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Managing the evaluation of difference in foreign language education: A complex Case study in a tertiary level context in Japan

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Managing the Evaluation of Difference in Foreign Language Education:

A Complex Case Study in a Tertiary Level Context in Japan

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Managing the Evaluation of Difference in Foreign Language Education:
A Complex Case Study in a Tertiary Level Context in Japan

by

Stephanie Ann Houghton

Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected world, people need to learn to respond constructively to cultural difference. Since foreign language learners are regularly presented with cultural difference as a matter of course, foreign language education provides an ideal space within which to explore issues that arise. How should foreign language educators manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education? I am not aware of any research in this area. Three teaching approaches were identified. Firstly, a non-judgmental stance can be adopted with a view to empathising with others intellectually, which requires the development of certain cognitive and communication skills. Secondly, a judgmental stance can be adopted with a view to raising unconscious values to the conscious level in order to control them and develop critical cultural awareness. Thirdly, in addition to the second approach, teachers can also attempt to change learner values in support of human rights and the development of democratic society. A complex case study based on action research was conducted to examine these teaching approaches in intercultural language education in a tertiary education context in Japan. Qualitative data were gathered over a nine-month period from thirty-six student participants and me as teacher-researcher. Data gathered from the student participants indicate that (1) whilst empathy can develop communication skills and self-awareness, some students may also feel insecure about being influenced by others (2) whilst adopting a judgmental stance may empower students to take responsibility for their choices, many Japanese students may reject the process stating cultural preferences for preserving harmony, and (3) student value and concept change is a likely product of encounters with cultural difference regardless of teaching approach. This thesis will present relevant data in context and present a model that integrates all three teaching approaches. Research is called for in relation to value and concept shift in foreign language education that also considers cultural preferences.

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Declaration

Three paragraphs in section 3.2.3 (see pages 41-43) on information processing (from the paragraph starting "Anderson (1983, 1985) to the paragraph ending "the reader is viewed as being at least as important as the text (Carrell 1983)" were submitted as part of a M.A. Thesis to the University of Essex, U.K. in summer 1997 (for graduation in 1998). These paragraphs were, and remain, my own work.

Statement of copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without her prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Expression of gratitude

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who supported the development of this thesis, including my students, research assistant and colleagues. In particular, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Byram, for his steady guidance and clarity of vision, and my partner, Takao, for his inspiration and technical support.

Volume 1

1. Prologue

1.1 Introduction

Classroom teachers may get their research ideas from many places. They may take a theory-first approach but my research interest was born directly of personal experience. In this prologue, I will examine the origin of my research question before presenting a thesis overview.

1.2 Research Question Origin

McDonough and McDonough (1997: 79) recognise that "unease" about aspects of classroom life may generate researchable issues, but my research question finds its genesis in "unease" outside the classroom. Various personal experiences over the ten-year period from 1993 onwards influenced the development of my research interest. I taught English as a foreign language in a Japanese senior high school from 1993-1996 and found people very culturally accommodating. Upon my return to Japan in 1999, however, I came under increasing pressure to conform to Japanese culture, and the social distance between foreign lecturers and other Japanese teaching staff at the university where I worked was markedly uncomfortable. Initially, I was prohibited from attending official meetings and though I was eventually allowed to attend as an observer, I was prohibited from both speaking and voting. Never having been deprived of my voice before, I was unnerved. It is in this sea of tension and state of unease that my research question was born.

Tension is defined as both an act of stretching and a state of uneasy suspense. Each definition of tension applies to teaching and research. Often, the best research questions are located in a taut spot between two points.

Hubbard and Power (1999: 25).

Thus, negative personal experience drove me into research but the extent to which common sense forms of knowing can help us understand the world is limited, a point recognised by Cohen et al (2000: 3) who advocate the use of research to develop more systematic and reliable ways of developing understandings about the world. Indeed, at the outset, I had no theoretical basis to understand what was happening to me which left me ill-equipped to deal with the problems, but I felt a sense of responsibility as a foreign language teacher to educate people to handle such intercultural problems more effectively than I could do so myself at the time, yet I didn't know how.

This tension stimulated my interest in attitudes towards foreign culture and I became interested in how the issue should be handled in foreign language education. Throughout the literature analysis period (2001-2003), I was seeking strategies to cope with cultural pressure. Until that point, my strategy had been to focus on understanding Japanese culture rather than judging it, but whilst this approach had worked quite well in my first three years in Japan, it failed to solve culture-related problems in my life after my return to Japan as I came under increasing pressure to conform to what were, to me, unacceptable aspects of Japanese culture. Adopting more judgmental approaches with the Japanese person closest to me just seemed to ignite irresolvable arguments as we each tried to force our cultural values upon the other, and I was often surprised how the values of some Japanese people seemed to lie in diametric opposition to my own.

Further, I was often perplexed by, and objected to, apparent conceptual difference between English and Japanese speakers. Consider the following examples. Firstly, my official employment status "jokin teki na hijokin" (常勤的な非常勤) translated roughly from Japanese into English as "a part-timer who works as a full-timer", even though it was only endowed with the legal rights of a part-timer. How could the concepts of full-timer and part-timer be conflated in such a way as to give me a similar workload to full-timers, yet deny me the same legal rights and benefits? How could this be considered fair? Secondly, "Japanese" nationals could be employed as "foreign" lecturers as long as they were "native-speakers" of the language to be taught. Was it not ridiculous that native English speakers of Japanese nationality could be employed as foreigners in Japan? Hall (1998) and Worthington (1999) consider related issues, and relevant law can be found in Sugeno (2002: 148-151, 188-205).

Such confusion and protest at the use of language led me to wonder about the possible conceptual components of cultural difference, but my confidence in my own conceptual system and value judgments were undermined as the gap between my own perceptions and the reality around me forced me to question myself. As I grappled more generally with the question of whether or not to judge cultural difference, I became increasingly interested in value and concept difference as reflected in language, and whether or not teachers should train students to judge cultural difference and why. As I conducted the literature analysis, I found that judgmental and non-judgmental approaches to cultural difference were embedded within broader approaches.

Milton Bennett, Mike Byram and Manuela Guilherme emerged as the three authors who ultimately provided the overarching conceptual structure of the research project. In sum, Bennett recognises the role of adopting non-judgmental stance towards cultural difference combined with empathy in the development of intercultural sensitivity but Byram and Guilherme do not, recommending instead the adoption of judgmental stance combined with critical approaches. I became interested in exploring ways of implementing these general approaches in foreign language education.

Until that point, I had only considered how to handle differing perspectives between two individuals. However, my attention was later drawn to the relationship between individual cultural perspectives and the shaping of society when foreign lecturers at my university were considering whether or not to take action against racial discrimination in the workplace. I was surprised at the reluctance of many people to get involved because of the prevailing perception that in Japan, it is sometimes considered better to stay silent and do nothing.

It was this surprise that added a third dimension to my research interest as I considered the kind of relationship teachers should foster between the individual and society when handling cultural issues in foreign language education. It was at this point that I noticed Guilherme takes a somewhat stronger stance than Byram by advocating that teachers should actively nurture in students values conducive to democracy and human rights, changing their values if necessary. The three teaching approaches listed below will be described in more detail later in the thesis.

The Three Teaching Approaches

- Course 1 (following Byram):

    o *Students should focus their attention squarely back on the self to develop critical awareness of their own evaluative processes and biases to control them, but teachers should not try to change student values.*

- Course 2 (following Bennett):

    o *Students should adopt non-judgmental stance and engage in intellectual empathy to take the perspective of others.*

- Course 3 (following Guilherme):

    o *Teachers should basically follow the course 1 approach but should also aim to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights promoting social justice, changing them if necessary.*

In general, then, I was interested in the question of how teachers should manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education. More specifically, I wanted to know what learning objectives could and should be set within teaching approaches dealing with the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education, and why. I resolved to try out the various approaches identified in the literature analysis and aimed to establish the extent to which each approach met its own objectives, considering the viability and desirability of particular learning objectives. The general

and specific research questions that ultimately guided the development of the thesis are listed below.

General and Specific Research Questions

General Research Question

- How should teachers manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education?

Specific Research Questions

- What learning objectives can and should be set within teaching approaches dealing with the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education and why?

    o *How far did each approach meet its own objectives?*

    o *How far are the objectives viable?*

    o *How far is the meeting of objectives desirable and why?*

1.3 Thesis Overview

This thesis is divided into twelve main chapters. Having reflected on the origins of my research in the chapter 1 prologue, I will then present the contextual background of the research project in chapter 2, highlighting aspects of my personal roles where relevant. The literature analysis presented in chapter 3 will be divided into five main sections held together under the umbrella concept of tertiary socialisation, a term coined

by Byram (1989) that will be defined later. Following the introduction in section 3.1, information processing theory will be considered in section 3.2, followed by cognitive and moral development under socialisation in section 3.3. Then, sections 3.4 and 3.5 will be arranged around the series of concepts found in Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, under the umbrella concepts of ethnocentrism and ethnocentrism respectively. These terms will be defined later. Thus, the first three chapters of this thesis will be devoted primarily to providing personal, contextual and theoretical background to the research project.

Chapters 4-6 will then outline research and course design. In chapter 4, I will show how I operationalised the research questions explaining why I chose to formulate the research project as a complex, qualitative action research case study considering the merits and demerits of taking such an approach. A concise overview of syllabus and course design will be provided in chapter 5, whilst detailed learning objectives and course materials can be found in Appendices 1 to 4 respectively. Research design, data collection and ethical issues will then be detailed in chapter 6 and supporting materials can be found in Appendices 5-8.

In chapter 7, I will describe the data analysis procedures I followed in five stages and supporting materials can be found in Appendices 9-11. In chapter 8, I will present the initial results of the data analysis considering the extent to which each of the three courses seemed to have met its own learning objectives, drawing on supporting student-generated data from Appendix 10. Having considered the three courses in isolation in chapter 8, I will then relate the three sections of Appendix 10 to the teacher-generated

data contained in Appendix 11 as connected elements of the single, complex case study in chapter 9.

In chapter 10, I will go on to answer my research question by extracting the positive aspects of the results from the negative aspects, presenting my recommendations in a new conceptual framework in diagram 31. Finally, in chapter 11, I will relate all of this discussion back to the academic literature at large considering possible future directions before the chapter 12 epilogue, when I will reflect personally on the thesis as whole.

2. Contextual Background

2.1 Introduction

As a teacher of English as a foreign language at a Japanese university, I was well-placed to conduct classroom research but contextual and role factors constrained research activity. By the term "context", I do not mean the background of existing research, knowledge and understanding that informs new and ongoing research projects, as suggested by Blaxter et al (2001: 38). That will be considered in chapter 3. Instead, I mean the various factors unique to my own particular teaching situation that framed my research situation and were beyond my control. McDonough and McDonough (1997: 8) suggest that the notion of context not only sheds light on explaining both the possibilities that are open to teachers and the constraints upon them but also carries broader implications for the generalisability and validity of research, relating directly to its very paradigms.

2.2 Context and Role

McDonough and McDonough (1997: 8) list various components of context related to the setting and learners, most of which will be considered in this chapter in general terms with reference to my own teaching background and context.

Setting

- Source of policy decisions

- Status and training of teachers

- Role of English in the country and curriculum

- Time available

- Physical environment of classroom and institution

- Student teacher ratio

- Class size

- Resources available

- Anticipated methodology

- Choice or imposition of coursebook

Learners

- Proficiency levels

- Age

- Interests

- Motivations and attitude

- Needs and goals

- Learning styles

- Mother tongue

They also note Handy's point that all human beings operate within a role set inhabited by others which, in the case of teachers, will comprise a network that encompasses members such as colleagues, students and administrative staff, and which affects the details of job specification and individuals' perceptions of their own roles. This, in turn, will affect how teachers go about their working life, teaching and research.

Questions related to what is expected of teachers, how teachers see themselves and classroom orientation relate to role considerations.

2.3 My Particular Teaching Context and Roles

At the time my research project was conceived, I had just taken up position as a "gaikokujinkyoshi" (外国人教師), or foreign teacher, at a Japanese university in southern Japan where I was employed to teach English as a Foreign Language and to conduct research. I was one of eight "gaikokujinkyoshi" (外国人教師) foreign teachers at the university in a position reserved for native speakers of English or Korean.

With regard to my first contractual duty of teaching, I taught nine mixed-level 90-minute English language speaking and writing classes per week spread over two 15-week terms per year (April-July and October-January) in "bungakubu hikakubunka gakka" (文学部比較文化学科), or the Comparative Culture Department of the Faculty of Humanities. As may be implied by the names, the Faculty of Humanities offers courses on literature and other subjects such as history and philosophy, whereas the Comparative Culture Department places more emphasis on cultural subjects such as international communication, language study and literature. The courses were spread over the first three years of a 4-year undergraduate degree, the fourth and final year being dedicated to the writing of graduation theses in which I was not involved.

With regard to my second contractual duty of conducting research, I took up position at the university with an open mind. I did not have any history of research

beyond that conducted during my Master's degree but I felt contractually compelled to take up meaningful research and eager to take advantage of a well-funded research opportunity.

How did my position as a "gaikokujinkyoshi" (外国人教師), or foreign teacher, position me within the university hierarchy? I was simply placed outside of it, which explained why I was neither invited to nor allowed to speak or vote in any official university meetings. In practical terms, I found myself placed very much at the periphery of everyday departmental activity working unsupervised in virtual isolation on a day-to-day basis. I was left with the perplexing sense that whilst I was employed to teach and promote foreign language study, the university administration at the same time denied me equal employment status and full participation in the life of the university because I was foreign, which undermined my trust in my employer and many colleagues.

How did I feel about my position at work? As documented in the chapter 1 prologue, I felt stigmatised as a foreigner. For most of my working hours, an uncomfortable level of social distance separated me from the mostly Japanese faculty members, which was compounded by the fact that I lived over 80 km away from the university and spent little time in the local area. However, the advantage of this general positioning outside the system was that I had complete freedom to teach and research as I saw fit within a very broadly defined curriculum. Further, there was no governmental

control of the curriculum or textbooks in contrast to the situation I had experienced at Japanese high school.

What were my classes like? Although all my classes were open to both sexes, my students were almost all female Japanese aged 18-21. Though foreign students could take regular under-graduate courses alongside Japanese students, very few of them attended my classes, which rendered my classes mono-lingual and mono-cultural. Initially, all of my classes were mixed level but in response to a request from faculty members for help setting up advanced classes, I started streaming first year comparative culture students into smaller, selective, advanced classes as they became second year students.

Faculty members clearly wanted me to provide special classes for advanced students. This not only improved the range of options on offer by the department but also motivated both first and second year students to improve their English language ability and provided space for me as a teacher to try something new further developing my own teaching ability in the process. In amidst the negative aspects of my position at work, it was at these positive points of growth on the parts of all concerned that my research would later be situated.

Class size ranged from 20-30 students per class in the first year, 12 students in advanced second year classes and 30-40 students in standard second year classes. Thus, my smallest classes were second year advanced classes for which I had been given special responsibility and which contained a small number of highly able and motivated

young people with whom I would go on to develop particularly strong personal relationships in the near absence of professional and personal daily contact with most of my colleagues.

2.4 Broader Context Inside and Outside the University

How was my particular teaching context embedded in the broader context inside and outside the university? In this section, I shall start by considering the broader context within the university, identifying links with the broader social context outside the university where relevant. Inside the university, I was so detached from departmental activity that I had no idea how my courses fitted into the broader curriculum, which was written in Japanese and difficult for me to understand without assistance, so I interviewed a faculty member about curriculum and courses in the Comparative Culture Department. By way of overview, let me present some curriculum data collected from the 36 students who later went on to take part in the research project that was used as a reference point for the interview. The pie chart below depicts the kinds of courses taken between April-July 2003, which I categorised into types and listed in the box to the right of the pie chart.

What pertinent points can be drawn from this data? Firstly, English language and literature classes are more common than other languages, which may relate to the status of English as Japan's first foreign language. My interviewee provided an historical explanation for this popularity claiming that English is so popular because Japan tried to import culture, knowledge and technology from English speaking countries after the Meiji era (明治時代), so it was necessary for Japanese people to learn English. Many

English departments were created in Japanese universities at that time, which focused on reading, translating and understanding English literature. Today, communicative approaches to English are generally preferred to enable Japanese people to promote understanding of Japanese culture in other countries and to satisfy student demand, which is why many universities in Japan like to employ native-speakers of foreign languages.

Chart 1: Sample Student Course Choices 2003-4
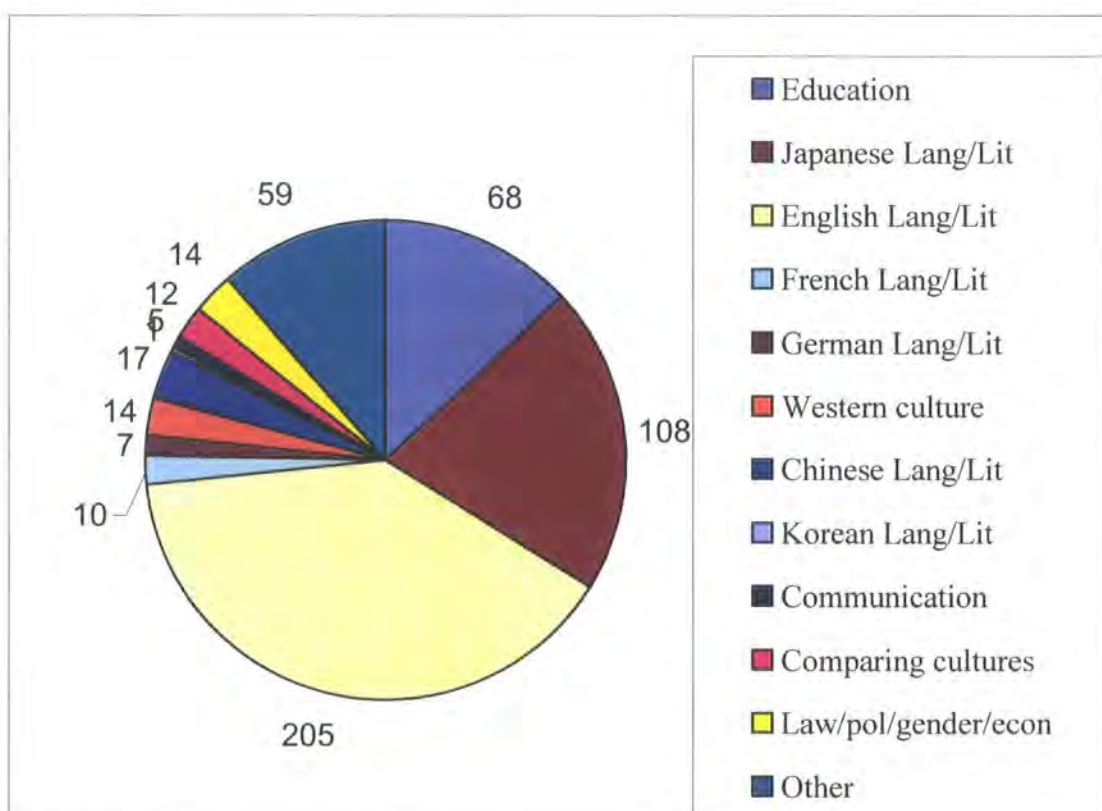
Indeed, turning briefly to the broader social context outside the university, English is the first foreign language taught in Japanese junior and senior high schools (ages 13-15 and 16-18 respectively) and in some elementary schools, but traditional use of the grammar-translation method and a general lack of teachers who could speak the

language prompted the Japanese government to take steps to bring native-speakers of English and other languages into Japan on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (J.E.T.) Program, for example, to promote the use of practical English in schools amongst both teachers and students. It was on this teaching program that I myself was employed from 1993-1996.

The second pertinent point to be drawn from the data is that Japanese language and culture courses are more commonly taken than courses focusing on western and Asian language and culture. This may reflect a curricular emphasis being placed upon the study of Japanese native language and culture through comparative culture. With regard to countries that are geographically close to Japan, notably few students study Korean or Chinese culture. According to my interviewee, one possible reason is the problematic history between these countries though China and Korea still tend to be prioritised over other Asian countries because of geographical proximity and increasing economic strength. Indeed, a glance at the nationalities of the "gaikokujinkyoshi" (外国人教師) foreign teachers employed by the university at the time reveals 7 native-speakers of English from various countries, 1 native-speaker of Korean and no native-speaker teachers of any other languages including Chinese, which probably reflects the relative level of emphasis placed upon each of these languages by the university.

It is also clear from the data presented in chart 1 that languages and cultures are clearly treated in isolation rather than being juxtaposed and brought into relation as one might expect from the term "Comparative Culture". My interviewee identified this as

being a weakness of the department since students are left to bring cultures into relation outside class. Apparently, the Faculty of Humanities used to be divided into "English" and "Japanese" departments but they were later re-named "Comparative Culture" and "Human Relations" in an attempt at modernisation. However, the faculty members remained the same, so the reform was difficult to implement in practice.

For example, some new intercultural communication courses were introduced but rather than being taught by specialists, they were basically taught by linguists who were trying to broaden their field of expertise and progress was generally inhibited by the threat of faculty closure after university incorporation in 2005. Rather than being systematically organised and staff being sought to fill the positions, the curriculum apparently depends largely on what existing individual members can and want to teach, since existing staff employed under the lifetime employment system could not be fired before retirement at that time.

2.5 Summary

In chapter 2, I have made explicit various factors unique to my own particular teaching situation that framed my research situation and were beyond my control related to my students, teaching setting and position at work. They all affected my orientations to research and to some extent, determined what was and was not possible in terms of project design, a point that will be explored later in the thesis. My definition of context as used in this chapter was distinguished from one referring to the background of existing research, knowledge and understanding that informs new and ongoing research projects but this will be the next point of focus as we move on to chapter 3.

3. Literature Analysis

3.1 Introduction

Against the wide-ranging back-drop of research interest outlined in chapter 1, and the general research question of how teachers should manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education, the specific research question that guided the literature analysis was stated as follows:

- What learning objectives can and should be set within teaching approaches which deal with the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education and why?

The purpose of this section is to provide a conceptual overview of the structure of the section, to present the term "tertiary socialisation" as the unifying concept that will be used to draw together different strands of thought in the literature, and its origins. The term "socialisation" was used by Berger and Luckman (1966: 119, 127) to describe the induction of the individual into the objective world of social reality as phenomena existing independently of one's own volition are internalised to form the basis of identity as it develops through childhood (primary socialisation) and subsequent phases of induction into new sectors of the objective world later in life (secondary socialisation). Doyé (1992) notes that whilst secondary socialisation is an extension of primary socialisation, it brings specialisation and is concerned with partial realities in contrast to the base-world the primary socialisation represents.

Byram (1989b: 5) extended Berger and Luckman's notions of primary and secondary socialisation to introduce the term tertiary socialisation to describe a third phase of socialisation that can be triggered by exposure to worldviews formed in other societies, encountered perhaps through foreign language study, which brings common sense interpretations of everyday life to the fore and into question. Doyé (1992) suggests that tertiary socialisation is more challenging than primary or secondary socialisation because as the crossing of personal boundaries exposes us to unfamiliar social worlds, patterns of thinking, valuing and acting that were considered appropriate for life in familiar contexts may need to be modified, or new patterns acquired, which can challenge identity. Doyé (1992) breaks the concept of socialisation down into cognitive, moral and behavioural socialisation and relates each to the ideas of Piaget (1969), Kohlberg (1976) and Mead (1967) respectively.

In the cognitive domain, Doyé (1992) links Byram's concept of tertiary socialisation with the formal operations stage of Piaget's (1969) model of cognitive development since crossing cultural boundaries requires the acquisition and application of new knowledge and the revision of previously internalised cognitions. This link is supported by Sercu (2000: 57-65) who likens primary and secondary socialisation processes to the acquisition or construction of worldview, which she defines in terms of the process through which individuals acquire their social norms, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes. Further, Sercu (2000: 66) suggests that stage-wise theories of development should be supplemented with information processing theory to examine what happens on the micro-cognitive level during socialisation since socialisation theory alone fails to fully account for the way people process, store and respond to

information passed on to them through socialisation. In the moral domain, Doyé (1992) links tertiary socialisation with Kohlberg's (1976) post-conventional stage of moral development. Endicott et al (2003) link Kohlberg's theory with Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity recognizing the dual importance of information- processing and constructivist theories of development to understand intercultural communication.

All such theories are primarily concerned with individual development but Byram's (1997) later work starts to consider the relationship between individual and society in terms of citizenship. Similarly, Guilherme (2002: 166) links tertiary socialisation with citizenship education from a sociological standpoint. Since overlap can be found between this and many of the theories, discussion of this aspect will be integrated with discussion of other theories and models.

The conceptual framework outlined above is presented in diagram 1 below. This should not be taken as an endorsement of the somewhat rigid and linear view of development of stage-wise theories of development. Whilst promising to shed light on the issue of evaluation, such theories provide a clear and convenient organising framework for the literature analysis within which to compare and contrast ideas of a wide range of theorists. Information processing theory will be considered in section 3.2. Cognitive and moral development will be considered under socialisation in section 3.3. The development of intercultural sensitivity related to ethnocentrism will be considered in section 3.4 and aspects relating to ethnorelativism will be covered under the same heading in section 3.5. At the end of each sub-section, a summary is provided followed

by the identification of possible learning objectives implied by the section, which opens

the way to later parts of the thesis.

