondary school students?
6. Given the reasons that you have described above, what do you think makes an effective secondary school teacher? And what makes a secondary school teacher ineffective?
7. What do you think are the most important reasons for secondary school students to learn (English)?
8. Given the reasons that you have described above, what do you think makes a successful (English) learners?

**Roles of school administrators:**
9. How would you describe your role as a school administrator in relation to the school, teachers, and students?

**Response to the national policies:**
10. How has your school responded to the new *Course of Study* (national policies about English education) recently established by the Ministry of Education?
11. Are there any educational/pedagogical modification at school since the establishment of the revised curriculum?

**Expectations for teachers and students:**
12. What expectations do you have about (English) teachers working at this school? Do you have any particular expectations for Japanese teachers of English who participated in the U.S. MEXT program?
13. What expectations do you have about students (English learners) studying at this school?

**Expectations from students, parents, and community:**
14. What observations do you have about the expectations from students, parents, and local community regarding secondary school education?

15. How does the school attempt to meet their needs? Does the school make any specific efforts to meet their needs?

**Difficulties experienced by teachers/suggestions for them:**
16. In response to the various expectations from students, parents, school, and the national policy, what kinds of challenges do you see teachers facing?

17. What advice or suggestions do you offer or would you like to offer to teachers? How do you support them?

**Professional development opportunities:**
18. What professional development opportunities do teachers have inside and outside school?

19. What professional development resources do you encourage teachers to use inside and outside school?

**Other comments:**
20. Do you have any other comments on the issues that we have discussed?