Diagram 1: Conceptual Framework Of The Literature Analysis

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │     Tertiary Socialisation    │
                    └─────────────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────┬───────────┴──────────┬──────────────┐
  ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌────────────────┐
  │     1     │  │     2     │  │     3     │  │      4          │
  │Information │  │Socialisation│ │Ethnocentrism│ │Ethnorelativism │
  │processing │  │           │  │           │  │                │
  └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └────────────────┘
```
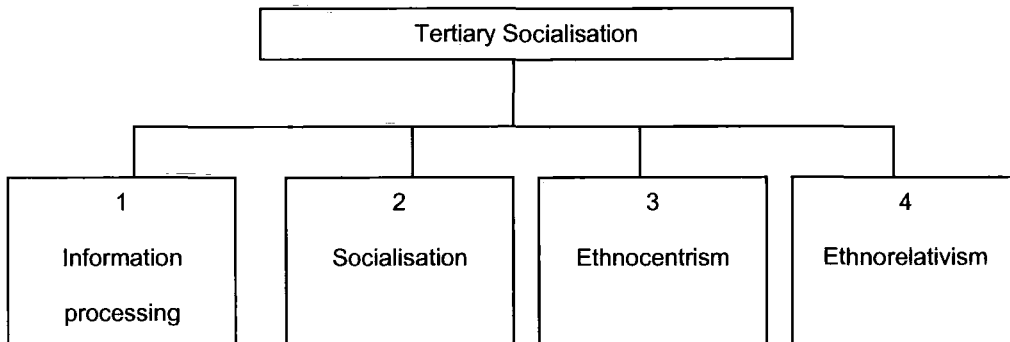
3.2 Information Processing

3.2.1 Information

De Bono (1990: 25-36) defines the mind as an information handling system

whose effectiveness derives from its ability to create, store and recognise patterns of

information, which depends on the functional arrangement of the nerve cells of the brain

(de Bono, 1969 and 1991: 67-74). He describes the memory surface of the nerve cells of

the brain as providing a special, yet passive, environment in which information self-

organises as it impacts upon the memory surface forming channels that guide incoming

information into deepening patterns that are influenced by the sequence of arrival and

the nature of the surface. Memories are formed as information entering the brain leaves

traces in the nerve cells that form the memory surface.

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Parts of the environment can be attended to selectively, however, which allows the memory surface to self-maximise through the processes of selection, rejection, combination and separation. But attention span is limited, which means that only part of the memory surface can be activated at any one time and this is affected by what is being presented to the surface at the moment and what has happened to the surface in the past. The most easily activated area or pattern on the memory surface is the one that has been encountered most often because it has left the strongest trace on the memory surface, which gives rise to pattern repetition or reconstruction, since this pattern is recalled more readily than others (de Bono, 1991: 69, 78).

Whilst this presents the information processing as an essentially passive system, reflecting the fact that we will be socialised whether we control the process or not, de Bono (1990, 1991) goes on to argue that we can consciously take control of the system to restructure it through lateral thinking. This description of the system accords with Rumelhart and McClelland's (1986) conceptualisation of information as being stored in multiple locations throughout the brain in schematic networks. Byram (1989a: 107-108) draws upon Rumelhart (1980: 34) to describe schemata as data structures for storing concepts in memory. Lantolf (1999: 31) draws upon Keil (1989) to describe them as networks of systematic beliefs about the world through which the subjective social world is constituted. According to Endicott et al (2003), schemata provide a repertoire of frameworks regarding social beliefs, cultural values, expectations, and assumptions that the person can use to make sense of the intercultural events and relationships.

Thus, culture learning can be conceptualised as the internalisation of knowledge held in schematic data structures, held in memory, that store concepts through which individuals interpret and classify their experience of the world. Byram (1989a: 102-119) argues that this process is influenced by language and its meanings since it involves concept acquisition.

3.2.2 Language

De Bono (1991: 77-144) argues that as information continues to impact upon the brain, the mind builds up a stock of pre-set patterns of information held in memory that facilitate communication through which information is transmitted through codes that refer people back to these pre-set patterns. Words or partial information can be communicated to trigger the retrieval of interlinked information patterns, which means that not all the information needs to be communicated to retrieve the pattern. Word triggers facilitate the transfer of information, rendering possible appropriate reaction to situations by identifying the situation from the initial aspects of it. Communication through language code thus depends upon the building up of a catalogue of retrievable patterns in memory.

De Bono (1991: 153) notes that there are points during information processing at which the world is translated into the symbols and then translated back into the real world. It is at these translation points that language runs into the variability of perception and the interactive complexity of the world, which is not easy to categorise. Fantini (1995) provides a similar description of this process and suggests that worldview is mediated by language and its conceptual structures and components.

Lantolf (1999: 32) notes Vgotsky's (1986) recognition of how words focus attention upon particular aspects of environmental phenomena and affect their interpretation.

Rathus (1985: 283) notes that within interlinked schematic networks of information, words cohere in layered hierarchies (from general to specific) with other words sharing many of the same semantic features with super-ordinate concepts such as "living things" coming at the top of a hierarchy above multiple layers of subordinate concepts that may each contain separate but hierarchically linked categories with hierarchies mesh into hetararchies with each language-culture establishing its own hetararchy (Fantini, 1995). Rathus (1985: 315) draws on Rosch (1978) to note that much human thought involves categorising new objects and events, mentally referring to prototype concepts that serve as good examples of the category and manipulating the relationships between them but that whilst categorisation processes themselves are universal, the way we set up our hierarchies and categories is not. This depends upon the amount and type of information we have at our disposal and much variation in conceptual thought exists.

The role of language in thought was considered by early social commentators such as Whorf, who suggested that since language structures the way in which we view the world, speakers of various languages conceptualise the world in different ways, but the claim that language controls thought remains controversial. Pinker (1994: 59-82) rejects the proposition suggesting that universal cognitive processes are not couched in words, reviewing and rejecting the literature in this area. Hardin and Banaji (1993: 277-308) endorse Higgins' (1981) point that researchers in the field of social psychology

have largely ignored the role of language in thought because of overwhelming empirical disconfirmations of the hypothesis that language controls thought but also claim that much evidence supports the notion that language influences thought. Hunt and Agnoli (1991), Wierzbicka (1997) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980) all consider this issue and Lantolf (1999) reviews research in this area. A link between language and thought is even recognised by Pinker (1994), although he qualifies it by claiming that:

It is hardly an example of incommensurate world views, or of concepts that are nameless and therefore unimaginable, or of dissecting nature along lines laid down by our native languages according to terms that are absolutely obligatory.

Pinker (1994: 66).

Lantolf (1999: 31) highlights the role of unique personal experience in thought, endorsing Shore's (1996) point that linguistically structured conceptual frameworks contain both cultural and personal models, the former being sets of conventionally constructed concepts constituting the shared cognitive resources of a community, constraining what people attend to and perceive as salient in the world (supporting the notion that language influences thought) and the latter being unique sets of concepts, based on life experience, that are heavily influenced by, but not totally determined by, cultural models (suggesting that conceptual system are partly personalised and free from the control of language.) People tend to be unaware of how far their personal models are influenced by cultural models and cannot make them explicit.

3.2.3 Information Processing

De Bono (1991: 152-154) suggests that language is a good describing system but not a good perceiving or thinking system and argues that definitions depend on other definitions, frames of reference and context, and that words package the world in a certain way but problems arise when the words are too big and clumsy or when we do not have words at all, which de Bono claims is a problem of perception rather than a problem of description. Amongst the disadvantages of the system listed by de Bono (1990) are that patterns tend to become increasingly rigid and can be difficult to change.

Since the sequence of arrival of information determines its arrangement, the information could always be arranged better. Anything resembling a standard pattern will be perceived as the standard pattern, which centres the information and established patterns extend insofar as individual patterns are strung together to give longer sequences that become so dominant that they constitute their own patterns. Pattern divisions can be made arbitrarily and information arranged in one pattern cannot easily be used in a completely different pattern. Though the choice between two competing patterns may be fine, one will be chosen and the other ignored. There is a tendency to polarise rather than maintain a balanced point between them.

Further, since selective attention is limited, we cannot possibly focus on every detail and must select some things at the expense of others rendering any rendition of the truth partial. Words can be loaded insofar as the value of the word is not expressed through a separate adjective but contained within the word itself and people may use adjectives freely to pass judgement without justification. De Bono (1991: 105) claims

they can trigger emotional backgrounds that are unjustified and tend to reflect crude either/or dichotomies imbued with the sense of good/bad or right/wrong. De Bono (1991: 111, 197) also claims that such dichotomies are set up through the use of the word "not" and based upon mutually exclusive categories that can easily contradict each other, so that information can be sorted clearly into one category or the other. Since the dichotomy uses contradiction to impose a rigid falsity on perception in the search for truth, de Bono advocates the development of new categories through lateral thinking.

Anderson (1985) claims that perceptual processing, parsing and utilisation are three distinct information processing stages of language comprehension. Perceptual processing takes place as people selectively direct attention onto sections of aural or written input for a few seconds, during which time preliminary analysis may convert them into meaningful representations (Call, 1985). Then, they construct further meaningful representations of input by parsing, or segmenting sentences into language chunks, the size and composition of which depends on the person's general knowledge of the language and how the information is presented, as recognised by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Richards (1983).

Finally, chunks are decoded by matching them with meaning-based representations held in long-term memory (Anderson, 1985). Meanings are then concatenated with other parsed chunks, to form a more complete understanding of the input as ideas are linked (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). When single concepts are evoked, connections are made with other concepts through spreading activation within information networks. Prior knowledge assists language comprehension though top-

down processing as people interpret new information in the light of old, inferring and predicting meaning when there are gaps in understanding.

Alternatively, the starting point for comprehension may be the analysis of individual words to form meanings that accumulate but lack of attention to context and first language interference make bottom-up processing inefficient (O'Malley and Chamot, 1989, 1990). Carrell (1983) claims that both types of processing may, however, misguide the learner through misinterpretations resulting from the inappropriate use of schemata. Comprehension can be influenced by the reader as much as the text.

Language processing finds its parallels in social perception theory, which explores the processes by which people come to understand one another according to Brehm et al (1999: 124). In social perception, people rely on indirect clues as sources of information. Aspects of people (such as physical appearances), situations (preconceptions, or "scripts" of what normally happens in certain situations) and behaviour (divided into discrete, meaningful units that could be verbal or non-verbal) guide our observations of other people. As we piece together discrete elements, we make attributions to explain the behaviour of other people and form impressions as we integrate and make sense of the information. What happens when discrepancies arise between information schemata held in memory and incoming information especially when conceptual discrepancy is rooted in language itself?

3.2.4 Discrepancy

Regarding what happens when discrepancies arise between information schemata held in memory and incoming information, Sercu (2000: 66) notes that in the field of social cognition, the question is no longer whether people obey their schemata or the data but when they do one or the other, drawing upon Leyens et al (1994). Generally, people tend towards schema-driven perception and aim to maintain already acquired categories and they may seek to maintain a simple but coherent impression by ignoring or distorting inconsistency information. But, if incoming information is inconsistent with existing schemata, they may attend to the inconsistency by reconstructing existing schemata or adapting new ones if they are motivated and have sufficient cognitive resources. Byram (1989a: 107) highlights Rumelhart's (1980) description of these processes in terms of accretion, tuning and restructuring.

- Accretion takes place when information is stored in memory.

- Tuning takes place when an existing schema is modified to bring it onto line with experience.

- Restructuring takes place when new schemata are created to accommodate experience.

Sercu (2000: 66) highlights Forgas' (1992) finding that when cognitive resources are scarce and when motivation is low, people may adopt simplified processing strategies but when people are motivated, are sufficiently familiar with a target and are presented with novel and otherwise atypical information, they may adopt more systematic processing strategies and consider re-categorisation of information or

modification of category. Sercu also highlights Fiske & Neuberg's (1990) point that information processing is affected by the relevance of the target to the perceiver, their level of motivation and whether or not sufficient cognitive resources are available, noting that people can thus operate under either an impression-maintenance or accuracy mode, drawing upon Stangor & McMillan (1992). For the latter to take place, motivation and cognitive resources are crucial; people have to be willing to actively process and restructure information.

With regard to discrepancy in language code, Byram (1997: 37-38) notes in his discussion of *savoir comprendre* that the interpretation process draws upon existing knowledge, but that people might not be able to notice the values and connotations that underpin native interpretations of the document. People failing to recognise what it is that they don't understand about other cultures will clearly impede their understanding. This relates to (a) de Bono's (1991: 81-92) observation that during information processing, there is automatic recourse to pre-set patterns of information held in memory, and (b) the ethnocentric assumption of similarity. Additionally, Barna (1982) notes that when we attempt to communicate in a foreign language, problems arise when we think we understand but don't, when we "cling to just one meaning of a word or phrase in the new language regardless of connotation or context" ignoring possible variations in meaning.

3.2.5 The Self

Returning to socialisation theory, the argument goes that socialisation leads to the development of the self, the cognitive component of which is known as self-concept,

which refers to the information a person stores in schemata in memory about their own attributes including current and possible selves, which form the knowledge-base for social interaction (Nishida, 1999). Triandis (1989: 506) identifies the self as an active agent that, like language, promotes differential sampling, processing and evaluation of information from the environment, all of which affect social behaviour.

Brehm et al (1999: 70-82) note that since the self-concept is made up of many self-schemata, people typically judge some parts of themselves more favourably than others and that the term self-esteem, which comes from the Latin "aestimare" (which means to estimate or to appraise), refers to a person's positive and negative evaluations of the self. They recognise the common claim that people need high self-esteem and want to see themselves positively, and since the level of self-esteem is determined by the degree of fit between how people see themselves and how they want to see themselves, discrepancies between the actual and ideal selves can cause negative reactions.

Diagram 2: The Link Between Self-Concept And Self-Esteem
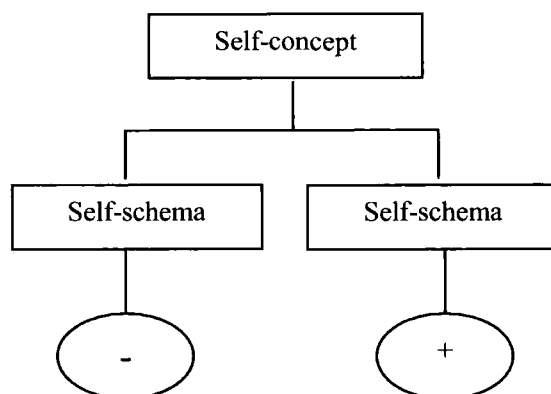
Rathus (1985: 523) notes that these ideas underpin humanistic psychology in Rogers' (1951, 1961, 1980) person-centred therapy, which holds that frequently perceiving the disapproval of others may make it difficult to maintain a consistent self-concept and self-esteem. This may, in turn, cause some people to deny many genuine feelings or disown parts of themselves. According to Rathus (1985: 607), Rogers claims that since the resulting distortion of the self-concept can cause anxiety, the aim of person-centred therapy is to restore and nurture "congruence" between self-concept and behaviour, thoughts, and emotions, and to provide an atmosphere in which people can focus on disowned parts of the self through self-exploration and self-expression. Rathus (1985: 525) sums up Rogers' aim as the reduction of discrepancy between self-concepts and self-ideals to facilitate self-actualisation but the cultural universality of such claims is questionable, as we shall see.

Thus, autobiographical memory in the form of self-schemata can be one source of self-concept. Brehm et al (1999: 88) note that since the self and our behaviour can be the objects of our own attention, introspection and self-observation are other sources of self-concept whose development can also be influenced by other people through social comparison as people evaluate themselves by comparing themselves to similar others. Again, the need for self-esteem is thought to play a role and some people are found to employ various types of self-enhancement mechanisms such as biasing cognitions in favour of the self, unrealistic optimism and making downward social comparisons, although the cultural universality of such patterns is questionable.

Heine (2001) tracks recent conceptual development in cross-cultural psychology that originated in Hofstede's (1980) study of I.B.M. employees in 76 different countries, which identified individualism/collectivism as one of four dimensions of value difference round the world. This was further considered by Triandis (1989) and later developed by Markus and Kitakyama (1991) who suggested that individualist cultures have an independent view of the self, whereas collectivist cultures foster an interdependent view of the self. More recently, Heine (2001) went on to clarify five key differences between the two concepts.

1. Self-enhancing and self-critical motivations

It will be recalled from the discussion of self-esteem that some people engage in self-enhancing strategies to protect self-esteem, but Heine (2001) observes that East Asians show little evidence of self-enhancing biases and tend not to show self-evaluation maintenance tendencies. Instead, they seem more concerned about how they are evaluated by others, which is loosely captured by the term "face" which can be defined as the amount of public worth associated with one's roles. Discussion of "face" can be found in the work of Goffman (1959) and more recently, Brown and Levinson (1987). Kanagawa, Cross and Markus (2001), for example, found not only that their Japanese research participants were influenced by social situations more than their North American counterparts but also that the self-descriptions of the former were more negative than the latter.

Self-esteem studies may shed light on the nature of the independent self but Brehm et al (1999) note that much research into social psychology has been conducted

in North America. Logically, self-enhancing tendencies (i.e. positive self-evaluation) would support the independent self insofar as they would support one's ability to function independently of others. By contrast, Heine (2001) notes as the interdependent self prioritises relationship-maintenance, it is extra-sensitive to the extent to which it is or is not conforming to standards set by the group, consensually with others in the hierarchy, and to a certain extent by society as a whole for the performance of roles and duties. East Asians may tend towards negative self-evaluation.

2. Consistency versus flexibility

The notion of nurturing the coherent and consistent self thus underpins the work of Rogers (1951, 1961, 1980), Festinger (1957) and Heider (1958). But Heine (2001: 887) notes the value of self-consistency is less clear for Asian selves where self is more relational and prioritises relationships and roles over personal qualities such as attitudes, traits and abilities. This leads Asian selves to behave differently, and inconsistently, across situations to meet situationally-determined role-requirements. In his discussion of self as cultural product, Heine (2001: 886-888) draws upon many authors to suggest that the "drive for consistency that underlies dissonance may be so weak amongst East Asians that they make little attempt to rationalise their behaviours in day to day life and may not aim for as much consistency in their reasoning processes as westerners".

3. Intra-individual and extra-individual focus

Heine (2001: 888-890) suggests that when processing information, East Asians tend to focus on information in the environment (extra-individual focus) but North Americans focus more on individual dispositions (intra-individual focus), which echoes

Hall's (1990) distinction between high and low-context culture. In the former, communication depends less upon verbal communication and more upon commonly understood social patterns. In the latter, clear and explicit verbal communication is needed to compensate for greater social movement as common understandings cannot be presumed. Hall's (1990) distinction, however, only reflects the degree of attention paid to context but Heine's (2001) distinction suggests that when people from low-context cultures are not paying such intense attention to context, they may be paying more attention to the individual attributes of interactants.

4. Malleability of self and world

These two factors underpin orientations to change. According to Heine (2001: 890-894), westerners tend to see the social world as something malleable that can be brought into line with the self, which means they try to change the world, whereas East Asians tend to see the world as being relatively fixed, which means they try to bring the self into line with the world. This echoes notions of primary and secondary control which Parmenter (1997) discusses in relation to Japanese education.

5. Relationship between self and other.

According to Heine (2001: 894-897), interdependent selves value being recognised members of certain groups maintaining harmonious relationship with group other members, although drawing clear boundaries between members and non-members is key. Such factors are less important to independent selves for whom the boundary distinguishing in-groups from out-groups plays a lesser role in identity-construction.

Heine (2001) draws upon various authors to provide support for this in the Japanese context. See diagram 3 below for alternative relationships between self and other.

Diagram 3: Alternative Identity Constructions In The Independent And Interdependent Selves

The Independent Self
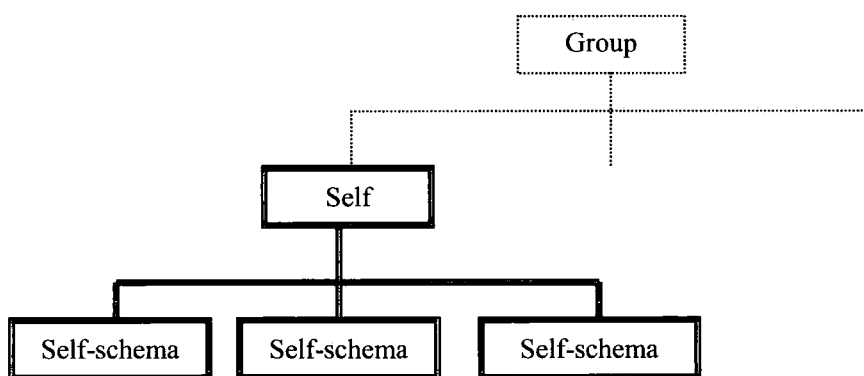
The Interdependent Self
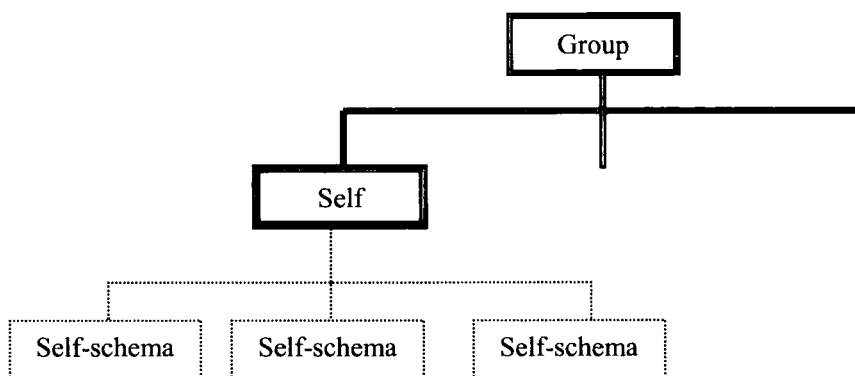
3.2.6 Summary

The mind is an information-handling system that accumulates retrievable patterns of information over time stored in memory in schemata that help us interpret the world.

The communication of words or partial information can trigger the automatic retrieval of schemata, which facilitates communication by referring people back to those patterns. Language influences thought (but does not completely control it) and words affect the interpretation of the inner and outer world. A language is a hetararchy of hierarchically-linked categories within which words are plugged into information networks that are partly based on personal experience and partly inherited from our social world, which can expand flexibly when the need arises. Whilst people tend to be unaware of how far their personal models are influenced by cultural models, exposure to alternative models can highlight this.

The information processing system is inherently biased. The world is too complex to pay equal attention to every detail, so we have to select some things at the expense of others, which renders information processing necessarily partial. For the sake of ease, the information processing system tends to sort information into pre-set patterns and categories, which centres the information setting up unnecessary dichotomies. Values can be contained within nouns or in separate qualifying adjectives. In language comprehension, individuals selectively direct attention onto sections of language converting them into meaningful representations to chunk and match with information stored in memory to build links with other information. When single concepts are evoked, connections are made with other concepts through spreading activation within information networks. Inappropriate use of schemata, lack of attention to context or first-language interference can misguide the learner. Such processes are paralleled in social perception.

When discrepancies arise between schemata and input, people tend towards schema-driven perception to maintain existing categories and form simple but coherent impressions but may attend to the discrepancy by reconstructing existing schemata or adapting new ones depending on motivation and cognitive resources. With regard to discrepancy in language code, we might not notice the values and connotations that underpin interpretations. Problems can arise when we ignore possible variations in meaning.

Identity is equated with self-concept which consists of many internalised schemata that hold information in memory about one's own attributes. Different parts of the self may be evaluated differently and positive and negative self-evaluation patterns are known as self-esteem. Whilst some theorists suggest that the need for positive self-esteem is universal and underpins social comparison processes, others suggest it is culturally-influenced.

3.2.7 Learning Objectives

Here, I will identify possible learning objectives implied by this section taking as my starting point the idea that information about the inner world and outer world is stored in memory in personal and mental models interlinked with language. When I use the term "mental models", I take this to imply the conceptual frameworks and schemata they are held in. Whilst people are generally unaware of cultural influence upon their mental models, attention can be selectively directed at each.

Firstly, learners may be unaware of the influence of language and culture upon their mental models of the inner and outer world, so teachers can focus the learner attention upon their mental models so they can describe them to others, although their descriptions may be subject to first language and culture interference. Learners can be asked to focus on their mental models of their inner world, the relationship between their inner world mental models and their native language, their outer world mental models or the relationship between their outer world mental models and their native language.

Secondly, learners may have little or no knowledge about how the personal and cultural mental models of other people differ from their own or how such differences relates to language, so teachers can focus learner attention on identifying and exploring and describing the mental models of others and their relationship with language, although such description may also be subject to first language/culture interference.

Thirdly, automatic reference to one's own mental models can distort information processing may mean that learners fail to notice discrepancy between information input and information stored in memory, or they may operate in impression-maintenance mode. But if people pay attention to discrepancy and accuracy, mental models can be revised, so teachers can focus learner attention on discrepancy between information input and their own mental models to help them accurately identify and describe various kinds of discrepancies. To this end, teachers can not only help learners develop both declarative and procedural knowledge about their own and other cultures, but also help them to develop the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture, as advocated by

Byram (1997). To develop the point, cultural knowledge has been identified as an important dimension of intercultural competence, since it provides a source of information upon which one can draw to interpret and predict the behaviour of people from another culture (Fiedler et al, 1971) and affects one's ability to minimise misunderstanding according to Wiseman, Hammer and Nishida (1989), Miller and Steinberg (1975), Samovar and Porter (1985), Gudykunst and Kim (1984).

3.3 Socialisation

Byram (1989a: 102-119) draws upon a range of authors to define the mind in terms of innate dispositions and social meanings comprised of beliefs, skills, knowledge that are triggered and shaped by structured and interconnected webs or networks of cultural meanings and gradually internalised under the guidance of older people, or significant others through successive and ordered stages, or zones of proximal development, that determine to which social meanings the child is exposed and influenced.

Sercu (2000: 64) notes a growing consensus within the field of developmental psychology that the development of understanding is a social process that comprises a series of qualitatively different stages of acquisition of cognitive operational schemata, in which more adaptive and flexible processing systems come to replace less flexible, more concrete ones. Sercu (2000) and Doyé (1992) both supplement socialisation theory with information processing theory. Similarly, Endicott et al (2003) recognise that moral and intercultural development can be explained by schema theory since the development and acquisition of new schemata involves bumping up against quandaries

that cannot be adequately explained using existing schemata and this is said to encourage the development of different and more complex ways of thinking about moral and intercultural issues.

3.3.1 Cognitive Development

Doyé (1992) claims that cognitive socialisation involves the acquisition of mental capacities needed to function in society (such as perception, reasoning, logical thinking and judgment) through discrete cognitive operations such as discrimination, categorisation and perspective-taking, drawing upon Piaget's (1969) stages of cognitive development, which Sercu (2000: 59-68) related to the development of worldview. Rathus (1985: 467) noted that Piaget (1962) saw people as actors who purposefully form cognitive representations of, and seek to manipulate, the world with development occurring in the following three ways, which clearly resemble Rumelhart's (1980) description of accretion, tuning and restructuring described in section 3.2.4 above:

1. The assimilation of new information into existing schemes (hypothetical mental structures that permit the classification and organisation of new information)

2. The accommodation of inconsistent information through the modification of existing schemes

3. Equilibration occurs when a person focuses on an object causing disequilibrium in his or her world and either adapts new schemes or changes old ones to restore equilibrium.

Festinger's (1957) concept of cognitive dissonance resembles Piaget's concept of disequilibrium in that when there is a discrepancy between two beliefs, two actions, or between a belief and an action, people tend to act to resolve conflict and discrepancies. Cognitive theorists propose that people are motivated to adjust their mental representations of the world to reduce discrepancies, accommodate new information and create realistic mental maps of the world. Festinger (1957) claims that people are driven to maintain cognitive consistency because the awareness that two cognitions are dissonant (or that the attitudes are incompatible with behaviour) is so unpleasant that they attempt to reduce the discrepancy (Rathus, 1985: 421). But, as we saw in Heine's (2001) discussion of consistency versus flexibility in independent and interdependent selves, the universality of dissonance-based theories is questionable.

Doyé (1992) notes that Piaget (1969) also recognised cognitive shift takes place as young children (7-12 years old) grasp that other people do not see the world as they do, which happens as they learn to empathise and focus on two aspects of a situation at once. The ability to empathise - or take other perspectives – is said to develop as children start to de-centre, which enables them to focus simultaneously on two dimensions of a problem appreciating that situations can be viewed from different perspectives. Also important is Piaget's (1969) observation that not all people, children and adults, learn to engage in more logical, reasoned, abstract forms of thought, or formal operations, which would enable them to consider situations from many points of view and focus on many different aspects of a given problem before arriving at

judgments and solving problems. Doyé (1992) relates this level of formal operations to Byram's (1989b) notion of tertiary socialisation.

3.3.2 Moral Development

Let us now consider moral socialisation, which Doyé (1992) uses to refer to the processes by which human beings become inculcated with the values and norms of society that enable them to function. Doyé (1992) suggests that Kohlberg's (1976) Theory of Moral Development sheds light on moral socialisation, which grew out of Piaget's theory. Crain (2000: 155-161) notes that moral development is thought to take place in two ways within Kohlberg's model, which relate to information processing and perspective-taking. Let me consider them in turn.

Crain (2000: 155-156) notes that firstly, moral development is thought to emerge from our own thinking about moral problems as mental processing is stimulated by social experience, discussion and debate, which motivate us to come up with new, more comprehensive positions as our views are brought into question. Kohlberg's stages are thus thought to reflect broader viewpoints. Crain (2000: 166) notes that the cognitive conflict at work in Piaget's concept of equilibration through which the child takes one view, becomes confused by discrepant information and then resolves the confusion by forming a more advanced and comprehensive position is thought to be at play in the dialectic process of Socratic teaching through which students give a view, the teacher asks questions to get them to see the inadequacy of their views, and they are then motivated to formulate better positions. But as we have seen, the universality of dissonance-based theories is currently questionable.

Secondly, development occurs as we engage in role-taking and consider others' viewpoints, which helps us develop their conceptions of what is fair and just (Crain, 2000: 156). This relates to Piaget's discussion of the shift out of egocentrism (Crain, 2000: 130) as young children slowly start to recognise that viewpoints differ but with a growing realisation that other people's viewpoints differ, which characterises Kohlberg's level of conventional thinking (Crain, 2000: 151-152).

Just as some people do not reach the formal operations stage of Piaget's theory, some people never enter the post-conventional level of Kohlberg's theory, which is reached only by individuals who free themselves from the norms of the society into which they are born, who can transgress the prescriptions of their society and follow universal rules. This involves taking a more idealised look at how people might coordinate their interests with due consideration of how multiple perspectives, democratic process and the principles of justice make for a "good" society. It is this post-conventional level of moral development that Doyé (1992) relates to Byram's (1989b) notion of tertiary socialisation and suggests should be a goal of intercultural education.

3.3.3 Universality

Crain (2000: 160) highlights challenges to Kohlberg's claim that the moral stages were universal. Firstly, Gilligan (1982: 72-73) argued that women frame moral problems in terms of "care and responsibility in relationships" rather than in terms of "rights and rules" contrasting the female "ethic of care" with the male "formal logic of

fairness that informs the justice approach", which in turn relates to the female valuing of the collectivity and connectedness (Gilligan, 1982: 160 and Crain, 2000: 163-165).

Secondly, Kohlberg's stages have also been criticised for claiming cultural universality when they are in fact rooted in the western philosophical tradition. On this, Crain (2000: 168-169) noted Tronto's (1987) recognition that indigenous societies may develop moral orientations more like those Gilligan articulated for women that emphasise people's interdependence, and the self as an extension of others, recognising the possibility that some cultures may develop more advanced moralities based on harmony and interdependence with the whole of creation. Still, Crain (2000: 169) highlights Broughton's (1983) point that emphasising the morality of justice over the ethic of care carries the potential to overcome the kinds of powerful legal systems challenged by Gandhi and Martin Luther King in the name of higher principles.

3.3.4 Neo-Kohlberg Approach to Moral Development

According to Endicott et al (2003), a neo-Kohlbergian approach emerged in the 1990's as Rest et al (1999) put forward a theory of moral development rooted in many of Kohlberg's fundamental ideas, yet deviating from them in response to the many criticisms of his original theory. It links the theory explicitly with schema theory, which was discussed earlier, depicting the development of moral reasoning as the gradual replacement of more primitive forms of thinking by more complex forms conceptualised as moral schemata, or mental frameworks, that form through the recognition of similarities and recurrences in socio-moral experience and reside in long-term memory. Development was conceptualised in terms of cognitive schema

development through three qualitatively different moral schemata forming a developmental hierarchy that parallels Kohlberg's three major levels. Notably, this approach attempts to combine schema theory, perspective-taking and alternative systems of morality:

- **The personal interest schema** is pre-sociocentric in that it rests upon an egocentric perspective in which the concern of the individual is limited to their personal stakes in the dilemma and those of the people with whom they are close related, and lacks any overarching, guiding concept of an organised society.

- **The maintaining norms schema** (usually emerging in adolescence) is characterised by a perception of a need for a society-wide system of cooperation and the uniform application of laws and social norms, and a duty-based, authoritarian orientation.

- **The post-conventional schema** is the most complex of the three and is characterized by flexible thinking since multiple mental frameworks, or schemata, are drawn upon to construct a common morality based on a community's framework of shared ideals ranging from the ideals of classic Kohlbergian individual rights-based principles of justice to communitarian and other non-Kohlbergian moral principles.

3.3.5 Summary

Information processing plays a role in both cognitive and moral development insofar as people form cognitive representations of the world, assimilate new information into existing schemata by modifying existing schemata to accommodate inconsistent information to maintain equilibration and reduce cognitive dissonance. Both cognitive and moral developments are characterised by a shift out of egocentrism (de-centring) that accompanies the development of the ability to take the perspectives of other people (empathy).

Thus, those who reach highest stages of cognitive and moral development should be able to both engage in higher forms of thought by focusing on many different aspects of a given problem before arriving at judgments. But since not all adults reaches these higher stages of cognitive and moral development, there is good reason to encourage both cognitive and moral development through education.

However, with regard to cognitive development, the claim that the human drive to maintain cognitive consistency is universal conflicts with the claim that the interdependent self may prefer flexibility. Cultural variation may exist. With regard to moral development, the claim that rationality-based morality systems with recourse to democratic process and justice as universal principles (associated with western males) represent a higher stage of moral development than those that prioritise harmony, empathy and relationship-maintenance (associated with western females and eastern morality systems) is controversial. Tension exists between prioritising the interpersonal

relationship and combating the abuse of power but attempts are being made to reconcile the two.

3.3.6 Learning Objectives

Here, I will identify the possible learning objectives implied by this section. As learners develop knowledge of how the personal and cultural mental models of other people differ from their own, and how such difference relates to language, teachers can not only help them develop more logically consistent, reasoned forms of thought but also develop their ability to be flexible across situations, empathise and maintain harmonious relationship, in accordance with different stages of Piaget and Kohlberg's models. Teachers can also help learners analyse and explain cultural difference in terms of their own and the other cultural systems separately, identifying similarities and differences between the two, following Byram (1997). Further, teachers can help learners mediate between conflicting interpretations of phenomena, resolve cultural and linguistic mismatches and identify irresolvable differences, also following Byram (1997).

3.4 Ethnocentrism

Endicott et al (2003) link Kohlberg's (1969) Stages of Moral Development with Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity suggesting that multicultural experiences are related to both moral and intercultural development in terms of increasing socio-cognitive flexibility, noting that both models share the common element of a critical shift from rigid to flexible thinking. They recognise that ethical and intercultural conflict can arise between people whose schemata, which are

inherently unstable and are bound up in identity, are based on entirely different kinds of experience. They also suggest that the ability to engage in flexible thinking during problem-solving by understanding and working with multiple frameworks, or schemata, is an important skill in conflict resolution. Let us consider Bennett's (1993) model next.

3.4.1 Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Sercu (2000: 62) linked the concept of worldview with Byram's (1989b) concept of tertiary socialisation. Bennett (1993) defines worldview in cognitive terms as a particular configuration of cultural categories held in the mind about reality, or patterns of differentiation of phenomena that are culturally determined and shared. Bennett (1993) assumes the differentiation and attachment of meaning to phenomena varies depending on the individual and the culture. The model is framed in terms of category development rather than schemata, though the two approaches are not inconsistent. Further, it highlights the particular role of ingroup-outgroup dynamics and exposes a wide range of possible responses to difference in worldview ranging from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, both of which add new perspectives to the knowledge framework that has been constructed so far. Ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism will be considered separately and related to other theories and models.

3.4.2 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is similar to egocentrism as described in the earlier stages of Piaget and Kohlberg's models. Bennett (1993) notes that just as egocentric people assume their existence is central to the reality perceived by all others, ethnocentric people also assumes that their own worldviews are central to all reality, which can cause problems in intercultural communication. Paul and Elder (2002: 185-203) consider the same basic

problem in terms of sociocentrism. Let me present an overview of how ethnocentrism is categorised in Bennett's (1993) model before proceeding to discuss the parts and relate them to the literature.

THE ETHNOCENTRIC STAGES

    I. DENIAL

- Isolation

- Separation

    II. DEFENSE

- Denigration

- Superiority

- Reversal

    III. MINIMISATION

- Physical Universalism

- Transcendent Universalism

The first ethnocentric stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the denial stage which comprises the two stages of isolation and separation, which (unlike the next two) are non-evaluative because no cognitive categories exist at these stages for cultural difference, the implication being that there is simply nothing to evaluate. Isolation results from a lack of exposure to cultural difference where the individual, in cognitive terms, has either no cognitive categories for cultural difference or very broadly defined and poorly differentiated categories (termed "benign stereotypes" since they have no evaluative dimension).

The second ethnocentric stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the defence stage which comprises the three stages of denigration, superiority and reversal, which are all evaluative. They have clearly defined cognitive categories for cultural difference (so there is something to evaluate) involve in-group/out-group dynamics and are evaluative. Denigration is said to set in when cultural difference is perceived as threatening and cultural difference is evaluated negatively as a defensive strategy. This is then said to give way to the superiority stage when positive evaluation of one's own culture is reinforced to preserve self-esteem and a need is still felt to subjugate cultural difference. The defence stage of reversal may (or may not) occur in some individuals who recognise the superiority of the host culture over their own evaluating it positively at the expense of their own. This stage is still considered to be ethnocentric since the only real change is the shift of the centre from one culture to another.

The third ethnocentric stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the minimisation stage. This comprises the two stages of physical and transcendent universalism, which are characterised by less judgmental universalism since at these stages, similarities are sought, and super-ordinate constructs are created that incorporate previously irreconcilable elements into a more complex structure. The implication that the search for difference precedes the search for similarity is questionable, though Bennett does recognise that in reality, the stages may not be as linear as they seem. Still, this is a developmental theory and suggests that the development between the stages is characterised by an increase in cognitive complexity, which minimises the difference by swallowing it up into a new and larger whole, giving the impression that differences do not really exist and we are all the same underneath (i.e. everyone is the same as me).

Since this underlying assumption effectively denies cultural difference, it is classed as being ethnocentric in Bennett's (1993) model.

Bennett (1993) does not discuss the micro-dynamics of how evaluation relates to the identification of similarities and differences that leads to the construction of super-ordinate constructs, what goes into those constructs and what does not. Nor does he refer to Rumelhart or Piaget's descriptions of underlying cognitive processes. Still, diagram 4 below illustrates how Bennett conceives of the development of cognitive categories in the response to cultural difference.

Diagram 4: The Ethnocentric Stages Of Bennett's Developmental Model Of Intercultural Sensitivity

THE ETHNOCENTRIC STAGES

I. DENIAL

No (few) categories exist.
There is nothing (too
little) to evaluate.

$\longrightarrow$

II. DEFENSE

Differences are identified,
categorised and evaluated.

$\longrightarrow$ +/-   +/-   +/-
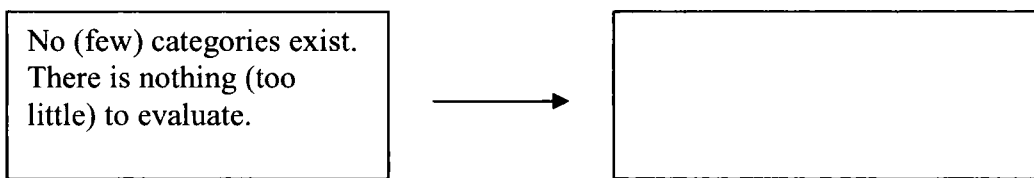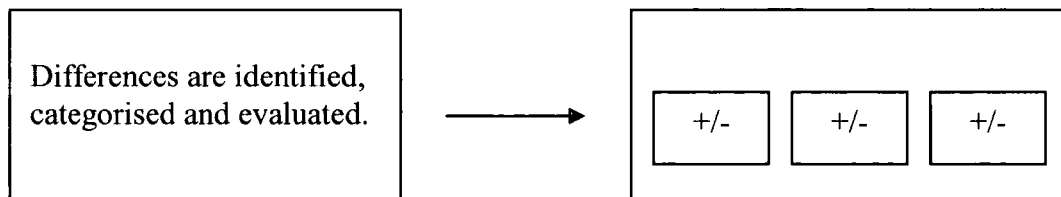
III. MINIMISATION
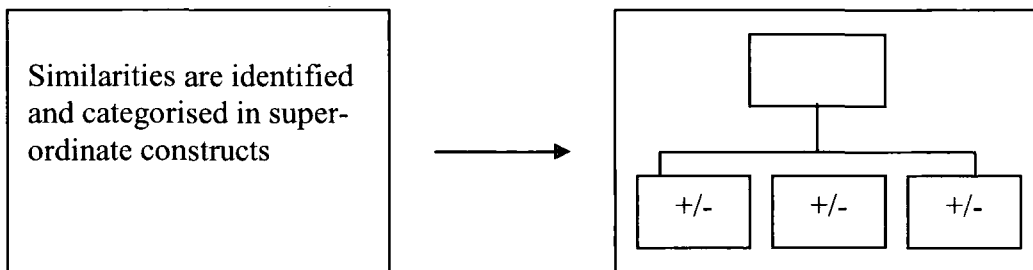
Ethnocentrism has been defined by Gudykunst and Kim (1984) as "the tendency to identify with our group (e.g. ethnic, or racial group, culture) and to evaluate out-groups and their members according to those standards" but the original term was coined by Sumner (2002: 13) in 1906 as "the technical name for the view of things in which one's own is the centre of everything and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it". Ethnocentrism has two key facets, as recognised by Gudykunst (1998: 106). Firstly, it refers to people's inability to conceive of perceptions of reality other than their own, which resembles egocentrism and is sometimes called "the presumption of similarity" (Barna, 1982).

This is consistent with the idea that those at the denial stages of ethnocentrism have too little information upon which to draw, if any. Their only option may be to simply project the information stored in their minds onto the situation to interpret what is happening, and this can distort interpretations of situations and cause misunderstandings in intercultural communication, leading us to interpret strangers' behaviour from own cultural frame of reference (Gudykunst and Kim, 1984: 94). In

short, the highly ethnocentric individual "suffers from a form of cultural myopia" (Wiseman et al, 1989).

The second facet of Sumner's (1906) definition of ethnocentrism ("all others are scaled and rated with reference to it") is evaluation from one's own cultural standpoint. Gudykunst (1998: 106) claims this can lead us to reject out-groups seeing them as inferior, a tendency which Brewer and Campbell (1976) claim is universal. This tendency to evaluate one's own group positively compared to out-group members underpins social identity theory, as we shall see in section 3.4.4, since it arises from group identification processes. Can this be equated with the need for self-esteem? If so, and if this need is not as strong in the interdependent self as it is in the independent self, can this tendency be said to be universal? Heine (2001) also suggested that ingroup-outgroup boundaries play a more important role in the identity of the interdependent self than in the independent self, so the answer is unclear. That said, the evaluative facet of ethnocentrism is said to affect memory insofar as (some) people tend to remember more favourable information about in-group members and less favourable information about out-group members (Hewstone and Giles, 1986). This is consistent with the evaluative facet of prejudice as described by Brislin (1986) in section 3.4.5, which may adversely affect communication. Barna (1982) also recognises this.

3.4.3 Stereotypes

Let me consider group identification processes next. The same categorisation processes that were discussed in section 3.2.3 in relation to information processing underpin the formation of stereotypes, a term coined by Lippmann (1922). Just as we

categorise information about the world, we categorise ourselves and other people into groups. According to the Encyclopedia of Psychology (2000: 466-470), stereotypes are basic to human thought sometimes providing useful sources of reasonably accurate information to make inferences about when there is a lack of information upon which to draw. However, stereotypes form as we categorise people based on visually obvious attributes such as race or gender. Once a category has been set up in the mind, knowledge, beliefs and expectancies are added and individuals within the category are thereafter imbued with the characteristics attached to the category. Such categorisation processes form and maintain the group boundaries that underpin ethnocentrism and prejudice, as recognised by Levine and Campbell (1972), Brislin (1986) and Rubovitz and Maehr (1973).

Allport (1954) notes that stereotypes are transmitted through language and can perpetuate prejudice if language is commonly used to describe members of stereotyped groups in a biased way (Maas and Arcuri, 1996: 193-226). Dovidio et al (1996: 279-281) review definitions of stereotypes that have been presented since the term was first introduced noting that earlier definitions tended to focus on their flawed nature, whereas later definitions emphasised their status as necessary cognitive processes. Examples of the pitfalls of stereotypes are listed below:

- They are over-generalised beliefs that can distort perception (Barna, 1982: 327).

- They can cause various types of cognitive bias, leading people to "remember more favourable information about in-group members and less favourable information about out-group members" (Hewstone and Giles, 1986).

- They can lead to inaccurate predictions about behaviour (Gudykunst and Hammer, 1988 and Kim and Gudykunst, 1988).

- They can constrain behaviour as people seek confirmation of stereotypes during interaction creating a self-fulfilling prophesy (Hewstone and Giles, 1986).

According to the Encyclopedia of Psychology (2000: 469), stereotypes can change. Through interaction with people who do not fit into the broader category, category sub-types may be set up to account for the differences, which contain more detail than the main category but alternatively, they may isolate atypical members from the main category, thus preserving the existing stereotype. Thus, stereotype categorisation may or may not break down in response to new information.

3.4.4 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory deals with group identification processes, which suggests that stereotypical categorisations help define group boundaries and lie at the heart of inter-group attitudes. A person's identity consists of both personal and social identity. Personal identity refers to "self-categories that define the perceiver as a unique individual in contrast to other individuals", whereas social identity "refers to social categorisations of self and others, self-categories which define the individual in terms of his or her shared similarities with members of certain social categories in contrast to other social categories" (Encyclopedia of Psychology, 2000: 341-343). Social categorisation of people into distinct groups can cause discrimination as the in-group is favoured over the out-group, which is rooted in a basic human need for self-esteem, as recognised by Tajfel et al (1971: 149-178), Tajfel (1982) and Turner (1987).

This view contrasts with distinctions made by Heine (2001) between independent and interdependent selves (see diagram 3) since social identity theory doesn't recognise the differential prioritisation of self as individual and self as group-member between different cultural groups, taking a more universal view that conceptualises us all placing equal priority on both but shifting between the two. Indeed, Wetherell (1982) questioned the existence of universal psychological processes associated with group conflict suggesting cultural influences also play a part. But again, Heine (2001) did suggest that maintaining the ingroup-outgroup boundary is more central to the identity of the interdependent self than to the independent self, to whom the main boundary is between self and other. The universality of social identity theory remains open to question.

3.4.5 Prejudice

Prejudice, or unfair negative attitude toward out-group members (Dovidio et al, 1996), also relates to group identification processes. Brislin (1986) identifies key aspects of prejudice as pre-judgment based upon labels applied to people originating in factors differentiating people such as race, sex, skin colour, occupation, religion or political affiliation, whereby people are judged based on perceived membership of the labelled category, rather than as individuals. Brislin (1986) highlights the point that prejudicial judgments are evaluative. In addition to making judgments about facts, individuals also make judgments about the goodness, worth or desirability of other people based on the labels applied which are sometimes so strongly held that they are impervious to the introduction of new facts which, from a rational point of view, should affect attitudes towards others.

Prejudice thus finds its roots in social categorisation and involves the tendency to evaluate negatively. Brislin (1984) summarises the functions of prejudice according to Katz (1960) who presented the functions of various attitudes that applied to the more specific case of prejudicial attitudes. Prejudice can lead to reward or punishment-avoidance, protect self-esteem, express values or provide the knowledge needed to function in society. Allport (1954) pointed out that love and hate are two sides of the prejudicial coin, with the former preceding the latter.

3.4.6 Summary

Intercultural development is related to both cognitive and moral development. Intercultural misunderstanding can be rooted in our ethnocentric projection of our own worldview onto others because it distorts our perception of other perspectives. Initial exposure to difference may be characterised by a lack (or absence of) cognitive categories for difference, which makes evaluation impossible because there is nothing (or too little) to evaluate. Further exposure to cultural difference allows differences to be identified, categorised and evaluated as affective dimensions come into play. Ongoing exposure allows similarities to be identified and categorised in super-ordinate constructs but the concomitant increase in category complexity may mask difference by swallowing it up into a bigger and undifferentiated whole, encouraging a more non-judgmental stance.

Just as we categorise information about the world, we categorise people into groups, which underpins stereotype formation. Whilst stereotypes can provide useful information about people, they generally cause cognitive bias and distort the

perceptions of stereotyped people and groups. They can also affect behaviour by causing stereotyped people to behave in line with the stereotypes that have been communicated. Rigid in-group and out-group boundaries are supported by stereotyping tendencies because people (a) tend to perceive more similarity between out-group members than between in-group members, and (b) tend to remember more favourable information about in-group members and less favourable information about out-group members, all of which is thought to boost self-esteem but this tendency may be culturally variable.

An important factor is prejudice, or unfair negative attitude toward out-group members, whereby the people and their worth are evaluated based on perceived membership of the labelled category, rather than as individuals. Prejudiced evaluation may impervious to the introduction of new facts, which should affect the evaluation from a rational point of view.

3.4.7 Learning Objectives

Bennett's (1993) model is developmental in nature. It is not a taxonomy of learning objectives, such as those drawn up by Byram (1997) but still, Bennett does make recommendations as to what guidance can be given by intercultural instructors to individuals at each stage. Let us consider both their recommendations. If learners have no (or too few) cognitive categories for cultural difference, teachers can help learners build them through cultural awareness activities following Bennett (1993) encouraging curiosity, openness and the readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own, following Byram (1997). Teachers can also motivate learners to seek

other perspectives on interpretation of familiar and unfamiliar phenomena both in their own and in other cultures questioning their own culture in the process, following Byram (1997).

Both Byram and Bennett recognise that this process may challenge identities formed during prior socialisation perhaps triggering the passing of judgment, as objects presents themselves as targets and learners start to defend their worldview perhaps unfairly basing their judgments on stereotypes. Recalling that people can ignore stereotypes and form more individualised impressions of others when they have personal information and the ability and motivation to use that information, teachers can focus learner attention on similarities between cultures following Bennett (1993) or develop their ability to form more individualised impressions of others using personal information rather than relying on stereotypes. Whilst stereotypes and prejudice may persist, larger cognitive structures may be constructed to assimilate the difference easing evaluative tendency but perhaps masking difference. Thus, teachers can focus learner attention on differences between self and other through simulations, gaming or using people from other cultures as resources, following Bennett (1993). These are some possible learning objectives implied by section 3.4.

3.5 Ethnorelativism

3.5.1 Ethnorelativism

Just as the models of cognitive and moral development outlined earlier are characterised by de-centring as egocentric people learn to take the perspectives of other people (empathy), Bennett's (1993) model is characterised by a similar shift from

ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, which also relates to empathy. Insofar as the ethnocentric projection of one's concepts and evaluation patterns onto the perspective of another person would distort that perspective, accurate perspective-taking (empathy) necessarily requires a suspension of one's own concepts and values, which might explain why Bennett identifies non-judgmental stance as playing a key role in the shift from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, although this is a controversial issue, as we shall see.

It may also account for the general non-judgmental positioning that characterises the ethnorelative stages of Bennett's (1993) model which sets out stages in which a respect for the integrity of all cultures develops that is rooted in an understanding that there are no absolute standards of rightness or goodness. But again, this is a controversial notion. Indeed, whilst Bennett claims that his model is non-evaluative, in the sense that the later stages are not presented as being any more desirable than the earlier ones, he does recommend educational strategies for the "treatment" of ethnocentrism and the later stages clearly imply a desirable movement towards an ideal state of personhood.

In fact, much of the criticism of Bennett's (1993) model, and similar approaches, comes from theorists who hold a different, and more critical, ideal of citizenship than Bennett, which will be discussed in the latter half of the section. Firstly, however, let me present an overview of how ethnorelativism is categorised in Bennett's (1993) model before proceeding to discuss the parts and relate them to the literature.

IV. ACCEPTANCE

- Respect for Behavioural Difference

- Respect for Value Difference

V. ADAPTATION

- Empathy

- Pluralism

VI. INTEGRATION

- Contextual Evaluation

- Constructive Marginality

The fourth ethnorelative stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the acceptance stage which comprises the two stages of respect for behavioural difference and respect for value difference. Bennett suggests that people at these stages no longer feel threatened by difference and attempt to elaborate new categories to accommodate difference rather than simply preserving existing ones. Cultural difference is acknowledged and respected, but not evaluated negatively or positively since the standards of the home culture are no longer used in the evaluation process due to an increased awareness that there are no absolute standards of rightness or goodness and that cultures can only be understood relative to one another and that particular behaviour can only be understood within a cultural context.

Respect for behavioural difference involves acceptance and respect of cultural differences in both verbal behaviour (both language and communication style) and non-verbal behaviour discounting the view of foreign languages as simply different codes with which to communicate similar ideas as being naïve and ethnocentric, viewing language behaviour instead as something that reflects fundamental difference in worldview. This is consistent with discussion about the link between language and culture in section 3.2.2. Respecting language difference entails acknowledging and respecting alternative perceptions of reality, or worldviews. This area of the model remains under-developed, however, because despite recognition of the connection between language and culture, Bennett did not discuss the role of language in the dynamic categorisation processes described under ethnocentrism.

Before considering what Bennett means by respect for value difference, let us stop to consider the nature of values. Rokeach (1973) defines them as enduring beliefs that specific modes of behaviour or end-states of existence are preferable to others. These beliefs act as guiding standards for action, attitudes, ideology, self-presentation, evaluations, judgments, justifications and comparison between self and others. Rokeach (1973) also notes the hierarchical structure of value systems highlighting the fact that since a given situation will typically activate several values within that system rather than just a single one, and different subsets of the value system will be activated in different situations, a relative dimension comes into play when values come into competition, are prioritised and integrated into relatively stable hierarchically organised systems, wherein each value is ordered in priority or importance relative to other values.

For Bennett (1993), respecting value difference involves respecting the value attached to people's perceptions about social phenomena and recognising that the valuing systems of other cultures is worthy of understanding and respect but not necessarily agreement. Any evaluation made or any personal opinion formed regarding the cultural difference at this stage is said not to be ethnocentric.

The fifth ethnorelative stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the adaptation stage which comprises the two stages of empathy and pluralism. For Bennett, adaptation develops alongside the ability to communicate with, and relate to, people from other cultures, which involves the creation of common meaning and the consideration of different worldviews as expressed through language. But does this involve the creation of new language? Further, adaptation involves the ability to temporarily behave or value in a way appropriate to another culture but Bennett stresses that this is not to be confused with assimilation wherein one's identity is absorbed into a new culture, because primary cultural affiliation is maintained and one's worldview and native communication skills are maintained and extended rather than being replaced.

The ability to empathise involves being willing and able to shift one's frame of reference to temporarily adopt another person's frame of reference. It is the same cognitive move as perspective-taking, which relates to the de-centring described in Piaget and Kohlberg's models outlined in section 3.3. Bennett (1993) suggests that people may remain at this stage for years. Empathy is a controversial issue that will be discussed in section 3.5.2. Bennett (1993) suggests that extensive exposure to different worldviews leads to the development of a pluralistic orientation resulting from the

internalisation of two or more cultural frames of reference and commitment to their co-existence, which accords with Byram's description of schemata internalisation in section 3.2.1. Cultural difference is internalised as part of the self and respect for cultural different equates with self-respect.

The final ethnorelative stage in Bennett's (1993) model is the integration stage which comprises the two stages of contextual evaluation and constructive marginality. According to Bennett (1993), non-judgmental stance facilitates entry into the integration stage and the development of adaptive skills, though appreciation of all possible choices among alternative perspectives paralyses one's ability to judge and this causes some people to retreat to the surer ground of ethnocentrism. Developing the ability to make contextual evaluation, or analysing and evaluating situations from various cultural perspectives implies the ability to shift cultural context at the level of self-awareness to exercise choice. Judgment is not bound by the value system formed during socialisation but considers alternative value perspectives. A number of cultural frames of reference may be applied when making the evaluation and the exercise of identity involves selecting cultural options consciously by taking different cultural frames of reference into consideration. This is what Bennett (1993) means when he describes integrated people as choosers of alternatives.

Bennett (1993) notes that some people with intensive living experience in different cultures, deep commitment to principles of internationalism, or a strong desire for coherence, may enter the constructive marginality stage by coming to grips with a multiplicity of realities which involves restructuring identity to incorporate other

worldviews as disparate parts are integrated into a new whole. Bennett notes that people

are conscious of the dynamic process of the construction of culture and are able to

function in relationship to cultures while staying outside the constraints of any

particular one and are both a part of, and apart from, a given cultural context. Meta-

cognitive awareness and control will be discussed later in relation to critical thinking in

sections 3.5.3 and 3.5.4 below.

Diagram 5: The Ethnorelative Stages of Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

THE ETHNORELATIVE STAGES

IV. ACCEPTANCE

New categories are elaborated to accommodate difference. No (ethnocentric) evaluation.
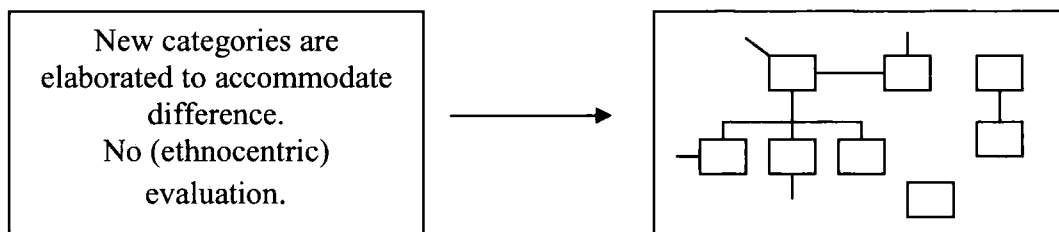
V. ADAPTATION ⟶ VI. INTEGRATION
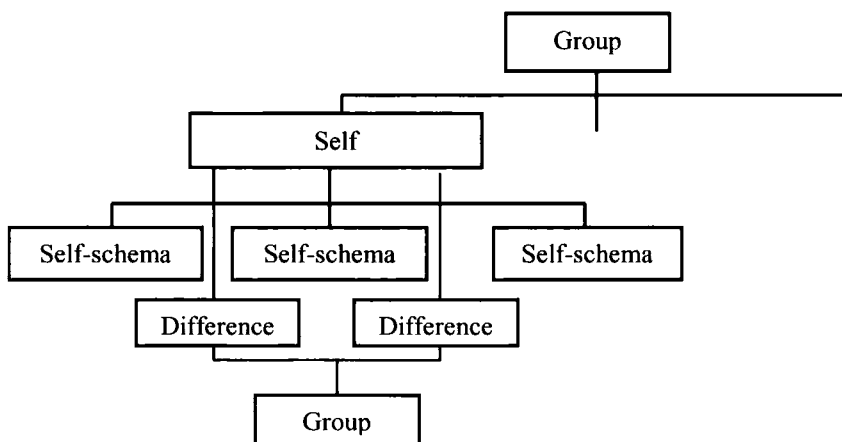
Clashing frames of reference may cause culture shock leading to the loss or rejection of primary cultural affiliation. The subsequent disintegration of identity can leave people in marginal existence on the periphery of two or more cultures but this is coupled with understanding. Identity then emerges from the act of defining identity itself. Bennett recognises possible discomfort caused by cognitive dissonance but the suggestion that this clash only occurs at this late stage is dubious. He also notes that at this stage, primary cultural affiliation may be lost or voluntarily discarded but suggests that such people are best placed to mediate cross-culturally, since they are not enmeshed in any reference group and are able to construct each appropriate worldview as needed. This reveals Bennett's (1993) personal view of the ideal citizen, a view that conflicts with critical approaches to citizenship education, which will be considered later.

3.5.2 Empathy

Let us now consider empathy in more detail, since it is a controversial aspect of Bennett's (1993) model, partly because it can be variously defined in the literature, a point noted by Gudykunst (1998: 232-233) who observes that empathy has cognitive, affective and communication components. Cognitively, empathy means to take the perspective of another person to see the world from their point of view. Affectively, it involves vicariously experiencing the emotions of another, which causes some people to confuse sympathy with empathy. Communicatively, empathy involves signalling understanding and concern through verbal and nonverbal cues.

Gudykunst (1998: 232-233) clarifies the difference between the first two types as follows. Sympathy means to imagine how we would feel in strangers' situations which

means we are still centred in our own affective domain (which happens when we communicate unreflectively on automatic pilot) but empathy means to imagine how strangers feel, listening carefully to strangers, understanding their feelings, being interested in what they say, being sensitive to their needs and understanding their point of view.

The ability to empathise also characterises Rogers' (1980: 150-161) person-centred therapist who listens closely and attempts to accurately reflect the client's experiences and feelings and view the world through their clients' frames of reference by suspending analysis and evaluation from within their own frame of reference, and setting aside their own values through non-judgmental stance and perspective-taking. Three other qualities that characterise the approach taken by person-centred therapists are respect for clients as important human beings with unique values and goals (unconditional positive regard, which is akin to non-judgmental stance insofar as analysis and judgment are suspended): being open about their feelings (genuineness): showing a fit between their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour to act as role-models (congruence) (Rogers, 1980: 150-161). Edge (1993) applied Rogers' ideas to teacher development taking the view that education everywhere fosters the development of people who find a healthy balance between believing and doubting, implying that perspective-taking requires the temporary closure of critical, evaluative thought to confirm understanding.

Empathy is one of seven behavioural interpersonal skills found by Ruben and Kealey (1979) to play a role in cross-cultural adaptation. They found that those who

were most non-judgmental in terms of interaction posture and most relativistic in their orientation towards knowledge experience the greatest culture shock suggesting that the more people are aware of the limitations of their truths, the more they are affected by the presence of people with different world-views and that receptivity towards other life orientations may lead to intra-personal turmoil, and even confusion as one seeks to resolve value contradictions and discrepancies.

But Abe and Wiseman (1983) note that the behavioural skills may not be generalisable outside of the United States, a point recognised by Olebe and Koester (1989) who noted some key differences between Japanese and American communicative behaviour. In Japan, relationship-maintenance is prioritised, communication tends to be more reserved and attentive to social norms, self-disclosure differs in terms of topical preferences, target preferences and depth of discussion, and the verbalisation patterns of evaluations of other people may also vary. Further, Nishida (1985) notes that behavioural skill may also depend on the foreign language ability of the person concerned. Also, Koester and Olebe (1988) note that since Ruben and Kealey (1979) considered actual communication behaviour, only verbalised evaluations could be considered, which ignored private, unverbalised evaluations of self and other. However, Olebe and Koester (1989) suggest that empathy, respect and non-judgmental stance may be universal but variously expressed in different cultures.

3.5.3 Meta-Cognitive Awareness and Control

Bennett (1993) recognises how the encounter with cultural difference can raise the complex unconscious presuppositions of worldview to the conscious level. This leads

him to define intercultural sensitivity in terms of turning the attribution of meaning back onto the meaning-maker through self-reflection to raise awareness of one's construal of reality is particular and one of many, which is consistent with the point made by both Hall (1990) and Kumar (1982) that experiencing another culture illuminates our own.

Let us take a closer look at how this reflective meta-level of thought is discussed in the literature. Byram (1989a) suggests that self-reflection and consciousness-raising can help circumvent the problem of foreign language learners merely encoding their own culture-specific meanings in the foreign language For Byram (1989a), this contains reflexive and comparative processes. The reflexive aspect of cultural awareness involves learners reflectively questioning and relativising their taken-for-granted cultural identity with its values, beliefs and actions and this implies that insight into or experience of the practices and meaning systems of other cultures plays a role in one's understanding of self and identity. The comparative aspect involves the juxtaposition and analysis of foreign cultural values, beliefs and practices and Byram (1989a) suggests that comparison is the process through which reflexivity develops.

With regard to foreign language learning generally, the ability to reflectively monitor one's own thought processes to control them is thought to facilitate language learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) derive meta-cognitive strategies for foreign language learning such as planning, selective attention and monitoring from Anderson's (1985) information processing theory, and suggest that procedural knowledge is the basic mechanism through which control over cognition is exercised. In education more generally, Anderson and Kratwohl (2001) revised Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of the

Cognitive Domain to include the development of meta-cognitive knowledge as a learning objective.

Goleman (2004: 36-55) suggests that emotional intelligence is underpinned by reflective self-awareness, a term that describes an ongoing attention to one's internal states during which the mind observes itself. Goleman (2004: 46).notes that this awareness of one's own thoughts and emotions may be referred to by psychologists as meta-cognition and meta-mood respectively and was described by Freud as an "evenly hovering attention" that takes in whatever passes through awareness with impartiality, as an interested yet unreactive witness. The basic argument is that awareness of emotions is the fundamental emotional competence on which others, such as emotional self-control, build. In this sense, Goleman (2004: 47) claims that self-awareness is a neutral mode that maintains self-reflectiveness even amidst turbulent emotions but Mayer's (1993) contention that it may also be judgmental is also recognised. Goleman's (2004) view that meta-cognitive control can be exerted over emotion is echoed by Gudykunst (1998: 31-34) who supports the development of mindfulness in communication to overcome any anxiety affecting and inhibiting communication with strangers. This line of thought is consistent with the concept of second-order thinking which will be discussed in section 3.5.4. Such mindfulness carries many potential benefits.

Firstly, it allows us to reflect on how we categorise people and to reconsider those categorisations. In relation to racism, the Encyclopedia of Psychology (2000) notes Devine and Montieth's (1993) suggestion that lower-prejudice people may consciously

attempt to prevent negative stereotypes from influencing their behaviour because they are more likely to have personal standards prescribing that they behave in non-prejudiced way towards x and experience more compunction and guilt when they deviate from these standards, which in turn motivates efforts to behave in a less biased way in the future. This concept of personal standards in monitoring and controlling one's thought processes accords with the concept of meta-cognitive control. Attempts to combat discrimination have thus involved making people aware of the dangers of using facile stereotypes in decision-making processes in the hope that they will choose not to let stereotypes influence their behaviour.

Secondly, Gudykunst (1998: 31) notes that mindfulness encourages openness to information. When we proceed without mindfulness in a particular situation, we tend to see the same thing occurring in the situation as we saw the previous time we were in the same situation. If we are consciously open to new information, we see the subtle differences in our own and strangers' behaviours that may take place. The more we think about how to behave in situations, the more appropriate and effective our behaviours tend to be. Thirdly, Gudykunst (1998: 31) notes that mindfulness encourages awareness of other perspectives. When we communicate without careful thought, we often assume strangers use the same perspective as we do. It is only when we are mindful of the process of our communication that we can determine how our interpretations of messages differ from strangers' interpretations of those messages.

Thus, there is much agreement in the literature that the development of meta-cognitive awareness and control is desirable. However, let us recall Brehm et al's (1999:

58, 87-88) observation that self-reflection as a source of self-concept is susceptible to change. They note that individual difference exists in self-monitoring, self-focusing can sometimes diminish the accuracy of self-reports (such as when people have to give reasons), self-monitoring can highlight self-discrepancies that may impact upon self-esteem, leading us to either adjust our behaviour to meet our standards or withdraw from the self-focusing situation, a phenomenon known as the self-awareness trap, although the universality of this is open to question since it is based on the assumption that self-esteem processes are universal, as we have seen.

3.5.4 Critical Thinking

Bennett (1993) suggests that non-judgmental stance is instrumental in facilitating the transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism but this view is controversial, so let us consider it in more detail. Sumner (2002: 632-3) recommended the sharpening of the critical faculty as the only antidote to ethnocentrism, defining criticism as the examination and test of propositions of any kind which are offered for acceptance, in order to find out whether they correspond to reality or not But this view represents the western logical thinking tradition de Bono criticised for relying on thought patterns based on dichotomous contradiction to impose a rigid falsity on perception in the search for truth in section 3.2.3 above.

Paul and Elder (2002: 135-141) track the historical roots of critical thinking back to the ancient Greeks. According to the "Online Etymology Dictionary", the word "critical" derives from the Greek "kritikos", which means to be able to make judgments. It is noted on the "Center for Critical Thinking" website that the word "critical" derives

etymologically from two Greek roots: "kriticos" (meaning discerning judgment) and "criterion" (meaning standards). Critical thinking thus implies the development of "discerning judgment based on standards".

More generally, however, the critical thinking movement seeks to enable people to govern their thoughts. Paul and Elder (2002: 14) argue that much of our thinking, left to itself, is biased, distorted, partial, uninformed or down-right prejudiced. This first-order thinking is spontaneous and non-reflective and may contain insight, prejudice, truth and error, indiscriminately combined. Indeed, the literature is replete with wide-ranging examples of cognitive distortions, many of which have affective underpinnings and behavioural consequences, such as focusing only on information that confirms our judgments, the use of various mental shortcuts in reasoning that lead to inaccurate conclusions, the hasty formation of premature impressions and snap judgments in social perception, all of which class as first-order thinking and affect our perceptions of other people, as recognised by Rathus (1985: 333), Brehm et al (1999: 121) and Gudykunst (1998: 100-169).

We have already considered the problem of variable perception and the importance of self-reflection in countering it. Indeed, Rathus (1985: 10) observes that Socrates' injunction "Know Thyself" remains a motto of psychological thought even today. Goleman (2004: 46-55) links this with emotional intelligence. Socrates claimed that we could not attain reliable self-knowledge through our senses because the senses do not exactly mirror reality and suggested that we should study ourselves through rational thought and introspection, an approach endorsed by Rathus (1985) because

contemporary psychology still differentiates between the stimuli that impact upon our sensory receptors and our frequently distorted perceptions and memories.

Paul and Elder (2002:14) contrast first-order thinking with second-order thinking, which is first-order thinking raised to the level of conscious realisation (analysed, assessed and reconstructed). The argument is that human beings tend to be governed by their thoughts but critical thinkers learn how to govern the thoughts. Paul and Elder (2002: 35) claim that this involves analysing our thinking, exposing and scrutinising its egocentric roots with a view to exposing inappropriate standards and replacing them with sound ones. By consciously examining our own thinking in this way, we can free ourselves from many of the traps of undisciplined and instinctive thought. Ultimately, we can take intellectual and emotional command of who we are, what we are, and the ends to which our lives are tending. This, in sum, is the aim of the critical thinking tradition as described by Paul and Elder.

Brehm et al (1999: 124) note that second-order thinking is also possible in social perception if we evaluate people more carefully and engage in more mindful judgment that results from the careful observation of others suspending judgment until more logical, analysis is complete. Brehm et al (1999) argue that people can be taught the rules of probability and logic to enhance social perception skills. To promote second-order thinking, the "Socratic questioning" technique described by Crain (2000: 166) in relation to Kohlberg's (1969) Stages of Moral Development can be used to question ends and objectives, the status and wording of questions, the sources of information and fact, the method/quality of information collection, the mode of judgment and reasoning used, the concepts that make reasoning possible, the assumptions that underpin concepts

in use, the implications that follow from their use, and the points of view that frame reasoning.

But let us recall that the implication in Kohlberg's model that harmony-based morality systems with relational emphasis are at a lower stage of moral development than those based on rationality were criticised, with Gilligan (1982) and Tronto (1987) emphasising the ethic of care as an alternative. See section 3.3.2 above. Let us also recall that moral development is thought to occur through cognitive dissonance, which has also been identified as playing a greater role in the independent self than in the interdependent self that may prioritise flexible (yet inconsistent) behaviour across situations to maintain harmonious group relations.

De Bono (1990: 166) also rejects the demand for consistency in the critical thinking tradition for its emphasis on analysis of closed conceptual systems, arguing that critical thinking alone cannot construct anything new from its parts. In analysis, a line must be drawn to enclose what is relevant, meaning that a decision needs to be taken as to what to include or exclude from the system before we then analyse the factors and the inter-relationships. But de Bono (1990: 177) argues that this is preceded and affected by perceptual limitation. He recommends the development of lateral thinking as a way around this, which involves making side-ways leaps between conceptual patterns, and looking between and around conceptual boundaries, to discover new ways of perceiving the world beyond that which we can already imagine in order to restructure our own patterns through conscious choice.

But let us recall that the provocation of cognitive conflict through Socratic questioning was only one way thought to encourage moral development. The other way was empathy, or perspective-taking, which also finds its place in contemporary critical thinking. Empathy is one of six intellectual traits recommended by Paul and Elder (2002: 26-7, 66) in the development of fair-mindedness saying that we cannot be fair to the thinking of others if we have not learned to put ourselves in their intellectual shoes. They argue that fair-minded judgment requires a good-faith effort to acquire accurate knowledge.

This implies the adoption of non-judgmental stance, since the projection of one's judgment onto the perspective of the other can only distort it. This is recognised by Edge (1993) who proposes a set of interaction norms based on Rogers' concepts of respect, empathy and honesty within which one person decides to be the speaker and the other person decides to be the understander. Respect is defined in terms of non-judgmental respect on the part of the understander by not only allowing the speaker to choose the subject of discussion but also respecting the speaker's thought on it, without judging them with reference to one's own knowledge or values. Empathy requires the understander to see things through the speaker's eyes as an act of acceptance and imagination that allows the understander to enter the world of the speaker. Honesty is defined in terms of the understander aiming to accept what the speaker says without evaluating it judging it in their own terms, and being committed to empathising with the speaker.

Whilst recognising that we are all sometimes subject to episodes of undisciplined or irrational thought, which would include the distortion of other people's perspectives by projecting one's own values upon them, Paul and Elder (2002: 66-68) note that critical thinking needs to be based on the universal intellectual values, or intellectual standards of clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness. As we have seen, such an approach can be brought into question by those espousing the ethic of care, for example. Other tensions are identified by Heine (2001) between the prioritisation of either consistency or flexibility, and by Lee (2001) between the prioritisation of either harmony or justice.

Paul and Elder (2002: 66-68) note that the development of intellectual traits requires the application of intellectual standards to thought itself and more specifically, to reasoning processes, or the transformation of information to reach conclusions. This position is a call for meta-cognitive awareness and control as discussed in section 3.5.3 but de Bono (1970: 25-36) argues that since the mind is a pattern-making and pattern-recognition system, and could always be organized better since its arrangement depends partly upon the order in which information was received, it needs to restructure itself constantly which, de Bono argues, is not possible through logical (vertical) thinking which simply works to relate accepted concepts not restructure them.

Thus, de Bono (1990: 196) recommends lateral thinking as a way of restructuring insight in new not old patterns. To this end, evaluation should be suspended temporarily to allow ideas to survive longer to breed further ideas, to allow other people to offer ideas that their own judgment would have rejected, to accept ideas for their stimulating

effect upon existing patterns or to allow ideas judged wrong within the current frame of reference to survive long enough to show that the current frame of reference needs altering. In sum, de Bono (1990: 97-8) argues that information processing cannot be switched off completely but that evaluation can be suspended to make way for other forms of explorative thought and that lateral thinking should supplement critical thinking.

3.5.5 Democratic Citizenship

Byram (1997: 43) added a fifth *savoir* to the model of Intercultural Communicative Competence to incorporate notions of democratic citizenship, critical cultural awareness and political education, drawing upon Doyé's (1993) application of Gagel's distinction between the cognitive, evaluative and action orientations to foreign language education. Gagel's evaluative orientation involves developing the ability to explain, mediate and use values to make political judgments, which Doyé and Byram apply to the foreign language classroom by encouraging learners to respect the norms of other societies and evaluate them in an unprejudiced way. But what does this mean?

Byram's position on the issue of evaluation changed significantly between 1994 and 2002. In Byram et al (1994: 29), Byram recognised that the "neutral empathetic construction of cultural norms is necessary to appreciate the relevant cultural construct" but also noted an uneasy uncertainty in the literature as to the nature of the cognitive dimension of empathy, and a general tendency for it to be explained in terms of feelings and sympathy, which was also recognised by Gudykunst (1998: 232-233). In Byram et al (1994: 30-31), Byram suggested that the two are interlinked and that whilst critical

thinking training may enhance empathetic skills, the desire to simplify and stereotype may frustrate the development of empathetic understanding But does the use of the word "desire" imply that Byram believes simplification and stereotyping tendencies are affective in nature? De Bono suggests they arise from the automatic activation of information patterns in the mind but we also saw that prejudice has affective dimensions. See sections 3.4.3 and 3.4.5 respectively. Perhaps Byram is right to suggest they overlap.

By 1997, Byram was rejecting the notion of empathy for being "uncritical and normative", claiming that accepting and understanding the viewpoints of others is insufficient. Still, Byram (1997: 44) recognised the tendency to evaluate cultures, often through comparison with one's own, and that attitudes grounded in prejudice can hinder interaction. He recommends that learners should be encouraged to respect and evaluate the norms of other societies in an unprejudiced way. But again, what does this mean? One possible interpretation is that evaluation can be combined with reflective self-awareness to control the impact of ethnocentric aspects of evaluation during interaction. But should the self be controlling itself or its impact upon interaction?

We saw in section 3.5.3 that lower-prejudice people may have personal standards that allow them to control prejudicial thought as it arises, which implies the possibility of controlling evaluative processes but in Byram et al (2002: 36), Byram absolutely rejected neutrality whilst recommending teachers to reflect on how their own stereotypes and prejudice affect teaching and learning. This is a call for increased meta-cognitive awareness but not a call for meta-cognitive control. But can the absolute rejection of neutrality release people from being trapped in their ethnocentric frames of

reference? De Bono (1990: 95) argues that suspension of judgment is the essential mechanism through which other frames of references can be fully appreciated through lateral thinking, which is hindered by the closed-minded analysis of closed conceptual system and evaluation which closes down possible avenues of thought by rejecting them.

But proponents of evaluative critical approaches imply that neutrality is impossible, which renders empathy impossible and is therefore representative of falsehood and deceit. De Bono argues that whilst it is impossible for information not to flow through the information processing system which normally involves evaluation, it is indeed possible to suspend it temporarily in order to explore other possibilities by selectively directing attention elsewhere in order to restructure one's conceptual framework from the inside by choice. Similarly, proponents of empathy, including proponents of critical thinking, such as Paul and Elder (2002: 26), recognise that empathy can be a cognitive move exercisable at will which implies that evaluation can be suspended at will. But is evaluation beyond conscious cognitive control?

Guilherme (2002: 179) reports that teachers themselves do not agree on whether the mere act of cultural comparison necessarily involves value-judgment or whether it can remain a neutral recognition of similarities and differences. Guilherme (2002: 152) recognises Fantini's (1999) warning that "comparisons are always rooted in the perspective of the onlooker", and therefore they always involve some kind of judgment. But she also suggests that since this entails biased interpretations, the first step in overcoming such conditioned perceptions of other cultures is becoming critically aware of our own cultural and personal standpoints, and then perhaps, as Fantini (1999)

suggests, by means of suspending judgment. This implies that whilst Guilherme does not necessarily agree, she does recognise Fantini's position.

Doyé (1992) appears to recognise that both are possible and educationally desirable. In Byram (1997: 43) and Byram and Guilherme (2000: 74), Byram drew upon Doyé for support of judgmental stance but for his part, Doyé (1992) also linked perspective-taking, or empathy which involves non-judgmental stance, with Byram's (1989b) concept of tertiary socialisation through Piaget and Kohlberg's models of cognitive and moral development, splitting tertiary socialisation into cognitive, moral and behavioural socialisation. Within cognitive socialisation, Doyé (1992) highlighted the role of perspective-taking in equilibration and multi-perspective education, which equates with the ability to work with multiple-mental models. Rest et al (1999) discuss this further.

Within moral development, Doyé (1992) noted that at the post-conventional level of Kohlberg's model, judgment is made with reference to universal principles rather than to one's own social norms, interpreting this as the unbiased registering of the representations of others rather than disqualifying them as being strange or either inferior or superior to one's own. Unbiased registering seems to suggest non-judgmental stance, which may shed light on Doyé's concept of unprejudiced evaluation. Indeed, the post-conventional stages of Kohlberg's model succeed the earlier stages, of which empathy (or perspective-taking) is one, which implies that non-judgmental stance has a place within Kohlberg's model. Crain (2000: 155-156) noted that both perspective-taking and Socratic questioning may encourage moral development.

Empathy and fairness were also linked in the final stage of Kohlberg's post-conventional level in relation to the functioning of justice and democracy, and situations can be considered from many different viewpoints according to Crain (1985: 24). Kohlberg thus stresses not only the ability to be impartial but also that everyone is given full and equal respect. This resonates with Bennett's (1993) contextual evaluation, which involves evaluation from a range of perspectives. Thus, empathy, evaluation and its suspension though impartiality all find their place in Kohlberg's model.

Regarding the role of the teacher, Byram (1997: 44) suggests that teachers should encourage students to judge by making the basis for their evaluation explicit before justifying it, but should not try to change the student values. When assessing *savoir être*, Byram (1997: 85, 92) suggests that learner choice of other evaluations of phenomena in their own society, or value shift, could count as evidence of competence under the third teaching objective: "the willingness to question the values and presuppositions in cultural practices and products in one's own environment". Insofar as Byram (1997: 44) explicitly encourages teachers not to deliberately try to change student values, he supports complete freedom of value choice as part of democracy. This is a slightly softer approach to democratic citizenship than Guilherme (2002: 207) who endorses Osler and Starkey's (1996) position that all teachers should deliberately set out to bring student values into line with "universal" values such as human rights.

But the line I have drawn between these authors is fine indeed and Byram has started to cross it more recently. In Byram and Guilherme (2000: 76), he does recognise "the interaction between human rights education and foreign language education can be

enriching for both". Indeed, despite his 1997 claim that teachers should not deliberately

try to change student values, he went on to recognise and possibly endorse the positions

of Guilherme, Osler and Starkey in 2000 when he claimed that "human rights may

provide foreign-language and culture education with culture-universals, basic principles,

and values that traverse cultures" suggesting teachers might refer to documents

produced by international organisations (Byram and Guilherme, 2000: 70), precisely as

advocated by Osler and Starkey (1996). Whilst the use of the word "might" seems to

imply possibility, the use of the word "may" could imply the giving of permission and

therefore endorsement. It is a fine line to tread.

Contrast this with Byram's earlier position (1997: 44) where, recognising

Starkey's (1995) support of human rights and peace education as the international

standpoint, Byram claimed that "taking international standards of human rights as a

base-line for evaluation is not of course a ready-made answer to the question of what

standard should, or could be recommended, since interpretations of human rights differ".

At that point, Byram (1997: 44) recognised it as nothing more than a possible "starting

point" for some teachers, framing the discussion more in the negative.

Guilherme (2002: 207) suggests that foreign language and culture education, and

corresponding teacher development programmes, should consider Human Rights

Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship as permanent references (Byram &

Guilherme, 2000). According to Kumar (1993: 1982), this humanistic approach to

values education recognises that the main source of strife, conflict and prejudices and

tensions among nations is often rooted in value systems that lack a broad humanistic

orientation. For this reason, the humanistic approach to values education encourages value analysis with a view to promoting value change that recognises the indivisibility of common human interests.

Guilherme (2002: 166) links Byram's (1989b) concept of "tertiary socialisation" with democratic citizenship recommending teachers to nurture "critical cultural awareness" in learners, a term originating in Byram et al (1994), which parallels Fairclough's (1992) discussion of critical language awareness. Guilherme (2002: 166) seeks to combine foreign language education, human rights education and democratic citizenship education taking a multi-disciplinary approach. Guilherme (2002: 137-138) rejects Damen's (1987) emphasis on self-awareness, empathy, awareness and acceptance of diversity, tolerance and lack of ethnocentrism as being too cautious for rigorous critical pedagogy but recognises the critical nature of some tasks recommended by Damen (1987: 20) such as "consider the difficulty of discussing "American" culture. Whose culture? What culture?" Guilherme does not, however, recognise the possible role of empathy or non-judgmental stance.

Similarly, Guilherme (2002: 139) rejects Robinson's (1988) conception of culture learning as subjective involvement with another culture that leads to a synthesis of both cultures where "differences between people will be decreased" for its underlying harmonious and consensus-driven idea of intercultural relations and lack of criticality. But as we saw in section 3.2.5, Heine (2001) notes that East Asian interdependent relational selves may prioritise harmony. We also saw that the implication that harmony-based social systems are at a lower stage of moral development than

rationality-based democratic ones opened Kohlberg's stages of Moral Development up to criticism for being too western in its approach. This issue will be revisited with specific reference to views of citizenship in East Asia, as we shall see.

Guilherme (2002: 141-144) validates (a) Byram's (1997) evaluative approach towards other cultures to allow the conscious control of biased interpretation because value-free interpretation is unlikely to happen and (b) his rejection of empathy on the grounds that learners are simply expected to accept and understand the other viewpoint rather than taking a critical, analytical stance. Further, Guilherme (2002: 163) endorses Soysal's (1998) post-modern description of citizenship based on "personhood" rather than on "nationhood" which conceives of individuals and societies as being culturally complex and essentially fragmented with permeable boundaries.

An important theme emerging from this view of citizenship is the deliberate and dynamic deconstruction and reconstruction of self and society. Guilherme (2002: 162-165) notes Mouffe's (1992) position that identities must be constantly deconstructed and reconstructed giving rise to citizenship as a form of constructed identification. Thus, the development of critical cultural awareness in citizenship education through foreign language education carries profound implications for the identities of both teacher and learner. The deliberate reconstruction of self necessarily involves the deliberate reconstruction of one's information and conceptual frameworks. Whilst Guilherme (2002: 220) recognises the cognitive implications of her argument laying out some cognitive operations in a critical cycle, notions such as non-judgmental stance, empathy,

synthesis and creation are excluded although they may clearly play a role in putting analysed parts back together in new forms during reconstruction.

Let me summarise the discussion so far. I started by noting that Byram added critical cultural awareness to the Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence as a fifth *savoir*, which clearly advocated that learners should adopt a judgmental stance with regard to difference. But I also noted Byram's gradual shift in this direction from 1994 onwards contrasting it with de Bono's view that analysis and evaluation keeps people trapped within closed conceptual systems. Noting that on the one hand, de Bono recognises both the viability and the need to temporary adoption of non-judgmental stance to appreciate new ways of thinking, I also noted that other authors such as Byram and Guilherme reject the very viability of non-judgmental stance. But I also pointed out that yet other authors such as Paul and Elder, Kohlberg and Doyé recognise the viability and desirability of both. This was the cluster of issues I addressed in this section before recognising that authors such as Guilherme clearly advocate the deliberate promotion through foreign language education of certain values. Some inconsistency was noted in Guilherme's analysis and in particular, the tension between her position and those that advocate social harmony was highlighted.

It was also noted above that Byram, Guilherme and other authors sometimes recommend teacher reference to international agreements, so let us consider what they have to say on some of the issues raised above. The UNESCO Delors (1996) report recognises the importance of fostering logical thinking, innovation (and by implication creative and/or lateral thinking) and empathy, in support of conceptualisations of citizenship based on personhood under "learning to be", which coincidentally parallels

Byram and Zarate's (1997) notion of *savoir être*, which was incorporated into the Common European Framework of Reference (Byram and Guilherme, 2000: 66) hereafter referred to as CEFR.

Similarly, the UNESCO Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy (1995) recognises the importance of nurturing personal identities that are oriented towards understanding and respecting each other so they can negotiate on an equal footing, with a view to seeking common ground. Also, it states specifically that education must cultivate in citizens the ability to make informed choices, basing their judgments and actions not only on the analysis of present situations but also on the vision of a preferred future which is broadly in accord with critical approaches. This clearly advocates the adoption of a judgmental stance geared towards the creation of a better future, however one sees that, which encourages the conscious design and creation of new forms of human society, which is generative in nature. How is this issue approached by the authors referred to above?

Guilherme (2002: 156) endorses Foucault's (1972) description of power relations as enabling and generative of cultural production but fails to recognise Damen's (1987) synthetic, dynamic level as providing the potential for critical cultural transformation. She does not, either, explore the concept of generative cultural production from a cognitive point view (Guilherme, 2002: 137-138). Nor does Byram. But de Bono (1990: 255) not only suggests that lateral thinking supports the development of democratic society but that neutrality, not evaluation, is the cognitive mechanism through which self-transformation occurs. Self and society can be improved upon through the

temporary suspension of evaluation because new options are generated by considering phenomena in new ways unconstrained by existing conceptual frameworks that can be subject to analysis as they are.

Guilherme (2002: 139-141) does, however, recognise the generative aspect of cultural production in Kramsch's (1993, 1998) model which emphasises the importance of understanding others, making yourself understood and understanding yourself. Within this approach, the focus is placed upon dialogue and the production of meaning across cultures that can constitute a third perspective where culture is dialogically created through discourse. Guilherme (2002: 139-141) supports Kramsch's recognition of the importance of the socio-cultural context of the student, of the school and the classroom cultures, and the role of language in changing people's perceptions and visions but criticises the lack of explicit social and political commitment.

This is where Guilherme (2002: 144-146) supports Pennycook's (1994) call for integrating critical pedagogy with English language education to address identity problems rooted in post-colonial power relations that not only empowers the post-colonised self but also develops a decentred and redefined post-colonising self seeking new identity within new. This view is echoed by Canagarajah (1999) who suggests that a critical approach to foreign language teaching can protect learners from cultural imperialism and the hegemony of the English language.

Thus, Guilherme in particular relates foreign language education to the regeneration of both self and society but visions of the good life may clearly vary both personally and culturally, so cultural coordination is needed. Guilherme (2002: 162)

also recommends teachers to pay attention to culturally variable notions of citizenship referring to contradictory worldviews and dichotomous concepts including, for example, the defence of the national perspective, more multi-cultural perspectives, individual and communitarian points of view, which differ in the prioritisation of individual or collective interests and the vertical or horizontal arrangement of relationship, drawing upon Byram (1996: 65).

Eastern and western values, including political values, are often seen as being diametrically opposed (Matsuda et al, 2001) but Lee (2001) rejects this dichotomy. Indeed, a conceptual shift is evident in the literature that is in the process of rejecting the individualim/collectivism dichotomy by relabelling and reclarifying the terms to clarify conceptual distinctions that are more consistent of the views of "collectivist" value-holders. Let us recall the section 3.2.5 discussion in which we considered Heine's (2001) five distinctions between independent and interdependent selves.

Consistent with Heine's recognition of the importance of harmony to the interdependent self under "relation of self to other", Lee (2001) describes the concept of relation from the Confucian tradition in terms of the interaction between the individual and the collectivity which renders them mutually dependent. Within this worldview, individuals are conceived of as active beings whose activity within the collectivity even defines it. The conceptual similarity between Lee's (2001) "relational being" and Heine's (2001) "interdependent self" is clear. Consistent with Heine's recognition of how the interdependent self likes to bring itself into line with an essentially unchanging outside world, Lee (2001) notes that one feature of Eastern democracy is that despite the

presence of a representative democratic system, many Asian countries are characterised by a so-called "one-party dominant democracy", which Lee (2001) claims reflects a general wish for continuation in the relationship between ruler and ruled unless it becomes utterly unacceptable.

Lee (2001) also notes that the tendency to maintain the status quo is so high that people tend to support the incumbent, and that even a dictatorship can be acceptable to the public, as long as the dictator is benevolent. Lee (2001) claims that the desire to maintain harmonious human relationships is more meaningful than working towards an ideal state, which explains why many East Asians are willing to put up with soft authoritarianism as a means of maintaining harmony, which is a very significant goal or philosophy in East Asian social life. This is the extent of the overlap that is to be found between Heine and Lee's discussion of what is often described as collectivist culture, but it is clear that the distinctions they are both making not only underpin views of citizenship but also run counter to the view of society preferred by proponents of critical approaches to democratic citizenship. From this discussion, we can see that if future society is to be generated by people from both east and west, the relative prioritisation of social harmony need to be considered from a political, as well as a personal, standpoint.

3.5.6 Summary

Bennett claims that the ethnorelative stages of the development of intercultural sensitivity involve the elaboration and generation of cognitive categories to accommodate cultural difference, rather than just preserving existing categories. Even

though Bennett recognises language and worldview are integrally linked, discussion of the role of language in the development of intercultural sensitivity is under-developed.

With regard to evaluation, a number of points deserve highlighting. Bennett suggests that in the early stages of ethnorelativism, evaluation can be non-ethnocentric insofar as the standards of the native culture are not applied, which is coupled with an understanding that behaviour can only be understood in context. In later stages, Bennett suggests that evaluation may succeed consideration of a range of cultural perspectives, which is preceded by non-judgmental stance but may result in the paralysis of judgment.

With regard to perspective-taking (empathy), there is definitional variation in the literature. The term empathy may be defined in cognitive, affective and/or behavioural terms but Bennett's usage accords with that found in Rogers' person-centred therapy. This involves the temporary closure of analytical, evaluative and critical thought but differs from the adoption of non-judgmental stance in verbal communicative behaviour whereby one does not verbalise evaluation. The extent to which evaluations are verbalised may be culturally variable.

With regard to meta-cognitive awareness and control, the self-reflective observation of inner states is thought to generally facilitate foreign language learning by helping learners to take strategic control of their own thought processes. Further, exposure to cultural difference can bring the largely unconscious complex of one's own worldview to the fore. With the development of meta-cognitive awareness comes the

possibility of control our one's cognitive and affective response to cultural difference as it happens.

Control may be gained not only over one's own cognitive processes and biases but also over one's affective reactions to cultural difference, limit their impact upon intercultural communication, but individual difference may exist. Such notions characterise critical thinking as first-order thinking is raised to the level of second-order thinking. Whilst critical thinking is evaluative, it may involve engaging in more mindful judgment that results from the careful observation of others suspending judgment until more logical, analysis is complete.

This may involve Socratic questioning, which may in turn be criticised for gender and culture bias in its implication that rationality-based morality systems represent a higher stage of development that those based on relational harmony and interdependence. Similarly, the critical thinking approach is criticised for western bias in its reliance on thought patterns based on false dichotomy, contradiction, dissonance and the demand for consistency, none of which can be considered universal. Arguing that critical thinking alone cannot construct anything new from its parts, de Bono argues that lateral thinking needs to be developed to discover new ways of perceiving the world to restructure our own patterns through conscious choice, not only creating new meaning as Bennett suggests but generating new language, which currently gives inadequate expression to the possible range of human perception. Empathy is one way in which this can occur, although writers such as Byram have come to reject it in

foreign language education partly because of underlying disagreement about what the ultimate goals of education should be.

The ideal end-state of Bennett's model is reached as existing worldview gives way to the internalisation of other cultural frames of reference through empathy and identity itself is transformed. Bennett suggests that such people are best-placed to mediate cross-culturally but there are other views. Common to most critical approaches is the rejection of empathy and harmony as desirable societal values and an acceptance of the struggle for social justice. Critical approaches also view the person as an agent of change in a malleable world, which can be distinguished from the ideal of personhood in East Asia where the malleable self prefers to align itself with the environment. Such philosophical differences remain unresolved.

3.5.7 Learning Objectives

Here, I will identify the possible learning objectives implied by section 3.5. Firstly, teachers can help learners perform the cognitive move of intellectual empathy by suspending analysis and evaluation of cultural difference from within their own frame of reference to understand its in its own context and describe it accurately, following Bennett, Rogers, Edge, Paul and Elder. Learners can adopt non-judgmental stance in interaction as surface communicative behaviour to allow another person's cultural perspective to unfold, following Ruben and de Bono.

Secondly, teachers can help learners to raise their first order-thinking up for conscious analysis, evaluation and reconstruction, suspending evaluation until after

analysis to promote more mindful judgment as a kind of second-order thinking, following Paul and Elder. Alternatively, teachers may take the view that suspension of evaluation is impossible instead encouraging evaluation accompanied by the attentive monitoring of both cognitive and affective processes by learners in order to take control of them, following Brislin and Goleman.

On the one hand, teachers can help learners develop the ability to construct other worldviews and evaluate situations from a range of cultural perspectives following Bennett. But if they take the view that learners should be encouraged to evaluate with reference to their own values and to justify their judgment to support the development of democratic society, teachers can help learners to evaluate with reference to their own values and to justify with reasons to support democracy, following Byram's guidelines. But if teachers take the view that learners should also align their values with specific universal values, they may require learners to realign their values demonstrating active political and social commitment, following Guilherme. These are the learning objectives implied by this section. See Appendix 1 for the learning objectives that were selected as the basis for course design.

3.6 Summary

The general research question was stated as follows:

- How should teachers manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education?

The specific research question that guided the chapter 3 literature analysis was stated as follows:

- What learning objectives can and should be set within teaching approaches which deal with the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education and why?

In the literature analysis, I explored the academic literature and considered my research question in depth from within a variety of theoretical perspectives. At the end of each summary section, I identified possible learning objectives that could be extracted from the literature under review. A wide range of objectives was identified but my research question survived the literature analysis insofar as perspectives upon the approaches, their related learning objectives and theoretical explanations and justifications sometimes conflicted with each other, which left me uncertain as to how to manage the evaluation of cultural difference in my own classes in practice. So I wanted to research these issues in practice to bring pedagogical experience to bear upon this rather uneven and conflicting theoretical ground in an attempt to resolve the outstanding issues to some extent. As stated in the chapter 1 prologue, the three teaching approaches ultimately selected were as follows and the reader can turn to Appendix 1 to see the learning objectives that were ultimately selected as the basis for course design.

The Three Teaching Approaches

- Course 1 (following Byram):

- o *Students should focus their attention squarely back on the self to develop critical awareness of their own evaluative processes and biases to control them, but teachers should not try to change student values.*

- Course 2 (following Bennett):

  - o *Students should adopt non-judgmental stance and engage in intellectual empathy to take the perspective of others.*

- Course 3 (following Guilherme):

  - o *Teachers should basically follow the course 1 approach but should also aim to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights promoting social justice, changing them if necessary.*

4. Research Methods

4.1 Introduction

Before discussing research design in detail, I will review key points from previous sections and identify threads of discussion that will be drawn together later. In the chapter 1 prologue, I considered how personal experience had generated and guided the development of my research interest. In chapter 2, I identified a range of contextual constraints upon my research activity in my own particular teaching situation. In the chapter 3 literature analysis, I considered the kinds of teaching approaches that can and should be taken towards the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education drawing together a range of theoretical explanations, reasons and justifications for the different approaches.

4.2 Operationalisation of Research Questions

4.2.1 Utility, Replicability and Generalisability

To operationalise the research question, I needed to break it down into specific questions that could be answered in concrete terms. Utility, replicability and generalisability, which McDonough and McDonough (1997: 65-67) recognise as being important features of good research, were key considerations. With regard to utility, I wanted to conduct research that would not only equip me to deal better with the problematic issue at hand but would also benefit other teachers in similar situations. Thus, I ultimately wanted to produce research findings that would be readily applicable to future and similar contexts. With regard to replicability, I wanted to design a piece of research that could be readily replicated or modified, in whole or in part, by other

teachers both to increase the practical utility of my own research and to open it up to tests of reliability. These two issues were both closely related to the issue of generalisability. I wanted to produce research findings that would not only shed light on my own teaching context with all of its particularities but which would also uncover more generic factors that would support more general statements about teaching situations.

In the long run, then, the intended recipient of the research was the teaching community, myself included, and whilst this community exerted no power over the research per se, the research design needed to be located in an area where my everyday work as a teacher might reasonably be thought to overlap with those of others. To identify the best location for the research to be conducted, I looked beyond my own individual teaching circumstances to what McDonough and Shaw (1993: 3) call "the shared framework", which can be thought of as a professional common core of teaching work which comprises both the criteria upon which decisions about language teaching are made and the pedagogic principles according to which materials and methods are designed.

To operationalise the research question, I drew upon McDonough and Shaw's (1993) conceptualisation of the typical stages of planning a language program (see diagram 6 below) as a framework within which to relate contextual factors (which I considered in depth in chapter 2 with reference to my own teaching situation) and the implementation of goals (which would be informed by the theoretical discussion in chapter 3) through syllabus construction (carried through to the level of learning

objectives for individual tasks), materials design and classroom methods. More specifically, I situated my research project within the red circle that appears in diagram 6 below, and which encapsulates the implementation of goals, syllabus construction, materials and classroom methods. I thus brought a conceptual and practical framework into play, centred on the concept of "syllabus", within which to operationalise my research questions.

Diagram 6: The Typical Stages of Planning a Language Programme
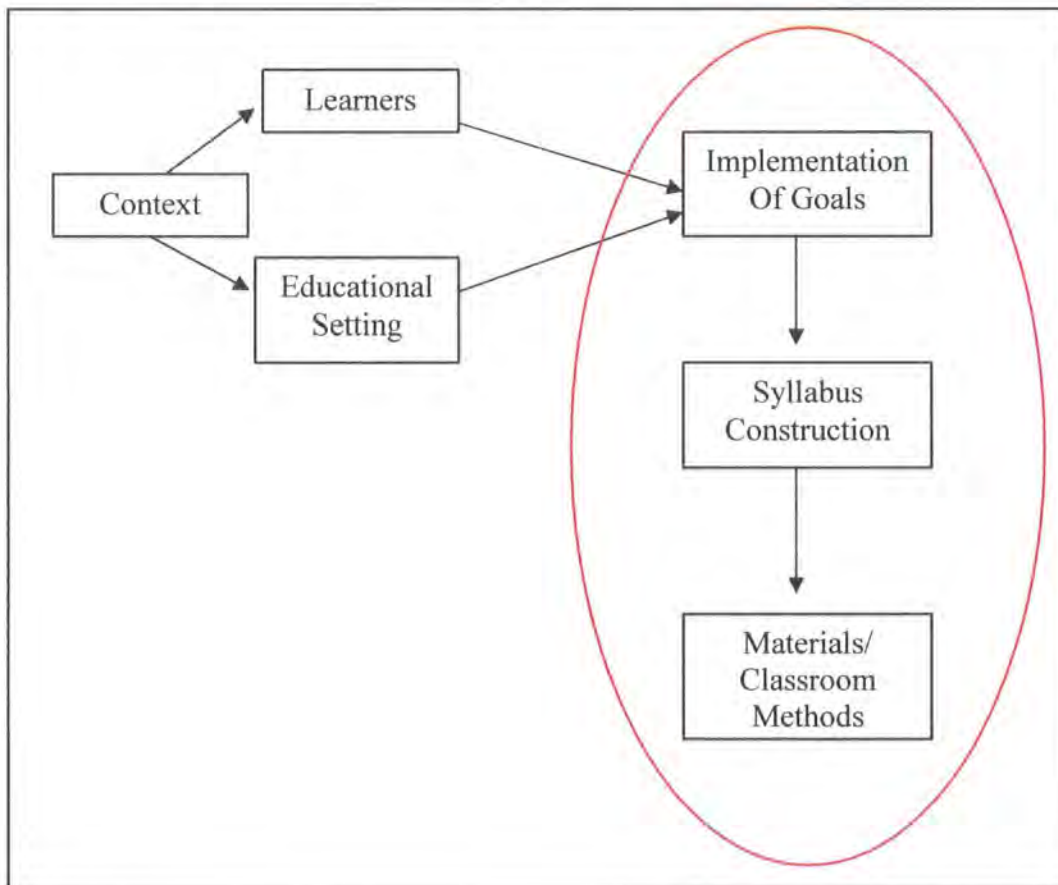
McDonough and Shaw (1993: 5).

This would then be carried through to the micro-level by stating individual learning objectives specifically enough that data could later be analysed to ascertain the

extent to which they had been achieved. This would allow me to then work back from the learning objectives to answer the research questions.

4.2.2 Construct Validity

Next, I will explain how I operationalised the general research question within the conceptual and practical framework described above with reference to McDonough and Shaw's definition of syllabus and the fundamental research issue of construct validity. McDonough and Shaw (1993: 13) define a syllabus as "the overall organizing principle for what is to be taught and learned...a general statement as to the pedagogical arrangement of learning content". They draw on Richards and Rogers (1986) to illustrate the relationship between theory, practice and syllabus in terms of the three planning stages of approach, design and procedure as follows:

Approach

- The most general level of syllabus design that refers to the views and beliefs or theories upon which planning is based

Design

- Where the principles of the first level are converted into the more practical aspects of syllabuses and instructional materials

Procedure

- The set of teaching techniques and classroom management that are used during the implementation of syllabus and materials

How did this help me operationalise the research question? In the literature analysis, I had derived alternative sets of learning objectives from the wide range of theories explored in the literature analysis that could be used as theoretical foundations upon which to base and plan different courses towards the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education. This was all relevant to the approach stage described above.

My general research aim was to investigate the kinds of learning objectives that could and should be set within three teaching approaches towards the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education from a pedagogical standpoint. Having addressed the approach stage in the literature analysis, I decided to work firstly within Richards and Rogers' "design" stage to convert the principles of the "approach" level into syllabuses of practical use and instructional materials. Secondly, I would work within Richards and Rogers' "procedure" stage to instruct students in class through the use of teaching and classroom management.

In other words, I would first design a set of three theory-driven syllabuses to try out each of the different approaches and then implement them in practice. Having decided where to locate the research in practical terms, I then needed to break down the general research question into more specific questions that could be answered in concrete terms after the courses had been implemented. I chose three specific research questions that would give me space to analyse the extent to which each approach had met its own objectives as well as to evaluate the viability and desirability of those objectives. Let me give an example from the learning objectives presented in Appendix

1. In week 10, students in each of the three courses were exploring value difference. Having identified points of value difference between individual students in earlier weeks, I paired them up so they could discuss the value difference and imagine some kind of conflict the value difference may cause. Since this required each student to negotiate value difference with another Japanese student, the negotiation of value difference was stated as a core course learning objective. It appears in the grey box in table 1 below as task 10.1 (in the course materials) and as learning objective (LO) 10.1.1. After students had presented their dialogues to the class, other students were asked to respond in course-specific ways. The learning objectives in the orange boxes were common to courses 1 and 3. The learning objective in the yellow box was particular to course 1. The learning objectives in the green boxes were particular to course 2. The learning objective in the red box was particular to course 3.

Table 1: Learning Objective Sample to Illustrate Research Question Operationalisation

WEEK 10				
TASK No.	LO Code	TASK		
		COURSE 1	COURSE 2	COURSE 3
10.1	10.1.1	Present: Negotiate: Value Difference: With Other Japanese		
10.2	10.2.1	Critical Evaluation: Values: Other Japanese: Refer to Own	Critical Evaluation Values: Target Japanese: Refer to Own	Critical Evaluation Values: Other Japanese: Refer to Own
Week 10 Homework 1	10.3.1	Critical Evaluation: Values: Own	Critical Evaluation Values: Own: Refer to Target	Critical Evaluation Values: Own: Refer to Target Values

Data analysis would later allow me to establish the extent to which each of the individual learning objectives had been met, which would in turn allow me to comment upon the overall success of each of the three teaching approaches, and reflect upon their viability and desirability. It seemed important to consider the issue of viability since

Byram, Guilherme and other authors rejected the viability of empathy. It also seemed important to consider the issue of desirability because social aims and ideals clearly vary between cultures (and probably individual authors) as we saw in section 3.2.5 of the literature analysis in relation to the independent and interdependent selves, for example. The final set of research questions upon which to base research are listed below (running from general to specific).Answering the specific questions in relation to the data would feed back into the general research question helping me to answer it. This is how I operationalised the research question in practice.

General Research Question:

- How should teachers manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education?

Specific Research Questions:

- What learning objectives can and should be set within teaching approaches dealing with the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education and why?

    o *How far did each approach meet its own objectives?*

    o *How far are the objectives viable?*

    o *How far is the meeting of objectives desirable and why?*

The question of whether or not these research questions were sufficiently focused was a question of construct validity. According to Cohen and Manion (2000: 110),

construct validity concerns the extent to which the researcher's understanding of the operationalised forms of the construct corresponds to what is generally agreed as being the construct. To establish this, I needed to check my construction of the research issue agrees with other constructions of the issue. To this end, I followed Cohen et al's recommendation rooting my construction of the issue in a wide literature search teasing out the meaning of the construct and its constituent elements, paying attention to counter-arguments.

Thus, with regard to the issue of the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education, I can say that whilst the literature suggests a wide range of possible learning objectives, their viability and desirability are open to question for different reasons. The research questions, then, are carefully constructed to recognise that whilst it is possible to set a wide range of learning objectives (a) some of them may be impossible to meet, and (b) even if they can be met, they may not be desirable.

Further, whilst the literature analysis investigated the extent to which the existing literature could already provide answers to the general research question stated above, the specific research questions listed above signify a shift in emphasis as the spotlight is moved from the abstract, theoretical realm into the classroom to uncover more pedagogical explanations and justifications for setting certain kinds of learning objectives in class. Taking this clear step from theory to practice would later allow me to refer back to the original theory driving the research to compare and contrast the data with it. This would hopefully bring the weight of pedagogical practice to bear upon the more abstract and theoretical ground to help me resolve outstanding issues.

Having explained how I operationalised the research questions with reference to the fundamental research issues of utility, replicability, generalisability and construct validity, I will now go on to explain why I chose the methodology of action research in my research design.

4.3 Reasons for Choosing Action Research

4.3.1 Natural Fit

The operationalisation of my research question as described in section 4.2.1 naturally pointed to action research as being the most appropriate methodology for this research project. In this section, I will outline the reasons why. Firstly, I will make explicit the underlying flow of research activity implied by the previous section with reference to diagram 7 below, where it can be seen that research activity was envisaged as consisting of theory-driven **action**, or intervention, in classroom planning and activity at the stages of design and procedure, accompanied and followed by **reflection** that would ultimately impact back on the original theory and back on itself at the levels of design and procedure to affect theory and shift the course of future practice in new and unpredictable directions.

In diagram 7 below, this intended flow of energy is depicted in red and also impacts upon learners. Similar conceptualisations of research that bring educational theory and teaching practice to bear upon each other are found in the kinds of action research models put forward by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), Elliott (1991), Ebutt (1985) and McKernan (1996), which are juxtaposed for easy comparison in Hopkins (2002: 42-55). Of those models, Ebbutt's model (Hopkins, 2002: 48) closely resembles

my emerging research design insofar as it allows for the fact that revisions may be made to the original general idea or the plan that was implemented and a number of developmental routes are possible after research.

A superficial comparison of diagrams 7 and 8 shows there is a natural fit between my research approach and action research but that said, I share Hopkins' view that whilst these kinds of models generally provide good guidelines for research, they should not be taken too prescriptively and teachers should allow themselves some freedom of movement in design. For me, such models can only serve as a starting point or an initial guide to action which accords with Hopkins' (2002) view:

> Unfortunately, models and frameworks cannot mirror reality: they are one individual's interpretation of reality. Consequently, they impose upon the user a pre-specified analysis of a process that the user may quite rightly interpret differently. At best, they provide a starting point, an initial guide to action. At worst, they trap the practitioners within a set of assumptions that bear little relationship to their reality and, consequently, constrain their freedom of action.
>
> Hopkins (2002: 50).

Further, more detailed definition and understanding of the underlying tenets of action research is required to demonstrate the reasons why it provided a suitable research methodology in my case. I will address these issues in the next three sections with reference to the following themes:

- The transformation of knowledge through action and reflection

- The mutual transformation of theory and practice

- Action research as critical praxis

Diagram 7: Intended Flow Of Research Activity

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

What [approaches] can and should be taken towards the evaluation of cultural difference in foreign language education and why?

Theoretical analysis gave rise to sets of learning objectives upon which to base syllabus planning.

3. How far is the meeting of objectives desirable and why?

[Design]

2. How far are the objectives viable and why?

Convert learning objectives to syllabus for practical application and instructional materials

1. How far did each approach meet its own objectives and why?

[Procedure]

Implement in the classroom through teaching techniques and classroom management

LEARNERS

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Diagram 8: Ebbutt's Action Research Model
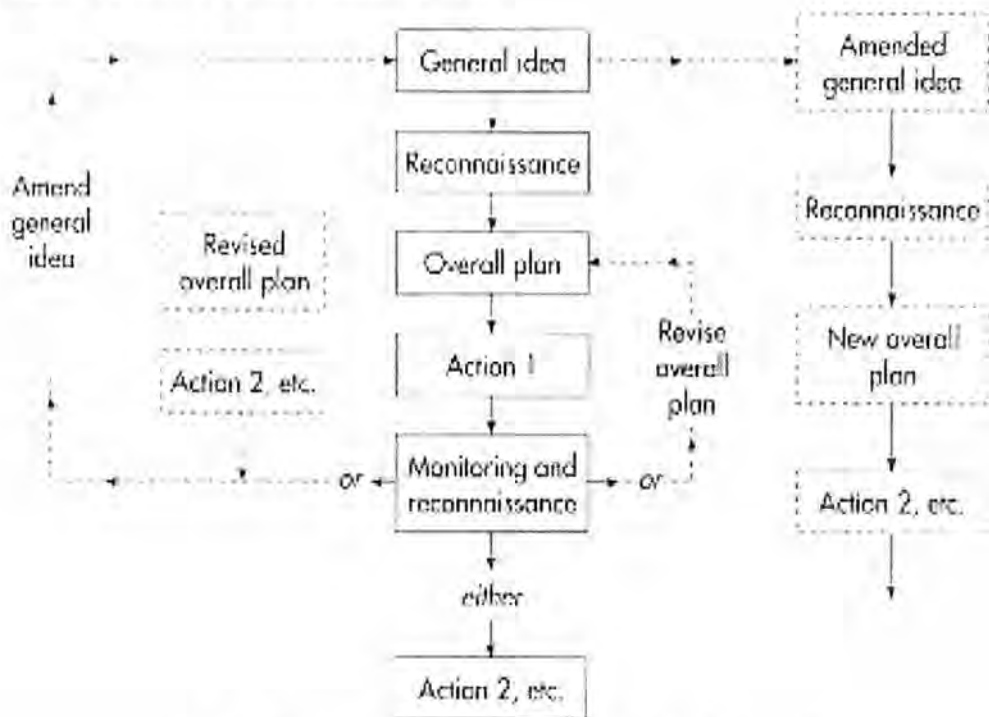
Idealized representation of the process of action research

Hopkins (2002: 48).

4.3.2 Transformation of Knowledge: Action and Reflection

Please note that I highlighted the terms "action" and "reflection" in bold in section 4.3.1. Let us consider the relationship between them. In their discussion of the teacher researcher, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 22-23) note how Schon (1983) amalgamated these seemingly contradictory terms through the concepts of "reflection in action" and "the reflective practitioner", which provide principled foundations for teacher initiated research. McDonough and McDonough (1997: 23) suggest that the strength of Schon's approach lies in the fact that the knowledge base of teachers is closely linked to everyday action and that this kind of tacit knowing-in-action can be converted into a more explicit form of reflection-in-action.

In my case, my knowledge base consisted not only of knowledge related to everyday teaching practice but also a whole host of theories that I had explored in the literature analysis but had never related to teaching activity. Essentially, as a teacher, I was seeking to enrich my abstract forms of theoretical knowledge through action to sensitise myself to the ways in which classroom dynamics might be explained in terms of theoretical principles, and to convert what might otherwise be left to the realms of teaching intuition into more theoretically enriched and principled forms of professional insight. Thus, the transformation of knowledge and improvement of practice through reflection-in-action by me, as a researcher working in isolation, were important dimensions of my emergent research design. This is consistent with the following definition of action research:

Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of those practices, and (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out. It is most rationally empowering when undertaken by participants collaboratively, though it is often undertaken by individuals...

Hopkins (2002: 43) on Kemmis (1983).

4.3.3 The Mutual Transformation of Theory and Practice

However, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 23) rightly note that reflection is only the basis for research and is not the research itself. The general principles pertaining to reflection-in-action need to be translated into viable research methodology that supports the kind of rigorous self-reflective enquiry hinted at in Kemmis' (1983) definition of action research above. Action research:

combines a substantive act with a research procedure; it is action disciplined by enquiry, a personal attempt at understanding while engaged in a process of improvement and reform.

Hopkins (2002: 42).

In my case, however, my research would not solely be aimed at transforming the state of my own knowledge and improving my own and other teachers' practice, although it would attempt to do both. It would ultimately refer theory-driven practice back to the theory itself to provide concrete examples from practice that may either validate or invalidate various conflicting claims I had identified in the literature analysis. This research priority corresponds more closely to a different definition of action research provided by Hopkins (2002) discussing Elliott (1991):

Action research might be defined as *"the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it"*. It aims to feed practical judgement in concrete situations, and the validity of the "theories" or hypotheses it generates depends not so much on "scientific" tests of truth, as on their usefulness in helping people to act more intelligently and skilfully. In action research, "theories" are not validated independently and then applied to practice. They are validated through practice.

Hopkins (2002: 43).

4.3.4 Action Research as Critical Praxis

To unravel the concept of action research a little further, let me pick up on the word "justice", which featured in Kemmis' (1983) definition of action research above. Hopkins (2002: 44) notes that action research has recently come to be seen as a methodology through which the aspirations of critical theory, which grew out of the Frankfurt School of philosophy and in particular from the writings of Habermas, might be realised. This is also recognised by Cohen et al (2000: 227) who note that this

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philosophical stance towards action research, taken by writers such as Carr and Kemmis

(1986), suggests that self-reflective forms of enquiry by participants in context should

aim to "improve understanding of their practices in context with a view to maximising

social justice". Consider Kemmis and McTaggart's (1992) definition of action research:

> Action research is concerned equally with changing *individuals*, on the one hand,
> and, on the other, the culture of the groups, institutions and societies to which they
> belong. The culture of a group can be defined in terms of the characteristic
> substance and forms of the language and discourses, activities and practices, and
> social relationships and organization which constitute the interactions of the group.
>
> Cohen et al (2000: 227).

At this stage, let me link some threads of discussion related to research

methodology with threads of discussion pursued in the chapter 3 literature analysis. The

view of action research as critical praxis outlined by Kemmis and McTaggart (1992)

above highlights the relationship between individuals and their groups with reference to

language and culture which, by extension, applies to teachers and students both inside

and outside the classroom. Similar issues were considered in detail in the chapter 3

literature analysis with reference to the setting of learning objectives related to the

evaluation of cultural difference and three conflicting approaches were identified, which

I will now summarise briefly before relating them more directly to the current

discussion about research approaches.

1. Students should adopt non-judgmental stance and engage in intellectual
   empathy to take the perspective of others

2. Students should focus their attention back on the self to develop critical awareness of their own evaluative processes and biases to control them but teachers should not try to change student values

3. Teachers should not only promote approach 2 but should also aim to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights promoting social justice

The main parallel I want to draw between the two discussions is that the Kemmis and McTaggart (1992) view of action research as critical praxis closely accords with the third teaching approach listed above, within which teachers should both implement approach 2 and promote social justice by attempting to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights. This explains why McDonough and McDonough (1997: 23) relate Schon's notion of the reflective practitioner and Giroux's notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals. But this critical approach is not without its critics. Concerns about application of critical theory to action research can be found in discussion of research methodology (Cohen et al, 2000: 233).

Indeed, it is one of the goals of action research, in particular, to challenge entrenched structures of power and authority, to subvert autocratic and top-down decision-making procedures, and to [emancipate] individuals from the domination of unexamined assumptions embodied in the status quo (Crookes, 1993: 131), a clear echo of Freire's (1972) radical position. Clearly, however, this view of research is not value-free but value-laden so, given that values differ across contexts, self-evidently cannot be directly transplanted.

McDonough and McDonough (1997: 33).

There are clearly immense problems attaching to a theory which not only argues that it reveals the world more clearly, but also asserts that it can be used to change the world, to liberate from inequalities and unfair restrictions

.

<div align="right">Gibson (1986: 6) in Hopkins (2002: 45).</div>

Further, the first teaching approach above that recommends the adoption of non-judgmental stance and intellectual empathy accords more closely with ethnographic research approaches than critical ones. Discussion of this issue will be developed in the next section with reference to the philosophical foundations of my research and counterpoints to it.

4.4 Reasons for Choosing a Hermeneutic Approach

4.4.1 Philosophical Foundations

Despite the criticisms of action research as critical praxis noted in section 4.3.4 above, I did intend to implement the third teaching approach within which teachers should not only promote approach 1 but should also aim to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights promoting social justice. Thus, no underlying philosophical conflict existed between teaching approach and research methodology but what about the other two teaching approaches? With regard to the second teaching approach within which teachers should not try to change student values, there was some apparent conflict with Kemmis and McTaggart's (1992) view that action research should try to change individuals but in fact, when teachers try to increase the critical cultural awareness and meta-cognitive control of their students, as is required by this particular teaching approach, they do indeed intend to change them. Indeed, it is precisely this kind of change that Byram suggests supports democracy.

<div align="right">124</div>

Thus, using critical action research as a research methodology with this teaching approach did not pose insurmountable philosophical conflict.

It is important to consider, however, whether any significant underlying philosophical conflict existed between critical action research as a research methodology and the first teaching approach, which promotes the non-judgmental stance and intellectual empathy. The key features of the empathy-oriented teaching approach can be equated with key elements of ethnographic research approaches, which aim to portray events in the terms of the subjects, report multiple perspectives and describe, understand and explain specific situations from the inside (Cohen et al, 2000: 78). Some key features of ethnographies are listed by Cohen et al (2000: 139) drawing upon Hitchcock and Hughes (1989):

- The production of descriptive cultural knowledge of a group

- The description of activities in relation to a particular cultural context from the point of view of the members of that group

- The production of a list of features constitutive of membership in a group or culture

- The description and analysis of patterns of social interaction, the provision of "insider accounts" and the development of theory

I want to contrast this kind of ethnographic research approach with the kind of research I wanted to conduct in two important ways. Firstly, the fact that I was intervening strongly in my own classroom practice by designing and implementing

particular kinds of theory-driven teaching materials meant that I was changing what would have been the natural flow of classroom activity in the absence of the research project. I was, in a sense, seeking to intervene in my own normal practice. I was not seeking to stand back from my normal practice to observe it from the outside. This is the first important distinction I wish to make.

The second important distinction relates to the role of reflexivity. According to Cohen et al (2000: 141), ethnographers use reflexivity to make explicit the extent to which their own "selectivity, perception, background and inductive processes and paradigms shape the research" to control bias and enhance the level of accuracy with which they reconstruct the perspectives of their subjects. But I was more interested in using reflexivity to transform and develop my own knowledge and test out theoretical ideas in the classroom with a view to affecting both theory and practice. Thus, the selection of the action research methodology for my research design for the empathy-oriented teaching approach meant that I had to distinguish decisions I made about learning objectives as a teacher from those I made as a teacher/researcher regarding the teaching/learning process in general. As a teacher, I wanted to engage students in intellectual empathy, or perspective-taking, but as a teacher/researcher, I wanted to be an active agent of change in the classroom situation using reflection to drive that change rather than simply detaching myself from my own teaching activity to observe it.

This led to my rejection of the ethnographic research approach because it did not suit my research purposes in its pure form but there was, however, another level of research activity at which I would attempt, as a researcher, to gain critical distance from

my theory-driven, interventionist teaching practice to observe and reflect upon it from

different standpoints. It is at this level of abstraction that my research activity would

find its closest parallels with ethnography with all three teaching approaches, which

explains why I went on to use some ethnographic data-gathering techniques. A further

related point relates to the way my own personal view of the world affected the

development of my research. I have paid great attention to constructivist and

advocacy/participatory philosophical positions throughout the discussion thus far, which

reflects the way my own basic ontological assumptions have shaped the

conceptualisation of the research project. Indeed, Cohen et al (2000: 6) note Burrell and

Morgan's (1979) observation that ontological assumptions normally underpin

epistemological assumptions about knowledge and how it should be researched:

> The view that knowledge is hard, objective and tangible will demand of
> researchers an observer role, together with an allegiance to the methods of natural
> science; to see all knowledge as personal, subjective and unique, however,
> imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects and a rejection of the
> ways of the natural scientist. To subscribe to the former is to be positivist; to the
> latter, anti-positivist.
>
> Cohen et al (2000: 6).

In my case, I saw knowledge as personal, subjective and unique, which partly

accounts for why I wanted to collect detailed data from a small number of students. I

wanted to develop personal involvement through in-depth classroom interaction. I was

not interested in standing back from classroom activity as a detached observer by

observing the classes of another teacher and looking for explanatory causal relationships.

I wanted to be more deeply engaged in my own classes with my own students, to learn

more their responses to the learning experience as individuals and to consider how I

responded to the experience as a teacher – thus looking for a "hermeneutic" (von Wright, 1971: 5) insight into the world of the classroom. Working within this paradigm, I wanted to prioritise understanding over explanation by attempting to recreate in my own mind "the mental atmosphere, the thoughts and feelings and motivations" (von Wright, 1971: 6) of my subjects. However, explanation did feature in the study insofar as I considered whether or not and why certain learning objectives had been met. Specifically, in chapter 8, when I consider the extent to which individual learning objectives were met, I attempt to present the effects of teaching and why they occurred. At that stage, whilst I try to show cause and effect from an experiment, I am not seeking cause and effect in nature, which is what the discussion of explanation originally focused on. I take a hermeneutic approach by trying to understand the participants and what they say, before interpreting what they say as evidence of (a cause and) an effect.

The contrasting philosophical foundations of the constructivist and critical research approaches implicit in the conceptualisation of the research project lend a complexity to the study that reflects the complexity of the phenomena under investigation. The combination of research approaches was considered necessary because the differing approaches towards the issue of evaluation of difference identified in the literature analysis mirror the differing research approaches themselves to some degree. But in my view, this is to be expected in a complex world, and this view is keeping with much recent research in many fields that rejects simplification in recognition of complexity (Law and Mol , 2002: 1).

It may be true, as Law (2004: 3) suggests, that talk of 'method' in social science still conjures up a relatively limited repertoire of responses and options for research due to the rigidity of conceptual boundaries between conventional research approaches. Instead, and taking a line not dissimilar to that of de Bono (1990, 1991), Law (2004: 4) argues for new ways of thinking about method that are broader, looser, more generous and unconventional.

The cornerstone of Law's argument (2004: 13) is that research produces its realities as well as describes them. In essence, this accords with my rejection of a pure ethnographic approach in this study. Whilst the classroom can be the object of a case study that can be described, the educational nature of the classroom also produces reality as the teacher/researcher experiments with different teaching approaches within this study. Indeed, such practices cannot be expected to converge into a single reality given the number and often hidden complexity of the participants.

Instead, emergent multiple and differing perspectives and realities, and differing versions of 'the good', may be captured by employing what Law (2004: 14) terms 'methods assemblages' that can be used to 'detect, resonate with and amplify particular patterns of relations in the excessive and overwhelming fluxes of the real'. It is to this end that I have attempted to combine constructivist and critical approaches within the same research project. Like Law (2004: 15), I favour the adoption of a more generous and inclusive approach in the innovative investigation of social complexity than has been seen in the past.

4.4.2 Methodological and Philosophical Counterpoints

In sum, my research project would take an action research approach within the hermeneutic paradigm that found its philosophical roots in constructivist and critical research perspectives, and was influenced to some extent by my own ontological assumptions about the world. To bring this into sharper focus, I will expand the discussion of research methods at this point to consider the approaches I rejected when I selected action research. I will compare and contrast my research approach with other possible approaches with reference to diagram 9 below, which illustrates Van Lier's (1998) view on how different research approaches can vary according to whether they focus on measuring, controlling, watching and asking/doing to greater or lesser degree. I will relate this to previous discussion where relevant.

Diagram 9: Research Design Varieties

Measuring	Selectivity ↑	*Structured* **Controlling**
Surveys Coding Systematic Observation		Experiments Quasi-experiments Intervention ⟶
Observation Case Study Protocols Stories **Watching**		*Controlled* Action Research Interviewing Elicitation **Asking/Doing**
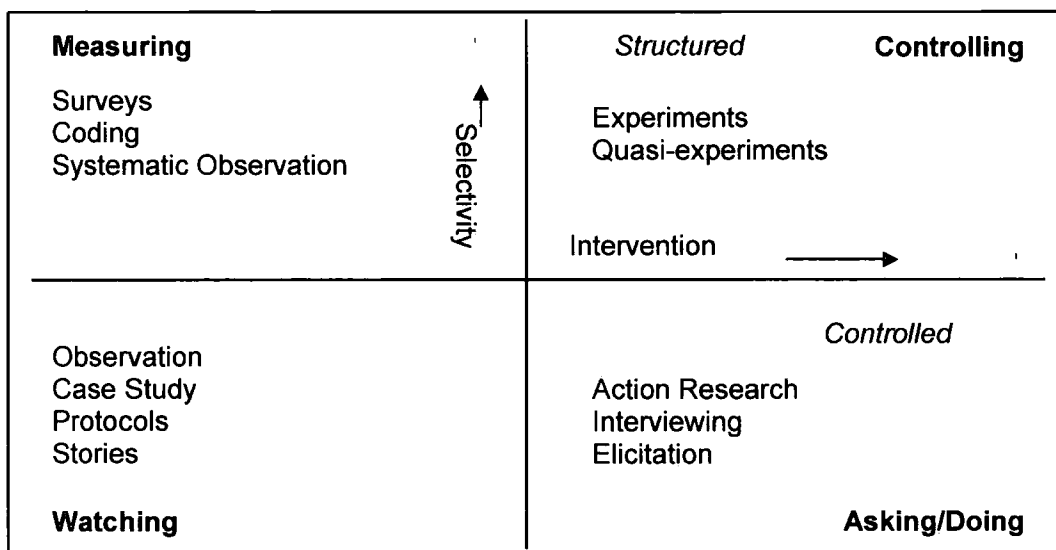
McDonough and McDonough (1997: 47).

Let me make two important comments on the location of action research in diagram 9 above. Firstly, it is located in the right half of diagram 9 along with other more controlling research designs that involve interventions such as experiments and other forms of action. Action research was distinguished from less controlling approaches to ethnography that appear in the left half of diagram 9 because in my research, I wanted to (a) intervene in the normal course of my own teaching practice rather than just observing it from the outside, and (b) use reflective processes to drive change in my teaching environment, rather than trying to control the extent to which my own perceptions clouded the insider perspectives I was observing.

Secondly, however, action research is located in the bottom half of diagram 9 above, along with less structured approaches to research design that involve more open-ended, less selective approaches and take into consideration a wide range of contextual factors. Many of the qualitative data gathering techniques used by ethnographers such as interviews, observation and story-gathering are also found in the bottom half of diagram 9, and the compatibility of ethnographic research designs with constructivist and critical approaches that provide the philosophical foundations of my research becomes apparent.

Now, let me make two important comments on where action research is not located in diagram 9 above and expand the research methods discussion to recognise the research designs that I rejected. Action research is not located in the top half of diagram 9 along with more quantitative research designs that involve the measurement and control of selected factors of given situations. What distinguishes action research from

more quantitative research designs? McDonough and McDonough (1997: 48) note that designs involving the measurement and control of selected factors in the top half of diagram 9 above tend to be more quantitative because they describe by numbers, generalise from sample to population and search for causes. They highlight Cohen et al's (1989) point that quantitative approaches have been associated with large-scale research. Surveys, for example, tend to rely on large-scale data to enhance generalisability by enabling comparisons to be made over time or between groups (Cohen et al, 2000: 172).

But my research design was partly shaped by the contextual constraint of class size as noted in chapter 2. Why was class size a contextual constraint in my particular case? Please recall that whilst I could have conducted my research in any of my nine 90-minute classes spread over a period of thirty weeks, faculty members wanted me to provide special advanced classes for second-year students. This was a governing factor in research design. More specifically, I wanted to perform classroom research in these three second-year advanced English classes before I even set about designing the research project for two main reasons.

Firstly, amidst the negative aspects of my position at work related to my role and general positioning outside of the power hierarchy, I wanted to position myself and my research at the most positive points of growth within my own particular teaching situation for the benefit of myself, my students and my colleagues. This point will be returned to later in this section when I consider reciprosity as an ethical issue in research design. Secondly, I anticipated that students in these advanced classes would not only

be motivated enough to take part in my research project, but would also be good enough at English for me to collect data in English to compensate for my intermediate Japanese ability. This raises other research issues that will be addressed later. Also, small class size would allow me to collect detailed data from each student. Performing research in these classes would maximise the chances for success.

The small-scale of my research project rendered the use of quantitative data collection methods rather unsuitable, however, which explains why I rejected them in favour of qualitative methods. With regard to the more specific issue of generalisability, rather than gathering extensive quantitative data to increase the generalisability of the results, I would instead take into account a wide range of contextual factors to explain local, contextual local meanings in depth to uncover:

> generic, universal features of the phenomenon in question through detailed and comprehensive study of individual contexts, of "local micro-cultures" - a classroom or a learning group.
>
> McDonough and McDonough (1997: 52).

This approach accords with interpretive approaches towards generalisability and explains why I pitched my research into the shared teaching framework elucidated by McDonough and McDonough (1997). Further, this supports my selection of qualitative methods which are indeed located together in the bottom half of diagram 9 above because they tend to focus on gathering information about perceptions of the world.

A further issue affecting the choice of research methods related to the type of data to be collected. Creswell (2003: 17) notes that the choice of data collection techniques depends on whether the type of data to be collected will be specified in advance or whether it will be allowed to emerge from participants in the research project. In my case, I had no clear idea about the kinds of data that would emerge during research. I had not managed to find any similar research projects that may suggest the kinds of specific information I should look for and the only realistic option would be to use open-ended data collection techniques to allow data to emerge from participants.

> if a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. This type of approach may be needed because the topic is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample or group of people, or existing theories do not apply with the particular sample or group of people under study.

> Creswell (2003: 22).

In short, quantitative techniques were rejected in favour of qualitative techniques for many reasons but going back to diagram 9 above, action research is not located in the left half of the diagram alongside less controlling designs that involve more detached forms of observation and measurement of situations rather than intervention. What distinguishes action research from these kinds of designs? McDonough and McDonough (1997: 45-49) note that experimental research designs appearing in the top half of diagram 9 try to identify and control variables through process of intervention that may bias research results and suggest that such an approach is not suitable for teacher research because "in most educational situations the list of possible confounding

variables is so large...that realistic and satisfactory control and counter-balance are nearly impossible".

In my case, the fact that I did not know which specific variables to examine precluded an experimental approach. But still, I did arguably want to apply three specific teaching approaches in three specific kinds of classes to explore the effects and desirability of each. This did not mean, however, that I wanted to investigate cause-and-effect dynamics in the classroom per se. My position was closer to that of Van Lier (1998). Whilst recognising the legitimacy of enquiring why and how things happen, he distinguished between causes and reasons emphasising the latter, and criticised normative approaches to educational research that seek to specify the elements of the teaching process that affect the learning process (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 45).

Indeed, the question "why" underpins all of my research questions, both general and specific and through that line of enquiry, I was seeking, through a hermeneutic approach, contextually-valid, pedagogical explanations and justifications for the acceptance or rejection of different learning objectives. For the reasons and justifications to be meaningful for me as a teacher, they needed to be articulated from the perspectives of both students and teacher through the qualitative documentation of our collective thoughts about the teaching/learning processes. In this sense, my research approach was consistent with ethnographic designs and techniques that explore meaning systems from the inside as seen by the people themselves and as they related to context.

A final reason why I rejected experimental research methods relates to my role in the research. Clearly, I would be a natural participant in the research as I was the teacher. This kind of researcher participation conflicts with the researcher role that typifies approaches located in the top half of diagram 9 above that tend to involve objective judgments being made by researchers from the outside rather than with researchers being participants in their own research according to McDonough and McDonough (1997: 48), Cohen et al (2000: 172), and Creswell (2003: 19).

4.5 Selecting Case Study

4.5.1 Case Study: Definition

Earlier, I attempted to show how the substantive focus and intent of my research naturally gave rise to a hermeneutic research approach and a design which involved collecting qualitative data. I highlighted the natural fit between the research project envisaged and action research. In this section, I will establish the compatibility between action research and case study. Writers who recognise the compatibility between action research and case study include McDonough and McDonough (1997: 203), who draw upon Elliott (1991) to claim that case studies play an important role in action research, and Cohen et al (2000: 183) who note that action research case studies can be considered one of four types of case study along with ethnographic, evaluative and educational case studies. In this section, I will lay out the key features of case studies firstly to examine reasons for their apparent compatibility with action research and secondly to expose their strengths and weaknesses. To identify the key features of case studies, I will deconstruct Stake's (1995) definition, highlighted in Creswell (2003), and consider its components in turn:

Case studies are a strategy associated with qualitative research in which the researcher explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. The case(s) are bounded by time and activity and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time.

Creswell (2003: 15).

The first notable component of this definition is that case studies are associated with qualitative data collection for two main reasons. Case studies take both a holistic approach to the study of context in all its richness, complexity and interconnectedness and an emic approach through the uncovering of insider perspectives according to McDonough and McDonough (1997: 205). Blaxter et al (2001: 71) note Yin's (1993) point that case studies are appropriate when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context. Further, they are appropriate for teacher-research because teacher-researchers, as natural participants, are already deeply embedded in context, which places them in an ideal position to study that context from the inside and develop intimate and informal relationships with those they are observing.

The second notable component of Stake's (1995) definition is that a case is a bounded unit such as a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. Miles and Huberman (1994) note that case boundaries may include temporal characteristics, geographical parameters, inbuilt boundaries, a particular context at a point in time, group characteristics, role and function, organisational and institutional arrangements (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 205). A researcher planning a case study must carefully delimit the boundaries of the case.

Thirdly, case studies employ various data collection techniques. Indeed, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 203) emphasise that a case study is not itself a research method nor the equivalent of one but that it employs methods and techniques in the investigation of an object of interest – the bounded unit. The final notable component of Stake's definition is that case studies take place over a sustained period of time and this is consistent with the notion that research themes arise as data emerges over time rather than being fixed a priori according to McDonough and McDonough (1997: 205).

This provides a further reason why case study was suitable for my research. I needed open-ended data collection techniques that would allow emergent data to establish contextually valid, pedagogical explanations and justifications for the acceptance or rejection of different learning objectives articulated from the perspectives of both the research participants and the participant teacher-researcher. Thus, case studies tend to be associated with qualitative data, take as their object a bounded unit that is investigated using a range of data collection techniques over a sustained period of time allowing research themes to emerge.

4.5.2 Advantages of Case Study

Next, I will identify the advantages of using case study in classroom research to justify its use in my particular situation. Firstly, my research will necessarily be small-scale and case studies are "ideally suited to the needs and resources of the small-scale researcher" because they place the "focus on just one example, or perhaps just two or three" (Blaxter et al, 2001: 71). Conversely, given that my research would necessarily

be small-scale meant that research that seeks significant findings across large groups was precluded, and I had little choice but to emphasise the amassing of conceptual detail.

Secondly, case study suited my research purpose of understanding learner reactions to three different teaching approaches with reference to the extent to which each approach met its own objectives. Both Hopkins (2002: 124) and McDonough and McDonough (1997: 214-5) recognise the suitability of case study with this kind of research. More specifically, Hopkins (2002: 124) notes that case studies are a "relatively simple way of plotting the progress of a course or a pupil's or group's reaction to teaching methods". Further, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 214-5) note that "programme design and development...can be seen most usefully as a case when it is part of a whole package, beginning with fact finding (needs analysis), through choice of approach and design parameters (design) to reflection on their appropriacy (evaluation)".

Thirdly, as a teacher, I was ideally placed to examine learner reactions to my teaching approaches in more depth, developing a deeper understanding of my learners is the responsibility of a teacher. "Where learners are concerned, teachers do not have to seek out cases: they are there in front of and around them, in daily proximity. Teachers spend their working lives dealing in different ways with individuals, and they need to understand those "cases"...Teachers study cases to enhance their own understanding" (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 212). I was already attuned to the bounded systems I was part of which partially equipped me to embark upon sensitive and systematic study of them. "Teachers are also in a position, as complete participants, to

be sensitive to context, and therefore to have an instinctive sense of how each "case" might be delineated as a "bounded system" (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 212).

Finally, and in more general terms, Hopkins (2002: 124) suggests that "information yielded by case studies will tend to give a more accurate and representative picture" than other research methods because they draw on data gathered by many methods and McDonough and McDonough (1997: 217) endorse Adelman et al's (1980) list of reasons for recommending the use of case study research in language teaching:

- Case study data is strong in reality

- Case studies allow generalisations about an instance, or from that to a class

- They recognise the complexity of social truths and alternative interpretations

- They can form an archive of descriptive material available for reinterpretation by others

- They are a "step-to-action"

- They present research in an accessible form

4.5.3 Criticisms of Case Study

In section 4.5.2, I established that case studies tend to be associated with qualitative research, take as their object a bounded unit that is investigated using a range of data collection techniques over a sustained period of time allowing research themes

to emerge. Most of these features also characterise the following definition of case studies:

> the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a class, a school or a community...to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs.

Cohen et al (2000: 185).

This definition does, however, identify an important and problematic fifth feature of case studies that deserves attention. According to Cohen et al's (2000) definition above, case studies are conducted with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs but this focus on the general contrasts with the focus on the particular that characterises hermeneutic research and the following definitions of case studies.

> the epistemology of the particular" ... "the study of the particularity and the complexity of a single case.

McDonough and McDonough (1997: 205).

McDonough and McDonough (1997: 216) note that case studies are commonly criticised for failing to meet the conventional research criterion of generalisability by building in features that would allow extrapolation to a wider population. Let me note two contrasting counter-arguments. Firstly, Erickson (1986) argues that "to achieve a valid discovery of universals one must stay very close to concrete cases" (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 52). This suggests that universal principles can be drawn from specific cases themselves. Alternatively, proponents of naturalistic case study research

such as Simons (1980) argue that the value of aggregated case studies in the gradual accumulation of a body of knowledge, much like case law, that can inform further studies (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 216). This suggests that principles of general application may emerge as patterns are identified between separate cases over time.

These two counter-arguments differ in their view of generalisation and there is an obvious need to define the concept clearly. I recognise the need for conceptual rigour in case study research to counter the kinds of criticisms advanced by Atkinson and Delamont (1986) who attack case study research for "what they see as imprecise definitions and the vagueness of the unit of analysis as a "bounded system"; about the number of definitions that say what a case study is not; and about an over-focus on ethics and political issues at the expense of theory and method. They are firmly against a series of one-offs because theory cannot be left to accumulate" (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 216). To encourage a more rigorous conceptualisation of action research, Cohen et al (2000: 185) list key questions to be addressed:

- What exactly is a case?

- How are cases identified and selected?

- What kind of case study is this? What is its purpose?

- Under what circumstances is it fair to take an exceptional case?

- What is reliable evidence?

- What is objective evidence?

- What is the nature of the validation process in case studies?

- To what extent is triangulation required and how will this be addressed?

- What kind of sampling is most appropriate?

- What is an appropriate selection to include from the wealth of generated data?

- How will the balance be struck between uniqueness and generalisation?

- What is a fair and accurate account?

- What is the most appropriate form of writing up and reporting the case study?

- What ethical issues are exposed?

4.6 Summary

The general research question that had guided the literature analysis was operationalised within a conceptual and practical framework that related classroom context to the theoretical underpinnings, practical design and implementation of the syllabus. The general research question was operationalised by breaking it down into three specific research questions that could be answered in more concrete terms after three courses based on three different syllabuses had been implemented. The extent to which each course had met its own teaching objectives, and the viability and desirability of those objectives, would be investigated through action research within the hermeneutic research paradigm allowing for the possibility that some learning objectives may be neither viable nor desirable. Reasons were given for selecting action research. A natural fit was established between the research project envisaged and action research models that bring theory-driven action to bear upon classroom practice and theory through reflection and systematic research enquiry. The underlying philosophical foundations of the constructivist and critical research approaches implicit within the conceptualisation of my research were compared and contrasted, and the

suitability of using a qualitative research approach with each was established. Alternative research approaches were identified and reasons were given for their rejection. Governing factors included small class size and the need for open-ended data collection techniques to establish contextually-valid, pedagogical explanations and justifications for the acceptance or rejection of different learning objectives articulated from the perspectives of both the student subjects and participant teacher-researcher.

In section 4.5, I laid out the key features of a case study and established the suitability of the case study approach for qualitative action research by recognising firstly that teachers are natural participants in classroom activity and secondly that their role as teacher supports the adoption of holistic and emic classroom research approaches to the investigation of context and insider perspectives, both of which characterise action research. Further, any given class conveniently presents itself to the teacher as an object of research. The decision to make a class the bounded unit of case study research allows the teacher/researcher to employ various data collection techniques in the investigation of the bounded unit over a sustained period of time to develop an accurate and representative picture of the particular classroom dynamics under investigation. The fact that case study is suitable for investigating learner reactions to teaching approaches in small-scale research renders it particularly suitable for my research project but two possible weaknesses of case study research were singled out for further attention: the need to address generalisability and maximise conceptual rigor in research design. Next, I will discuss course design in chapter 5 before addressing research project design and data collection issues in chapter 6.

5. Course Design

5.1 Introduction

How should teachers manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education? At the end of the chapter 3 literature analysis, I stated the three teaching approaches I wanted to implement in the case study as follows:

The Three Teaching Approaches

- Course 1 (following Byram):

  o *Students should focus their attention squarely back on the self to develop critical awareness of their own evaluative processes and biases to control them, but teachers should not try to change student values.*

- Course 2 (following Bennett):

  o *Students should adopt non-judgmental stance and engage in intellectual empathy to take the perspective of others.*

- Course 3 (following Guilherme):

  o *Teachers should basically follow the course 1 approach but should also aim to bring student values into line with democratic principles and human rights promoting social justice, changing them if necessary.*

In chapter 5, I will describe how I implemented these approaches in course design drawing upon the theoretical background. They were each rooted in a common "core course" that aimed to bring learner perspectives to the surface as potential sources of

perspective difference in a mono-lingual, mono-cultural classroom where the only non-Japanese research participant was me, as teacher. Having developed the core course, I developed three alternative teaching approaches towards the evaluation of difference before detailing specific learning objectives and designing teaching materials. The relationship between the core course and three different teaching approaches is illustrated in diagram 10 below, although transformative critical evaluation can be considered an extension of critical evaluation, and some parts of those two courses overlapped. I coined the term "transformative critical evaluation" to clearly distinguish the course 3 approach from the course 1 approach. The term was thus not drawn from the theoretical background.

Diagram 10: Core Course and Teaching Approaches
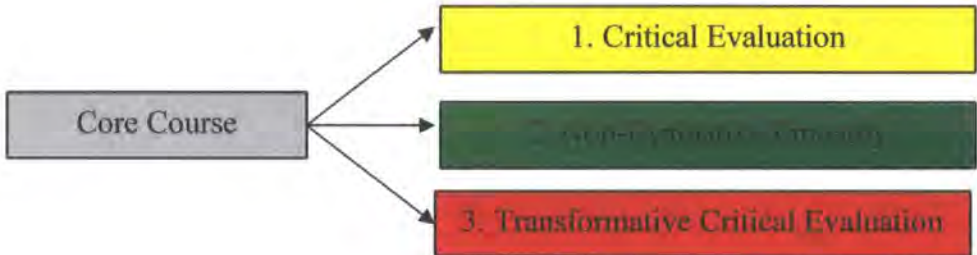
5.2 Syllabus Overview

5.2.1 Core Course

Fist, let me describe core course syllabus design. The existence of other perspectives presumes the existence of one's own and consideration of the other perspective requires some departure from, or reference to, one's own. Learner perspectives need to be uncovered before they can be exposed to others. Perspective-

formation was considered partly individual and partly cultural insofar as they are shaped by group socialisation processes and speakers of the same language may share similar perspectives upon similar phenomena, which can be considered culture itself.

Recognising that learners may initially lack awareness of their mental models and their relationship with language, I initially encouraged learners to reflectively describe their mental models nurturing self-awareness and laying the foundations for the development of meta-cognitive awareness control, even though I realised that those initial descriptions would probably be ethnocentric. I selected content that allowed for the exploration of perspectives upon phenomena in the world (phenomenon X). Recognising firstly that my own worldview would naturally impact upon course design and secondly that I would be the only non-Japanese research participant, I also drew upon my own worldview as a primary source of perspective difference.

It was assumed that learners would lack awareness of how their own mental models differed from those of other people and how such difference related to language. Since a lack of cognitive categories for cultural difference necessarily precludes evaluation since evaluation lacks an object, I initially worked on developing cognitive categories for difference in learners encouraging them to explore other mental models, even though their descriptions would probably be subject to language/culture interference as they described things from within their own frames of reference. Curiosity, openness and general readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own were possible learning objectives at this stage (Byram, 1997: 50) but the key point in my approach was encouraging genuine perspective-exchange. This

means that I wanted students to explore each other's personal and cultural mental models by exchanging views of different social phenomena. Discovery of self and other through intercultural communication is considered a pre-requisite for the evaluation of difference but recognising that the process can be complicated as automatic reference to one's own mental models and affective reactions distort and bias information processing, I decided to encourage learners to reflect on their cognitive and affective processes. The development of meta-cognitive and meta-affective awareness and control would also be encouraged alongside the discovery of self and other as central aims of the core course. The three courses would then diverge increasingly as different approaches towards evaluation were taken.

Diagram 11: Course Design Overview (1)
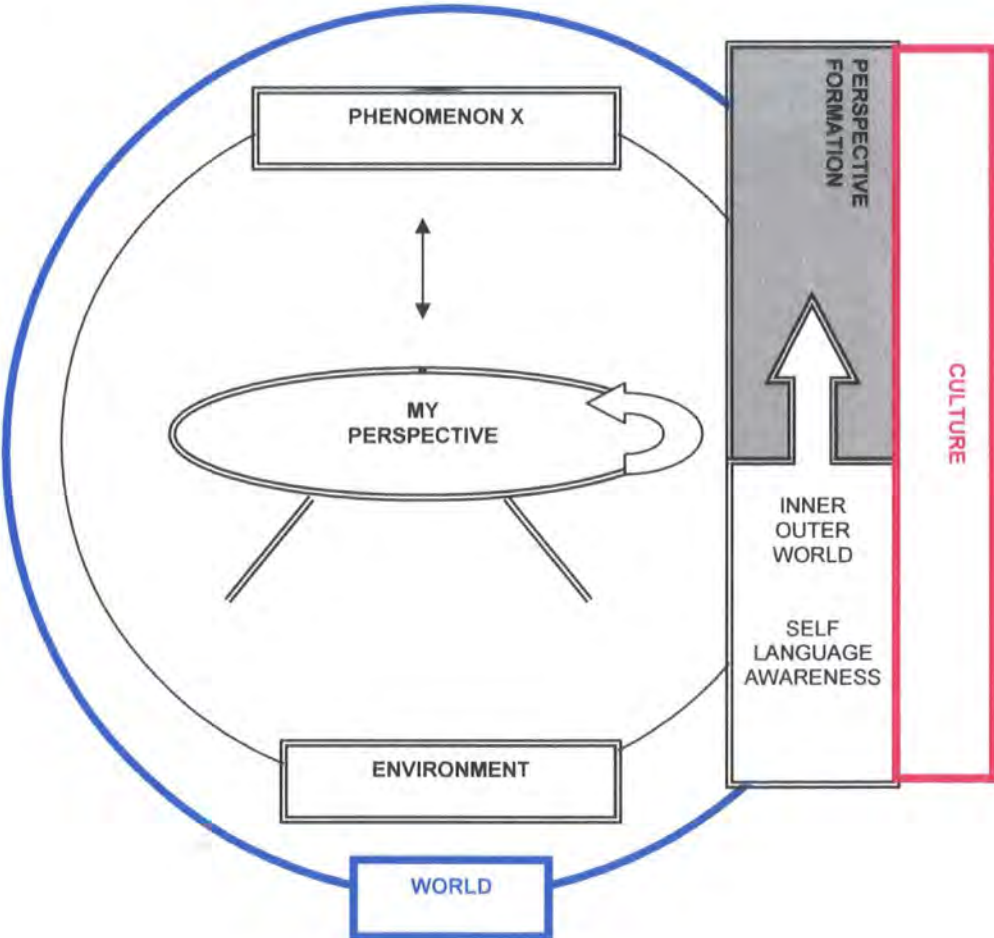
According to the literature, the discovery of self and other, and the development of meta-cognitive and meta-affective awareness and control, all seem to support intercultural communication with little risk. Clearly, more information can be gathered to distinguish individual people from stereotypical categories, learner processing of similarities and differences can be improved and learner attention can be focused on discrepancy between information input and their own mental models to help them identify discrepancies (Byram, 1997) forming more individualised impressions of others instead of relying on stereotypes (Brehm et al, 1999). But disagreement exists with regard to what objectives can or should be set for evaluation. Three possible approaches will be outlined before detailing the learning objectives set for each course.

Diagram 12: Course Design Overview (2)
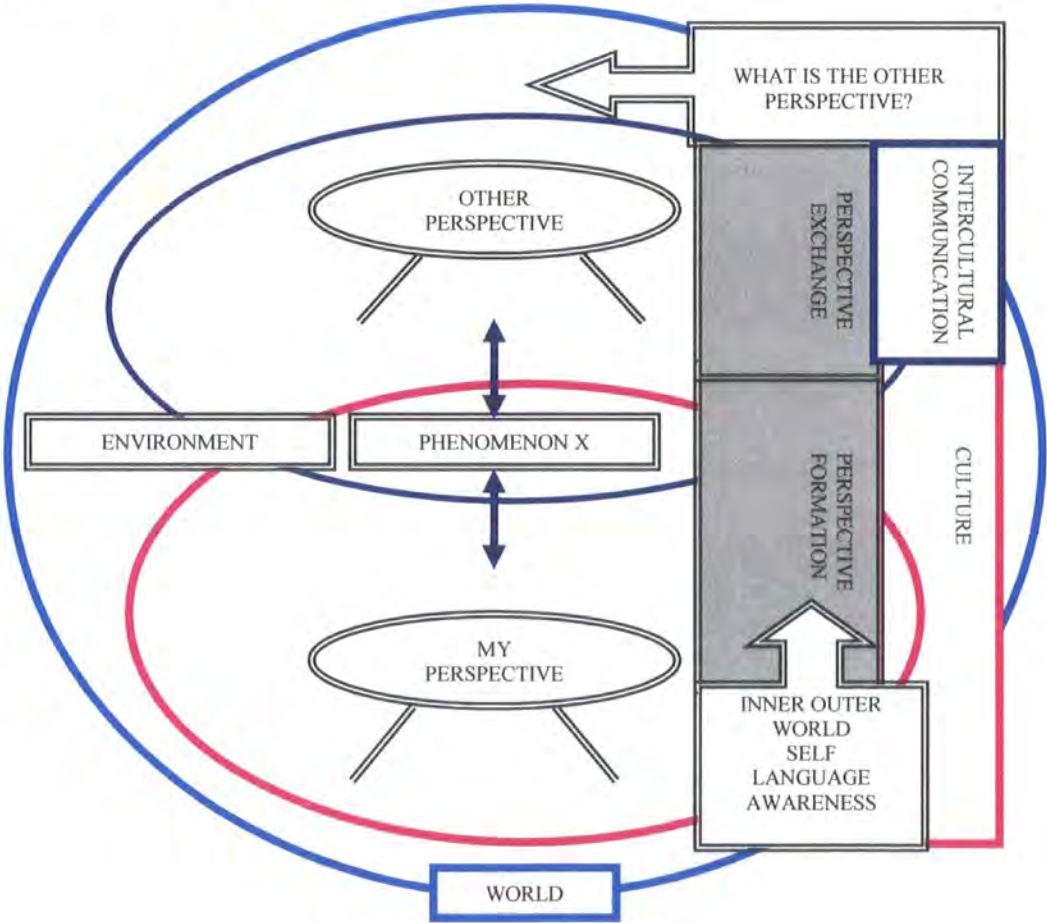
5.2.2 Course-Specific Teaching Approaches

5.2.2.1 Course 1 Approach: Critical Evaluation

The approach illustrated in yellow in diagram 13 below was the adoption of judgmental stance through critical evaluation by analysing, comparing and contrasting one's own perspective with others before evaluating both with reference to one's own values to offset the kind of ethnocentric evaluation that underpins prejudice and stereotyping. Although critical evaluation was considered to support democracy by respecting learner freedom of choice, I would not attempt to change student values within this course 1 approach (yellow).

5.2.2.2 Course 2 Approach: Non-Evaluative Empathy

The approach illustrated in green in diagram 13 below was non-evaluative empathy. This assumed that mental models and evaluative processes can be temporarily suspended to allow the cognitive exploration and reconstruction of other perspectives through intellectual empathy. The aim of this approach towards evaluation was thus for learners to suspend evaluation, temporarily shifting flexibly to explore and reconstruct other cultural perspectives. This approach may suit East Asians and western women whose morality systems may be based more on relational harmony and interdependence than on social justice, rationality and logical analysis of self and world. However, some male western researchers may consider the former to be a lower stage of cognitive and/or moral development than the latter. I would not attempt to change learner values within this course 2 approach (green).

Diagram 13: Course Design Overview (3)

EVALUATE BOTH PERSPECTIVES WITH REASONS

SUSPEND EVALUATION AND EMPATHISE WITH OTHER PERSPECTIVE

RESPOND TO THE OTHER PERSPECTIVE

WHAT IS THE OTHER PERSPECTIVE?

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE EXCHANGE

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

ENVIRONMENT

PHENOMENON X

PERSPECTIVE FORMS

CULTURE

MY PERSPECTIVE

INNER OUTER WORLD

SELF LANGUAGE AWARENES

ACT ON EVALUATIONS

WORLD

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5.2.2.3 Course 3 Approach: Transformative Critical Evaluation

The approach illustrated in red in diagram 13 above was transformative critical evaluation both included and extended critical evaluation by requiring both teacher and learners to act upon their conscious evaluations to align themselves and their environment more closely to values underpinning democracy and human rights. The view taken within this approach was that transformation of the inner world of the learner alone is not enough to transform the political and social environment enveloping citizens, and should therefore be supplemented with action inside and outside the classroom to that end. Since transformative critical evaluation requires explicit, evaluative and active political and social commitment both inside and outside the classroom, I would attempt to change learner values in the course within this course 3 approach (red).

5.2.4 Interlocking Course Structure

How were the courses connected structurally? I will attempt to make this clear next. The three courses were spread over 2 terms of study, containing a total of 27 classes, conducted over a period of nine months from April 2003-January 2004. All three courses ran through five interlocking stages, which each contained core course and course-specific components that sometimes overlapped. Stage 1 fed into stages 2 and 3 which ran parallel to Stage 4 (sub-stage 1). Stage 3 and Stage 4 (sub-stage 1) both finished at the end of the first term in July. Sub-Stage 4 (sub-stage 2) took the form of a summer assignment that fed into Stage 4 (sub-stage 2) in the middle of the second term between Stage 5 (sub-stages 1 and 2) around November. A brief overview of course design for each stage is provided in this section but readers are referred to Appendices

1-4 for detail. The overall interlocking course structure is illustrated in diagram 14 below.

Diagram 14: Interlocking Course Structure
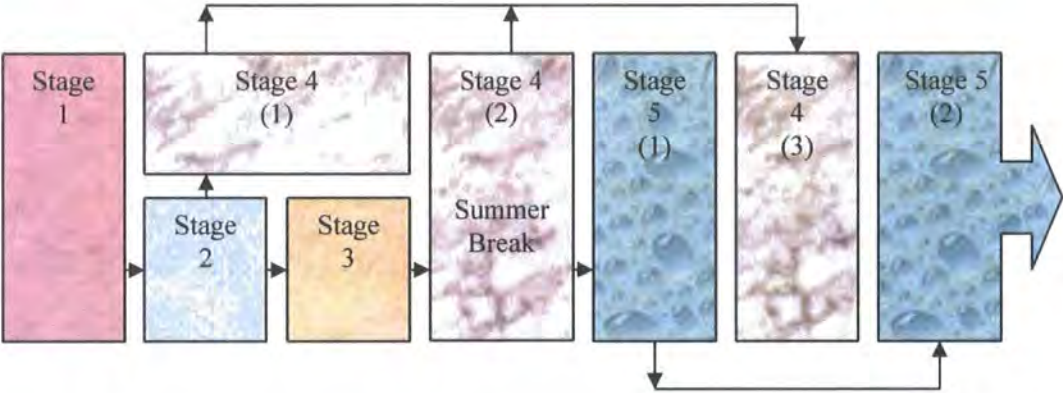
The five interlocking stages of each course contained core course and/or course-specific components that sometimes overlapped through learning objectives (LO), which are presented by week number in tabular form in Appendix 1. Learning objectives for each course are presented in three colour-coded columns (see colour code key below) to clarify the degree of overlap between courses at different junctures. Speaker and listener learning objectives are distinguished where relevant.

Key 1: Colour Coded Learning Objectives

The learning objective tables also refer the reader to different parts of the thesis, thus serving as a map. Task numbers refer readers to the teaching materials presented in Appendices 2-4. LO codes refer readers to the learning objectives presented in Appendix 1. LO codes also refer readers to specific data chunks that were coded by LO

during data analysis. See chapter 7. Task numbers, LO codes and learning objectives for each course are thus juxtaposed by week in colour-coded tables referring readers to course design detail, course materials and data analysis chunks in various Appendices. The tables look like this:

Key 2: Learning Objective Tables

See course materials: Appendices 2-4

See learning objectives: Appendix 1

See data analysis: Appendices 10 and 11

LO containing S denote speaker objectives only.

TASK No.	LO Code	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3
		TASK		
		Course 1	**Course 2**	**Course 3**
	8.S.1	Identify: Describe: Values: Own		
8.1	8.1.1	Critical Evaluation: Values: Other Japanese: Refer to Own	Identify/Describe: Values: Other Japanese	Critical Evaluation: Values: Other Japanese: Refer to Own
8.2	8.2.1	Elicit: Values: Other Japanese	Reflect/Focus/Disclose: Values: Other Japanese: Suspend Own	Elicit: Values: Other Japanese
8.3	8.3.1	Identify: Relative Strength: Values: Other Japanese		
Week 8 Hmk 2	8.5.1	Identify: Values: Own		
Week 8 Hmk 3	8.6.1			Identify: Judge/Justify: Target Values

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5.3 Course Design Overview

Before providing an overview of course design in the 5 stages of each course, let me make a note about when the courses were written. Term 1 materials were all written before term started but this was as far as I could get before the courses began, even though term 2 materials had been conceptualised in my mind. Term 2 materials were written primarily in the summer break but partly during the second term, and also in response to developments in the course. In particular, course 3 students were very slow in preparing and presenting their summer assignments in sub-stage 3 of Stage 4 losing an entire week as a result. Thus, course 3 spent less time on sub-stage 2 of Stage 5. The course design overview that follows in sections 5.3.1-5.3.5 below documents what <u>was actually done</u> with students but not what <u>would have been possible</u> if course 3 students had kept up with course 1 students. In a sense, the final course design presented here partly reflects the results of the course because course design was affected by student participation to some extent. Let me now present the course design overview.

5.3.1 Stage 1

This stage (weeks 1-8) was devoted to learner consciousness-raising focusing on values. I provided a conceptual framework within which to raise learner mental models/schemata to the surface in working configurations to reveal perspective difference we could work with later. In week 1, culture was first defined in terms of shared beliefs, values and norms drawing upon Lustig and Koester's definition (1999: 30) before focusing on, and illustrating, each component in turn so that learners could distinguish and identify beliefs, values and norms, reflecting on their own and developing their own definitions of culture. Themes selected reflected teacher

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perceptions of underlying teacher and learner cultural difference and conceptual

difference between the Japanese and English languages:

- Beliefs: Tooth fairies, "ki" (気). See the glossary.

- Values: Sense of clean/dirty

- Norms: Various

Having distinguished values from beliefs and norms, the concept of values was

broken down into more detail to set up enough conceptual categories to reveal value

difference between students. Schwartz's (1995, 1997) taxonomy of ten universal value

types was introduced to students at the end of the first week. I chose this taxonomy

because it provided a clear set of values that were defined clearly enough that I could

relate them not only to British but also to Japanese culture. Since it sparked many ideas

for materials design, I found it easy to work with. For the overview of Schwartz's value

types provided to students, see the week 1 teaching materials for each class in

Appendices 2-5. For definitions of the values, please see the teaching materials for

weeks 2-5 in the same Appendices:

- Week 2: Power and Achievement

- Week 3: Benevolence and Universalism

- Week 4: Tradition, Security and Conformity

- Week 5: Hedonism, Stimulation and Self-Direction

To illustrate how values shape interaction in hidden ways, I drew upon my own mental models/schemata to write short dialogues that contained hidden values for students to discover, once they had learned the value definitions. To this end, I selected the following unifying concepts using them to link two or three of Schwartz's values to related ideas, arranged around central themes to set up different value underpinnings in each dialogue and open up entry points into learner mental models/schemata:

- Week 2: Ambition

- Week 3: Voluntary Work

- Week 4: Summer Holidays

- Week 5: Free Time

Having identified the values in each dialogue, students were then asked to reflect on their own values, discussing them with reference to new topics that further expanded the conceptual framework. This would increasingly activate schemata prior to homework activities in which students had to write a series of four paragraphs reflectively describing their values with direct reference to Schwartz's value types, which they would present to other students in the form of a speech in weeks 6-8. Since values are organised and prioritised hierarchically, students also made a value chart ranking the relative strength of their ten values on a scale from minus 5 to plus 5. Stage 1 also consisted of some course-specific components in each course in preparation for the core course speeches on values in weeks 6-8. Students in course 1 and course 3 learned how to perform critical evaluation which was conceptualised in three stages:

Critical Evaluation

1. *Compare (identify similarities)*

2. *Contrast (identify differences)*

3. *Judge and Justify (evaluate with a reason)*

Students on course 2 learned how to perform empathy which was also conceptualised in three stages, framed initially in terms of specific communication skills that would help students construct accurate mental maps of speaker perspectives endorsable by speakers:

Empathy

1. *Reflect (Mirror a point back to the speaker using the same or similar words to give the speaker a chance to correct our misunderstanding)*

2. *Focus (Focus on a point made by the speaker to develop speaker ideas and detail)*

3. *Disclose (Offer ideas to the speaker to prompt new information)*

In weeks 6-8, students had to deploy these course-specific skills as they listened to other students present their speeches on values that were developed in weeks 2-5 prior to plenary discussion whose ultimate aim was to help students guess speaker value charts that had been kept secret until that point. (The teacher also made a speech on values in week 12 of Stage 2 and students had to respond in the same course-specific ways). Completion of the speeches marked the end of Stage 1 for course 1 and course 2 students, but course 3 students went one step further, since I also aimed to change their values. I selected values from among Schwartz's value types that I considered more

desirable for the purposes of intercultural communication, regardless of student preference, and sought their agreement to a list of teacher-recommended target values for intercultural communication.

5.3.2 Stage 2

This stage (weeks 8-12) aimed to expose all students to value difference by providing opportunities for experiential learning and asking them to respond to value difference in course-specific ways. Having identified areas of value difference between students by analysing juxtaposed student value charts, I paired students up focusing their attention on one of Schwartz's value types they each appeared to value differently. For example, I might have paired a student who had valued tradition at plus 5 with another student who valued it minus 3. Each pair thus consisted of what I called "a strong valuer" and "a weak valuer". Students had to explore the value difference as weeks 8 and 9 homework tasks, imagine a potential problem that might be caused by it and write a short dialogue to illustrate the value difference in "a value negotiation" to present to other students in weeks 9 and 10. Each student was given the chance to play both roles as week 8 roles were reversed in week 9. Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate their partners in writing and in front of the class, whereas course 2 students had to empathise with their partners describing their perspective to their satisfaction.

Listeners were asked to respond in course-specific ways to core course value negotiations. Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate them, whereas course 2 students had to empathise with each member of the pair. Students were asked

to complete two different types of questionnaire at different times. Whilst they varied in course-specific ways, questionnaire A directed student attention reflectively upon interaction between self and other, whilst questionnaire B focused on the interaction between two others. Questionnaire A was thus completed by members of student pairs after value negotiations to promote reflection. Questionnaire B was completed by listeners have listened to value negotiation presentations. See diagram 15 below.

Diagram 15: Overview of Questionnaire Structure in Course Materials

Questionnaire A
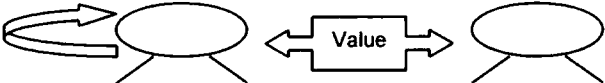
Questionnaire B
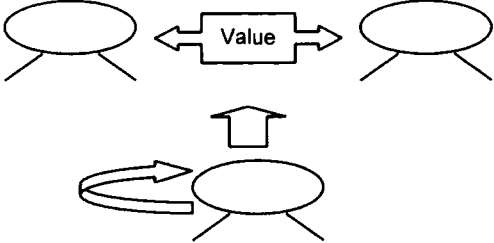
This activity was carried on a step further from value negotiations to mediations when a third student was placed into each pair and asked to mediate the conflict considering the value difference. Course 1 and course 3 students had to mediate with reference to their own values, making their position clear, but course 2 students had to mediate using empathy. The trios then had to present their mediation dialogues to other

students before reflecting on the experience, and related discussions, in a report on mediations. Course 1 students also had to critically evaluate their own values in a separate essay whilst course 3 students had to do this with reference to the target values set for intercultural communication. Course 2 students had to write about the role of values in conversation to identify their impact prior to emphasising non-judgmental stance later.

5.3.3 Stage 3

This stage (weeks 11-14 and the July test) aimed to focus student attention consciously on concept difference linking language and values. We set value difference aside temporarily to consider concepts in isolation focusing on (a) words or concepts that exist in Japanese or English but not both languages, and (b) words that exist in each language but have different meaning. The Japanese concrete noun "kotatsu" (炬燵) was used to exemplify a concrete object commonly used in Japan but not (to the best of my knowledge) in the U.K. See the glossary. We then considered how conceptual difference can cause misunderstanding.

Drawing upon my own subjective experience of life in Japan, I wrote critical incident conversations around words that existed in both languages but differed in terms of both underlying definition and related values. Conflict dialogues were thus rooted in both conceptual and value difference. The words selected were "club" and "neighbour". Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate the conflict dialogues. Course 2 students had to empathise with the characters instead. Finally, all students had to mediate the conflicts in writing. Course 1 students had to mediate with reference to their

own values, whereas course 3 students had to mediate with reference to the target values

for intercultural communication. Course 2 students had to mediate using empathy.

5.3.4 Stage 4

This stage (weeks 2-25) was divided into three sub-stages. In sub-stage 1 (weeks

2-14), students had to write three questions for each of Schwartz's ten value types

developing a questionnaire with which to interview a foreigner about their values in the

summer assignment. Course 1 and course 3 had to critically evaluate interviewee values

with reference to their own values, whilst course 2 students had to empathise with their

interviewees producing descriptions endorsed by the interviewee.

This central task was enveloped by sub-stage 2 (week 14, summer assignment and

week 15) when the stage 3 discussion of concept was extended to include stereotypes as

a particular kind of concept used to categorise people. Whilst week 14 activities focused

on defining and examining the nature of stereotypes, week 15 focused on whether or not

student stereotypes had been broken by their foreign interviewees. Students were asked

to write reflective essays on group interviews held at the end of term 1 in week 15

homework tasks.

In sub-stage 3 (weeks 23-25), students had to present their course-specific

summer assignments to other students in speeches. Course 1 and course 3 students had

to listen carefully to the speaker critical evaluation of interviewee values to identify the

values of speakers themselves (expressed indirectly through the critical evaluation

itself) before critically evaluating speaker values with reference to their own. Course 2

students had to monitor whether or not speakers had empathised successfully with interviewees suspending their values and concepts in the process.

Students were also set a number of other tasks during Stage 4 within which previous work was recycled back into the course to promote for further reflection and discussion of student-generated themes. In some cases, student views expressed in homework or the interactive student dairy were presented to other students for comment. An end-of-course assignment was also set towards the end of Stage 4 in which students were given recordings of their pre-course interviews (March 2003) to transcribe before writing a reflective essay on how their ideas had developed or changed during the course. See section 6.3.2. Students were also asked to submit discussion points for the end-of-course group interviews (January 2004).

5.3.5 Stage 5

Whereas most of Stages 1-4 focused student attention on value similarity between cultures using Schwartz's value types as an heuristic conceptual tool, Stage 5 (week 16-week 27) shifted student attention onto value difference between cultures using Hofstede's (1980) theory instead. The greatest divergence between course 1 and course 3 was found in Stage 5, in consideration of Hofstede's (1980) four dimensions of value difference: Power distance, Individualism/Collectivism, Masculinity/Femininity and Uncertainty Avoidance. Let me consider them in turn.

Power Distance

Having introduced the theory and its background in week 16, and having considered the limitations of theories such as those provided by both Schwartz and Hofstede, students then considered the role of climate in culture considering how their attempts to survive in different, extreme climates might impact upon group dynamics. This provided students with a light introduction to power distance. In week 17, the power distance dimension of values was presented in much the same way as Schwartz's values were presented in Stage 1 with students identifying hidden values in text before reflecting upon their own. The unifying concept for power distance was relationships with parents and teachers. In week 17 homework, course 1 and course 3 students had to read and evaluate statements related to power distance, whereas course 2 students simply had to identify the values.

In week 18, I started presenting hidden values through video rather than written text using a clip from the film "Anna and the King" in which characters exhibited clearly different orientations towards power. Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate the characters with reference to their own values, whilst course 2 had to empathise with them. In week 18 homework, students had to watch the whole film and write an essay. Course 1 students had to select a scene and critically evaluate the characters in writing, but course 3 had to express their views on whether Anna was right to try to change the values of the King. Course 2 students had to select a scene and empathise with both characters by describing the scene from the perspective of each character.

Next, power distance was related to conceptual difference between Japanese and English through the English words "junior" and "senior", which are often taken as literal translations of the Japanese words "kohai" (後輩) and "senpai" (先輩), although there are no conceptual equivalents in English. See the glossary. Course 1 students were asked to read a conflict dialogue and mediate with reference to their own values, considering both value and concept difference. Course 3 students were asked to do the same but had to mediate with reference to the target values for intercultural communication. Course 2 had to mediate through empathy.

In week 18, course 3 students also started to focus on democracy as a political system comparing and contrasting their definition of democracy with other students, before considering its advantages. Week 18 homework for course 3 students was to express their views, in an essay, upon a possibly controversial statement provided by the teacher claiming that undemocratic aspects of Japanese culture that undermined democracy should be changed.

Individualism/Collectivism

In weeks 19 and 20, values were presented through video clips from the films "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" and "Bend it Like Beckham". Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate the characters with reference to their own values whereas course 2 students had to empathise with them. Value difference was then connected to conceptual difference through the words "club" and "neighbour", which exist in both Japanese and English but vary culturally. Students then had to read a

culture conflict and mediate with reference to their own values, considering both value and concept difference. Course 3 students were asked to do the same, but had to mediate with reference to the target values for intercultural communication. Course 2 students had to mediate through empathy. Course 1 students also focused on identifying possible in-group bias in mediations with reference to Social Identity Theory and had to write an essay on the mediations and related discussion.

Course 3 students focused more on defining peace before evaluating a set of U.N.E.S.C.O. statements on social requirements for a Culture of Peace, with reference to their own values, in week 19 homework. In week 20, they also related the issue of out-groups mentioned in relation to Social Identity Theory to minority groups in Japan through consideration of the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (hereafter referred to as I.C.E.R.D.) and the N.G.O. human rights reporting system. Students were presented with non-negotiable values and concepts appearing in the human rights I.C.E.R.D. treaty that they were expected to read and accept before researching problems faced by particular minority groups in Japan. This served as a prelude to actual social action to help minorities later in the course.

Masculinity/Femininity

In week 21, values were presented through a video clip from the film "Tombraider". Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate the characters, with reference to their own values, whereas course 2 students had to empathise with them. The person of Angelina Jolie was then dissociated from the Lara Croft character to identify the personal values that may have led to her being presented with a Citizen

of the World Award by the (then) Secretary-General of the United Nations for her work with refugees. Value difference was then connected with concept difference through the word "woman". Students were asked to read the teacher concept of "woman" before anticipating possible value conflict between themselves and the teacher, arising from conceptual difference, which required student reflection on their own corresponding concepts and values. Course 1 and course 3 students had to critically evaluate teacher concept and values, whereas course 2 students had to empathise instead.

In week 21, course 3 students also related the values to human rights law through the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (hereafter referred to as C.E.D.A.W.) and the N.G.O. human rights reporting system. Students were presented with non-negotiable values and concepts appearing in C.E.D.A.W. they were simply expected to read and accept. Week 21 was to summarise a Japanese news item about C.E.D.A.W. in English to develop background knowledge.

In week 22, students read about teacher stereotypes of British men before watching video clips from a Jamie Oliver television cooking show and "Bend it Like Beckham" to identify values before either empathising with, or critically evaluating, the characters depending on the course. Week 22 homework activities were rather open-ended, allowing students to cast their attention freely to deploy their skills in chosen areas of interest in writing. Course 1 homework was to make a free critical analysis. Course 2 homework was to produce a free empathetic description in writing. Course 3 students also focused on what it means to be a good democratic citizen, and were asked

to conduct a democratic citizenship project in which they had to take social action to help a minority group following the good example set by the teacher as role-model.

Uncertainty Avoidance

In weeks 26 and 27 of course 1 and course 2, values were presented through the terms "New Year Resolutions" and "Catholic confession" as culture-specific ways of taking control over the future. A video clip from the film "Angela's Ashes" was used to introduce the confession theme before developing background knowledge, with reference to "the ten commandments" and other related concepts. In week 27 of course 1, values were presented through the term "property ladder" in relation to care of the elderly, and choices related to death, as culture-specific ways of taking control over the future.

An article about the "property ladder" comparing the Japanese and British property markets was examined for ethnocentric bias before student critical evaluation of a summary version. Ideal ways of caring for the elderly were considered as previously-expressed student opinion was recycled back into the course, with students expressing their opinions upon issues raised in writing for course 1 homework. Course 2 students instead had to research beliefs about life after death in a religion of their choice to identify hidden values related to uncertainty avoidance for homework. Course 3 students considered the issue of uncertainty avoidance in relation to the increasing number of foreigners coming to Japan, examining two separate Japanese articles written in English that provided conflicting statistics and views on crime committed by

foreigners in Japan to identify possible ethnocentric bias, before considering the possible underlying issue of xenophobia.

5.4 Summary

This section has shown how I used course design to address the question of how teachers should manage the evaluation of difference in foreign language education. Having clearly stated the three approaches take in courses 1-3, I showed how I designed a common core course that to bring learners into a state of value difference before implementing the three alternative teaching approaches of (1) critical evaluation (2) non-evaluative empathy, and (3) transformative critical evaluation. I described the 5-stage interlocking course structure of all three courses referring the reader to the learning objectives tables in Appendix 1, which also serve as a map that links (a) course design to learning objectives, and (b) course materials and specific data chunks used in data analysis. I hope I have provided an overview of each course highlighting common parts, whilst making key distinctions between the courses clear.

6. Research Design

6.1 Introduction

In chapter 4, I defined and considered the key components of a case study noting its suitability for action research if it takes as its object a class as a bounded unit to be investigated using a range of data collection techniques during the life of the class. I also recognised the need to clearly delimit the bounds of the case clarifying case study ype and purpose. Even though the three groups were taught separately, I finally decided upon a single, complex case study for certain reasons and will explain why.

6.2 Single, Complex Case Study: Design Issues

6.2.1 Case Study Type, Purpose and Bounds

Blaxter et al (2001: 73-74) draw upon Yin (1993) to note that case studies can be single or multiple. According to Yin (2003: 40), unitary or multiple units of analysis can exist within both single and multiple case studies but contextual conditions always should be considered. In diagram 16 below, the dotted lines illustrate porous boundaries between the case and its context. Yin (2003: 45) suggests that single-case designs should be used when the case represents a critical test of existing theory, a rare or unique circumstance, a representative or typical case or when the research has a revelatory or longitudinal purpose.

Diagram 16: Basic Types Of Designs For Case Studies
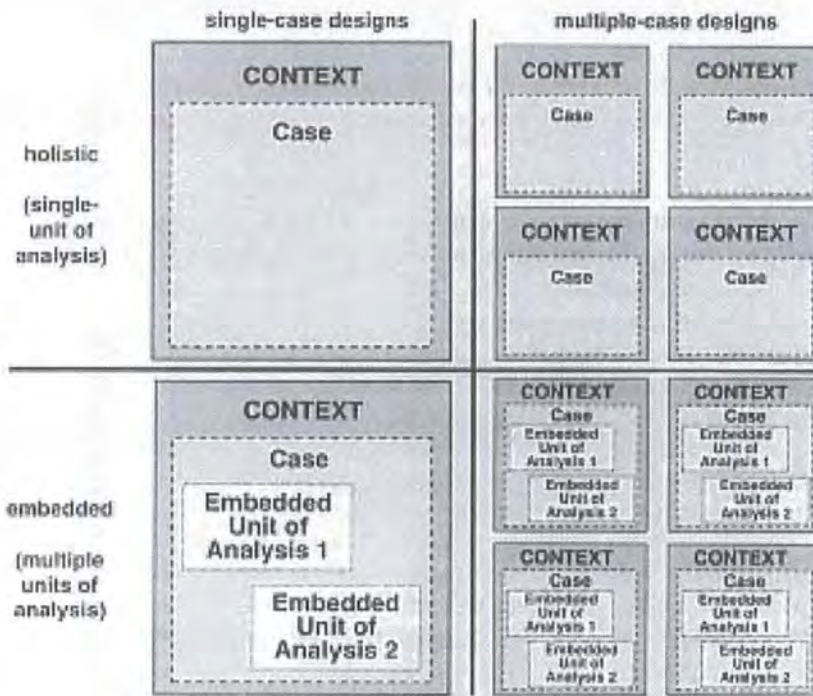
Yin (2003: 40).

Yin (2003: 52-53) not only notes that multiple-case studies should be used if the investigation calls for a number of literal replications of the study, but also claims they are preferable to single-case designs because replication can strengthen both research conclusions and generalisability. However, my research design is best described as a single, complex case study for a number of reasons related to course design. Basically, the research project was conducted with three different groups of students on different courses. Despite the separateness of the three groups, the main objects of research were the courses of study and despite their important variations (depicted in green, yellow and red in diagram 17 below), they also shared the same common core course (depicted in grey).

Diagram 17: Case Study Units

The fact that the three separate courses were firmly interlocked by a common core course, and yet could also be distinguished in ways significant to the research project, precluded literal replication of any single study in each of these three classes. This meant that the three courses had to be considered as component parts of a single, complex case-study system rather than as a multiple case-study, even though the groups never met at any time. The case-study structure is illustrated in diagram 18 below, and is a composite representation of the three components of diagram 17 above.

Diagram 18: Case Study Structure
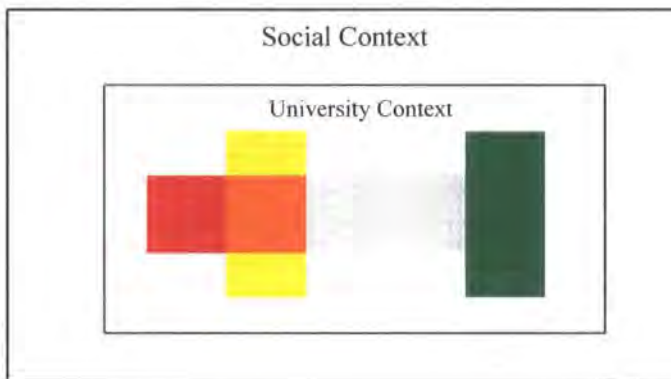
The case boundary in diagram 18 equates with the outer edge of the multi-coloured shape, which represents the three different courses of study (green, red and yellow), which all share a common core course of study (grey). The multi-layered context in which the case is situated consists of (1) the university context, and (2) the

broader social context outside the university impacting upon university life. Taking a micro-view, each class also consisted of a group of twelve students and a teacher/researcher, bringing numerous boundaries between self and other into play at each level that are not depicted in diagram 18 above. However, an important point to remember when considering such a complex case study is that attention can shift between the whole and its parts, attention should ultimately return to the whole after consideration of the parts (Yin, 2003: 46).

Focusing on the parts, one weakness of this particular case study design is that it stood to cause imbalanced data gathering insofar as a different number of students would all be following different parts of the courses at different times. Whilst all thirty-six students would follow the same core course (grey), the maximum number of students following the course variations (green, red and yellow) would be twelve, and up to 24 students would follow the common aspects of two of the course variations (orange). The amount of data gathered would naturally shift in line with the changing number of research subjects. Focusing attention back on the whole, however, thirty-six students would be participating in the case study at any one time.

6.2.2 Research Validity/Trustworthiness

How can researchers persuade their audience that their research findings are worth taking seriously? Lincoln and Guba (1985: 290-331) address this question arguing that the four evaluative criteria conventionally used to validate research (internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity) should be substituted with alternative criteria more suitable for establishing the trustworthiness of naturalistic research

(credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability). Their arguments run as follows:

1. Naturalistic research does not assume the existence of a single tangible reality focusing instead on the multiplicity of mental constructions used when perceiving reality. The aim of research is not to establish cause/effect relations between variables, but to represent multiple constructions adequately so they are credible to their constructors (free of researcher bias). The credibility concept replaces the internal validity concept.

2. Naturalistic research does not accept that if internal validity is established about sample X, which is representative of population Y, that the features of sample X can automatically be generalised to population Y because the features of Y will also play a role. The onus is on those applying the research to consider features of both the sending and receiving contexts, but the original researcher should facilitate transferability in research design. The transferability concept replaces the external validity concept.

3. Conventional research holds that research is reliable if two or more repetitions of the same project yield similar results under similar conditions, but since naturalistic research also allows for change occurring within the entity being studied or the researcher, dependability should be sought. The dependability concept extends the reliability concept.

4. Naturalistic research does not seek objectivity through inter-subjective agreement of multiple observers of phenomena as a way of overcoming subjective researcher bias. The focus is not placed upon researcher characteristics, but on the quality of the data themselves which should be confirmable. The confirmability concept extends the objectivity/construct validity concept.

The variety of abstract concepts used when discussing this issue can be considered a product of the shifting underlying debate. Researchers with similar interests to me have drawn upon this terminology with some applying the conventional concepts, perhaps adapting them and others replacing them completely. Next, I will highlight what I think are the fundamental issues in my research project and how I addressed them.

6.2.2.1 Internal Validity/Credibility

Blaxter et al (2001: 221) note that researcher interpretations of data need to be checked constantly to maximise the accuracy of findings from various standpoints to ensure that investigations are conducted properly. Creswell and Miller (2000) claim that the accuracy of research findings needs to be valid from the standpoints of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account (Creswell, 2003: 195). McDonough and McDonough (1997: 63) note that the onus is on researchers to actively check their interpretations at all stages of the research project, through reflexivity and explicitness, to avoid subjective data bias.

Researcher Bias

Ethnocentric bias lies at the very heart of my research project since it was set in motion by my personal struggle to cope with challenges to my worldview in Japan. My experience with otherness, coupled with the theoretical understanding of ethnocentric bias I developed whilst performing the literature analysis, may have raised both my awareness of my own bias and my understanding of it to higher levels than other researchers of unrelated subjects. I consciously operationalised my awareness of my limited worldview bias in course design, so my worldview played a legitimate role in the research rather than being isolated from it, which characterises action research (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 62).

However, I do not claim complete self-awareness. It is at best partial and superficial, possibly inaccurate, and probably shifting due to my incomplete and changing understanding of Japanese society, my intermediate yet constantly developing Japanese language ability and my total lack of attempt to address other boundaries to my worldview presented by cultural groups outside Japan and the U.K. But by reflexively making my preconceptions explicit, I hope to create an open and honest narrative that will resonate with readers. The need for this is recognised by Creswell (2003: 196), Blaxter et al (2001: 220) and Hopkins (2002: 133-137).

Teacher/Researcher Reflexivity

The overlapping teacher/researcher roles in action research give rise to both intra-teacher and intra-researcher reflective positions within the same person, which I will call teacher reflexivity and researcher reflexivity. The roots of this distinction lie in

section 4.3 where I discussed reflexivity in terms of reflection in action and critical praxis in action research. I will use the term "teacher reflexivity" to refer to these kinds of pedagogically-oriented reflexivity. In chapter 4, I also noted how ethnographers use reflexivity to control researcher bias. I will use the term "researcher reflexivity" to refer to cases where reflexivity is used to control researcher bias as meta-cognitive self-monitoring by the researcher. The relationship between them is illustrated in diagram 19 below.

Diagram 19: Researcher Reflexivity
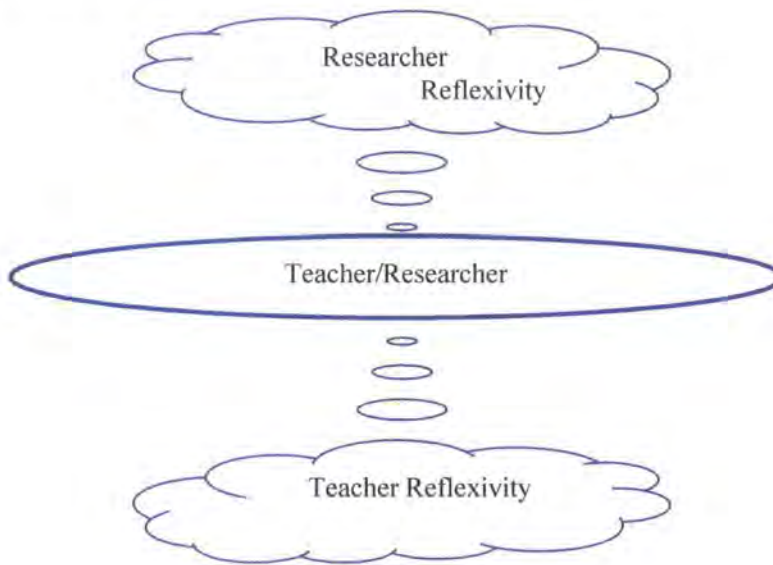
I envisage a division of consciousness within the teacher/researcher and its link with the three teaching approaches, as illustrated in diagram 20 below. At the top, the six teacher/researcher reflective positions are represented in blue thought bubbles. The three researcher reflexivity bubbles are located above the teacher/researcher, to represent their detachment from the teaching process (which is represented in the bottom half of diagram 20 below). At this level, the teacher/researcher attempts to gain

critical distance from teaching practice to reflect upon it from different standpoints, making use of researcher reflexivity to control researcher bias. The three teacher reflexivity bubbles are located below the teacher/researcher, to represent their proximity to the teaching process. The arrows linking the teacher reflexivity thought bubbles to both course-specific and foundational learning objectives, depicted in the yellow, green, red and grey boxes in the bottom half of diagram 20 below, represent the deployment of teacher reflexivity for particular pedagogical purposes.

Teacher reflexivity 1 played two main roles in practice. Firstly, I sometimes demonstrated how to perform the various stages of critical evaluation. Secondly, I sometimes deployed my own worldview, directly judging student perspectives whilst providing my own genuine perspectives for them to critically evaluate. But there were limitations. In course 1, to protect student freedom of choice, I was not supposed to try to change student perspectives or to try to bring them into line with any other systems or worldviews including my own. The role of researcher reflexivity 1 was thus defined partly in terms of keeping teacher reflexivity 1 in check.

Diagram 20: Teacher And Researcher Reflexivity

Researcher Reflexivity 1

Researcher Reflexivity 2

Researcher Reflexivity 3

Teacher/Researcher

Teacher Reflexivity 1

Teacher Reflexivity 2

Teacher Reflexivity 3

Approach 1:
Course-Specific
Learning Objectives

Approach 2:
Course-Specific
Learning Objectives

Approach 3:
Course-Specific
Learning Objectives

Cognitive:

Critical evaluation

Cognitive:

Empathy

Cognitive:

Critical evaluation

Meta-cognitive:

Conscious control
of judgment:
Judgmental stance

Meta-cognitive:

Conscious control
of judgment:
Non-judgmental stance

Meta-cognitive:

Conscious control
of judgment:
Judgmental stance

Political:

Inner/outer world change
in line with democracy
and human rights

Approaches 1, 2 and 3: Foundational Learning Objectives

Inner and outer world self and language awareness

Teacher and Researcher Positions

Researcher reflexivity 2 monitored and controlled teacher reflexivity 2, which was deployed for the pedagogical purposes listed in the black and green boxes of diagram 20 above under foundational and course-specific learning objectives. The course-specific learning objectives for course 2 promoted empathy and non-judgmental stance. Teacher reflexivity 2 required me to sometimes suspend my own worldview, adopting a non-judgmental stance.

I also provided my own perspectives for students to empathise with by consciously, and reflectively, deploying my own worldview as a practice object. I adopted a non-judgmental stance by limiting my provision of perspectives to those related to social phenomena I considered external to student perspectives. I avoided judging the personal perspectives of students directly, whilst making a conscious effort to provide genuine perspectives for them to empathise with. In this way, I tried to increase the number of learning opportunities available to students.

Researcher reflexivity 3 monitored, and controlled, teacher reflexivity 3. It was deployed for the pedagogical purposes listed in the black and red boxes of diagram 20, under foundational and course-specific learning objectives. Course-specific learning objectives for course 3 match those set for course 1, with additional political learning objectives of inner/outer world change in line with democracy and human rights to promote social justice. Instead of protecting student freedom of choice, I tried to change their perspectives in specific ways. Researcher reflexivity 3 was thus supposed to ensure that teacher reflexivity 3 performed this function.

Summary

- Assess self-awareness levels

- Assess ability to consciously articulate and identify the boundaries of my worldview

- Assess ability to operationalise my self-awareness for particular pedagogical purposes

- Recognise the limitations of self-awareness

- Examine the roles of researcher/teacher reflexivity within teaching approaches

- Maximise conceptual clarity in research design

Commenting retrospectively, reflexivity was difficult to implement consistently in the early stages of data collection when I was still (a) getting used to the teaching approaches, and (b) getting to know the research participants. Whilst it got easier over time, some overlap probably occurred throughout. The teacher reflectively recorded various issues in teacher notes in the interactive student diaries (DATA Z4-DATA Z65. See Appendix 9. Students A1-A12 followed course 1. Students B1-B12 followed course 2. Students C1-C12 followed course 3). Key patterns and data references are listed in table 2 below.

Table 2: Reflexivity Deployment Data

Pattern	Data references (See Appendix 9)
Clear implementation of teaching approach	Z9, Z12, Z37, Z39, Z44, Z45, Z46, Z53, Z54, Z55, Z58, Z60, Z61, Z63

Teacher difficulty implementing teaching approach	Z4-Z8, Z14-Z18, Z21-Z25, Z31, Z32, Z39, Z40, Z48, Z52, Z56, Z57, Z60, Z62, Z64, Z65
Teacher/student value difference	Z4, Z43, Z31
Teacher drawing line on personal matters	Z10, Z20, Z26, Z27, Z36, Z38
Reflections on particular theories	Z25, Z12, Z13, Z30
Development of relationship with particular students	Z16-Z18, Z28, Z38, Z39, Z41, Z59

Of these, all but three of the examples of clear implementation of teaching approach were from course 3, perhaps because the teacher was clearly pushing students in a certain direction. In both courses 1 and 2, the teaching approach seems to have been more problematic insofar as the teacher suspected she was changing student values during consciousness-raising (DATA Z6, Z7 14, Z17, Z18) or focusing (DATA Z24, Z31, Z32.) In course 3, the teacher seemed unable to resolve apparent conflict between teacher prescription of values and student freedom of choice (DATA Z40, Z48, Z56, Z57, Z62).

6.2.2.2 External Validity/Transferability

According to McDonough and McDonough (1997: 63), external validity concerns the extent to which it is possible from the interpretations of data to suggest that other research participants in similar circumstances might respond in similar ways. Blaxter et al (2001: 221), Yin (2003: 33-39) and Creswell (2003: 195 and see chapter 9) provide similar definitions. Yin (2003: 33-39) notes that this has been a major barrier in doing case studies as critics argue that single cases offer a poor basis for generalising but I did anticipate that the results of my research may be somewhat generalisable to similar groups in similar situations insofar as other teachers may be able to recognise

and draw something of value from my research to use in their own situations. To this end, I operationalised my research question within McDonough and Shaw's (1993) notion of the shared framework.

However, my case study could be considered exceptional insofar as the research participants would be studying in a class that was more advanced and considerably smaller than what might normally be expected at a Japanese university but still, these classes are representative of university classes of similar size which contain similar students in Japan. The following types of generalisation taken from Cohen et al (2000: 182) were considered possible:

- from the single instance to the class of instances that it represents
- from features of the single case to a multiplicity of classes with the same features
- from the single features of part of the case to the whole of that case

In section 4.4.2, I noted that I would take into account a wide range of contextual factors to explain local, contextual local meanings in depth to uncover both particular and generic features of the context under investigation. This accounts for the need for case studies to be conducted over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2003: 196). I selected data collection techniques that would develop conceptual depth and richness and conducted the case study over a period of nine months to allow the data to emerge and accumulate over an extended period of time. Further, I conceptualised the human dimensions of the classroom context as action research case study zones within

which to develop conceptual depth and richness. I selected data collection techniques (a) to give expression to intra-student, intra-teacher, inter-student, teacher/student, teacher/researcher and researcher/student relationships, and (b) to facilitate transferability.

Summary

- Operationalise the research question within McDonough and Shaw's (1993) notion of the shared framework

- Conduct the study over a prolonged period of time focusing on various human relationships within the group

- Develop conceptual depth and richness to convey detail and uncover generic features of local contexts

6.2.2.3 Reliability/Dependability

Strauss and Corbin (1998: 266-8) note that reliability normally means that a study can be replicated through the use of either the same or alternative research processes and the reproduction of research findings gives the original findings credibility. Blaxter et al (2001: 221), Yin (2003: 33-39) and McDonough and McDonough (1997: 63) all provide similar definitions but let me note two important distinctions made by Yin (2003: 37). The first pertains to whether the case study has been designed in such a way that similar research results would be obtained if this same case study were performed by another researcher. This involves the minimisation of errors and biases in the study. The second pertains to whether the case study has been designed and documented clearly enough for other researchers to follow later.

I operationalised the research question within McDonough and Shaw's (1993) notion of the shared framework to make it possible for other teachers to repeat the research – in the same or modified form - in their own classrooms. But contextual, learner, teacher and researcher variables are just some of the variables at play in any classroom-based action research project that can never be replicated in their entirety in any later version of the project, and variation would naturally exist between me and any other researcher who might have performed this same research project.

Strauss and Corbin (1998: 266-8) recognise the near impossibility of replicating the original social conditions under which data were collected or to control all the variables that might possibly affect findings. They recommend the adaptation of the concept of reliability for qualitative research in recognition of the difference between (a) doing research in a laboratory, where one can to some degree "control" variables, and (b) conducting it out in the "real" world where events and happenings follow a natural course. Strauss and Corbin (1998: 266-8) suggest that reliability needs to be grounded in a set of reasonable assumptions. For any given piece of research to be considered reliable, any later or alternative researcher should produce a similar theoretical explanation given:

1. the same theoretical perspective of the original researcher

2. a similar set of conditions

3. the same general rules for data gathering and analysis

I have made both contextual factors and my theoretical perspective as a researcher as explicit as possible, so they can be taken into account by later researchers. Considering points made by Yin (2003: 33-39, 57-81), Hopkins (2002: 133-137), McDonough and McDonough (1997: 63) and Creswell (2003: 195) regarding data gathering, I have also laid out data gathering and analysis procedures carefully for later replication.

Summary

- Make contextual factors explicit

- Make theoretical perspective explicit

- Present data gathering/analysis procedures clearly enough that they can be followed by others

- Recognise that similar studies will somewhat differ

6.2.2.4 Construct Validity/Objectivity/Confirmability

The impact of researcher subjectivity upon data collection should be minimised by establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. Yin (2003: 33-39) recommends the following techniques:

1. Gather multiple sources of evidence to triangulate data and encourage convergent lines of enquiry

2. Establish traceable chains of evidence

3. Ask research participants to review the draft case study report as respondent validation (Cohen et al, 2000: 189, Creswell, 2003: 196 and Hopkins, 2002: 133-137)

I did not ask research participants to review the final thesis partly because they were not native English speakers, but mainly because they would have graduated from university before completion of the thesis. Instead, I built a form of respondent validation into data collection, as we shall see. Considering points made by Hopkins (2002: 133-7) about the need for concept clarification, I sought conceptual fit between my construction of the research issue and those appearing in the academic literature presented in the literature analysis detailing the conceptual framework underpinning my research. I regularly consulted my thesis supervisor throughout the research period as a form of peer debriefing (Creswell, 2003: 196).

Summary

- Data from multiple sources
- Chains of evidence
- Respondent validation
- Concept clarification
- Peer debriefing

6.3 Data Collection

6.3.1 Introduction

Cases employ various data collection techniques and are methodologically eclectic, with a number of different permutations and possibilities for choice (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 207-8). I will present my data collection techniques referring to the overview of research stages in table 3 below. There were six key stages. Stage 1 will be discussed under research ethics in section 6.4 below. Data collection techniques used in Stages 2-6 will be laid out first.

- Stage 1
    - o Pre-Course
        - ▪ *Search for, selection and division of research participants into groups*
- Stages 2-6
    - o Pre/During/Post-Course
        - ▪ *Triangulated data collection*

Table 3: Overview of Research Stages

Stage 1: December 2002 – January 2003
Courses were advertised
Students were sought, selected and divided into groups

Stage 2: February- March 2003
Pre-course questionnaires were administered
Interviews were conducted in English based on pre-course questionnaires

Stage 3: April- July 2003		Teacher Diary
Term 1 classes took place Audio recordings were taken Student coursework was gathered	←	Interactive Student Diaries

Stage 4: End of July 2003
Mid-course group interviews (English/Japanese)

Stage 5: October 2003- January 2004		Teacher Diary
Term 2 classes took place Audio recordings were taken Student coursework was gathered	←	Interactive Student Diaries

Stage 6: End of January 2004
End-of-course group interviews (English/Japanese)

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6.3.2 Pre-Course Data Collection Techniques

6.3.2.1 Pre-Course Questionnaires/Interviews

In stage 2, I used both pre-course questionnaires and follow-up interviews (see appendix 8) as data collection techniques considering points made by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 171) and Cohen et al (2000: 246). I attempted to gather detailed description of pre-course research participant background, and perceptions of cultural difference focusing on the information types listed below. One point to note is that information gathered on students' other proposed courses of study was also used to interview a colleague about the curriculum (a) to add conceptual richness and depth to the contextual background presented in chapter 2, and (b) to enhance research reliability. Information was collected on the following:

- Research participant background

- Basic personal information

- Language/culture background

- Prior study of foreign language

- Prior contact with foreign culture

- Other proposed courses of study during the research period

- Research participant perceptions of cultural difference

  o *In their own lives specifically*

  o *In Japanese society generally*

The resulting pre-course questionnaire is presented in Appendix 8. For pre-course information provided to students, see Appendix 7. Questionnaire structure can be summarised as follows:

- Section 1: Personal Background

- Section 2: Language and Culture Background

  - *Part A: Foreign Language Study*

  - *Part B: Prior Contact with Foreign Culture*

- Section 3: Perceptions of Cultural Difference

  - *Part A: Cultural Difference in your Life*

  - *Part B: Cultural Difference and Japanese Society*

- Section 4: University Studies

  - *Part A: Your Timetable*

  - *Part B: Your Classes*

Since my research project was a small-scale, site-specific case study, a qualitative, less structured, word-based and open-ended questionnaire was considered appropriate. I designed a semi-structured questionnaire following Cohen et al's (2000: 248) guidelines. Sections 1 and 2 of the questionnaire gathered factual background information from research participants:

- **Section 1:** Factual questions: Gather basic personal information about the research participants/contact details.

- **Section 2A:** Factual and yes/no questions with open-ended follow-up questions: Gather information about research participants' prior foreign language study.

  o *Questions 1-3: Focus on English study: Length of prior study/ qualifications attained/private school study*

  o *Question 4: Study of other foreign languages*

- **Section 2B (questions 5-8):** Series of yes/no questions: Gather information about prior contact with foreign culture: With and/or within the family/during travel abroad.

  o *Questions 5 and 6: Simple yes/no questions*

  o *Questions 7 and 8: Combined with open-ended follow-up questions and/or table to be completed*

- **Section 2B (questions 9-13):** Factual questions: Gather information about other prior exposure to foreign culture: Contact with foreign teachers/foreign friends in Japan and abroad

  o *Questions 11 and 13: Multiple-choice questions: Gather information about frequency of contact with foreign friends*

  o *Questions 14 and 15: Future intentions to travel abroad*

Sections 1 and 2 sought historical information about research participants and pre-course interviews then allowed me to gather more detailed information (Creswell, 2003: 186-187). This also brought me into contact with students before the course (Hopkins, 2002: 109). Further, I was able to both assess students' English language ability and

orient them to the course. Section 3, however, contained more open-ended questions about research participant perceptions of cultural difference, allowing them more freedom to respond in their own terms (Cohen et al, 2000: 248).

- **Section 3A**

  o *Question 16: Personal identity*

  o *Question 17: Defining cultural difference*

  o *Questions 18 and 20: Experience of cultural difference abroad/in Japan*

  o *Questions 19 and 21: Desired future role of cultural difference in their lives*

- **Section 3B**

  o *Questions 22 and 23: Reflective description: Social identity as a Japanese/associated feelings*

  o *Questions 24 and 25: Reflective description: Relationship between Japan/other countries*

  o *Questions 26 to 30: Reflective description: Position/role of people from other cultures in Japan framed in terms of the past, present and future relationships between Japanese people and people from other cultures (question 26) and immigrants (question 27), the identification of possible problems between them and possible solutions*

  o *Questions 27 and 28: Views: Possibility that Japan may bring in foreign workers to make up the deficit in the workforce caused by the falling birthrate*

o   *The recognition of intercultural conflict that underpins questions 29 and*

30 sets the direction for the course

Section 3B takes the Japanese/foreigner group distinction as the overarching conceptual framework within which to pose questions leaving its design open to accusations of conceptual bias, so let me justify my inclusion of these questions. Experience tells me that the Japanese/foreigner group distinction is a strong conceptual reference amongst Japanese students, at least when relating to me, and it seemed reasonable to assume that research participants would be familiar enough with this distinction to discuss it. However, I also recognised the possible existence of alternative conceptual frameworks, which is why I designed section 3A questions to enquire very generally about perceptions of cultural difference without building in any pre-set conceptual frameworks. The combined design of sections 3A and 3B thus reflects my recognition that the Japanese/foreigner group distinction is likely to exist in the minds of research participants but equally, that alternative conceptual frameworks might exist, which also explains why the two sections are of similar length.

The design of section 3 largely mirrors the approach taken to course design. The cognitive shifts from self to other, and from reflection to description in section 3A, mirror the shift from self-reflection to the experience of otherness and description of it promoted in the first half of the course. The attention paid to cultural differences between national groups and intercultural conflict in multi-cultural society reflects the general emphasis of the second half of the course. Section 3 thus served a pedagogical purpose by preparing students for their course of study, but it also served an important

research purpose. I expected student responses to section 3 to change during the course and decided to ask them to reflect and report upon their answers to the pre-course questionnaire in March 2003 as an end-of-course task in January 2004.

Section 4 of the questionnaire enquired about (a) the research participant timetables for the week allowing me to gauge their workload and organise interviews later in the year, and (b) the other courses they would be taking during the research period. The purpose of this section was to help me formulate questions to interview a colleague about the curriculum, and to make contextual research factors explicit.

6.3.2.2 Data Collection Procedures

Research participants collected pre-course questionnaires from the university office on Tuesday 28[th] January 2003 and submitted them by Friday 28[th] February 2003, giving them one month to complete the questionnaire in English. Section 4 was not administered until April 2003 because students could not register for their courses until then. Follow-up interviews were conducted in March 2003 before courses began in April 2003. Students were asked to bring a copy of the completed questionnaire and were interviewed individually in English about the first three sections of the pre-course questionnaire for around 30 minutes to verify and expand data. See diagram 21 below.

Diagram 21: Relationship Between Pre-Course Questionnaires And Pre-Course Interviews
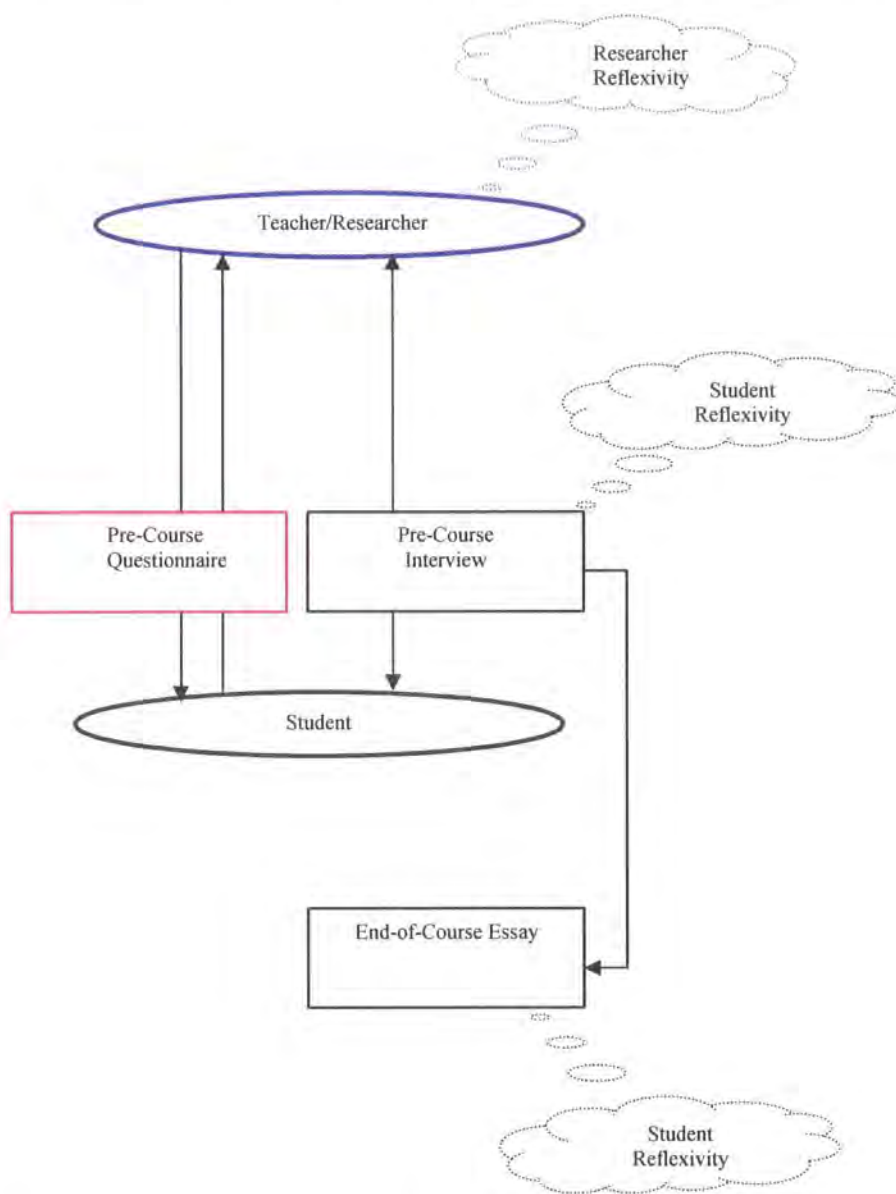
Considering points made by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 185) and Creswell (2003: 186-187) regarding interviews conducted by native speakers of non-native speakers, I gave students time and language support to help them express their ideas accurately in English, patiently listened to them and gave them chances to correct their answers. Pre-course interviews also helped develop conceptual depth and richness

of data through the provision of more detailed answers, which affected the choice of interview approach. I selected a semi-structured approach.

- Structured elements

  - *Interview content and procedures were organised in advance and the sequence/question wording were known by research participants in advance*

  - *Questionnaire sections 1 and 2 were rather structured*

- Less structured elements

  - *In section 3, open-ended questions would generate unpredictable discussion*

In my questioning stance, I did not deploy the three kinds of teacher reflexivity that characterise each teaching approach since the courses had not even started. Instead, I consciously tried to elicit research participant ideas rather than injecting my own. However, that approach does happen to be more in line with empathy-oriented teaching approach 2.

The pre-course interviews were very time-consuming taking about 36 hours in total but this is a common disadvantage of teacher/pupil interviews. I chose to make audio-recordings despite their attendant disadvantages (Hopkins, 2002: 109), but rather than transcribing them myself, which can be very time-consuming (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 186 and Blaxter et al (2001: 173), I gave students a copy of the pre-

course interview recordings at the end of the course. This was when I asked them to reflect and report on how their ideas had developed since March 2003 in the end-of-course essay in January 2004.

Looking back, data collection was generally successful. Questionnaires were collected in good time, interviews were conducted before classes started, I did my best to verify and expand data, audio recordings were successful, good relationships were established with students and I embarked upon the three courses with a sense of student English language ability. However, some questions proved too difficult for some students, perhaps leaving them feeling unnecessarily nervous before courses started.

6.3.3 In-Course Data Collection Techniques

Next, I will describe in-course data collection techniques. In research stages 3-6, term 1 classes took place from April-July 2003 and term 2 classes took place from October 2003 to January 2004.

- Teacher diaries were written

- Interactive student diaries were written

- Lessons were audio-recorded

- Student coursework was gathered

6.3.3.1 Teacher Diary/Audio Class Recordings

Teacher diaries can be used to record personal observations, reflections and reactions to classroom problems aiding the reflective analysis of experience in case study research (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 122, 131 and Hopkins (2002: 103).

But their subjective, introspective nature and quantitative and qualitative richness can pose problems. Indeed, Hopkins (2002: 103) and McDonough and McDonough (1997: 124) all recommend researchers to make an effort to counteract the problem. I decided to use the teacher diary not only to record the kinds of general reflections and observations noted by Hopkins (2002: 104) and McDonough and McDonough (1997: 131) but also as a research diary to take notes on the progress of the research project, as recommended by Blaxter et al (2001: 182).

A foundational feature of all three teaching approaches was to bring myself into a regular state of cultural difference with research participants as I operationalised the dynamic emergence and interaction of worldview boundaries. The teacher diaries provided working space in which to record and monitor the effect of my own bias, helping me control it, as I deployed teacher reflexivity within course-specific teaching approaches. Considering points made by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 122-3) and Hopkins (2002: 103) regarding diary writing, I wrote diary entries after every single research class from April 2003 to January 2004 trying to capture changes over time and minimise the decay of accuracy with fading memory. In the previous academic year, I had arranged for the period immediately after each lesson to be left open, so I had up to ninety minutes of uninterrupted teacher diary writing time after each class, which allowed for timely post-class reflection.

I did not make any visual recordings partly because it would have been too cumbersome to carry equipment to three lessons a week over the course of an academic year, and partly because I thought it would have been too distracting for both the

students and me. I did, however, make audio recordings of classes, which allowed me to retrospectively listen to lessons with critical distance from them as an alternative to the use of outside observers (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 105). That was impossible in my case given the scale of the project, the number of classes involved and my degree of isolation from other teaching staff.

I also used audio recordings to triangulate other forms of data collection by retrospectively investigating classroom events that were being commented upon in teacher and learner diaries. Hopkins (2002: 106) recommends audio-recordings because they can provide ample material with great ease, but since transcription would have been too time-consuming, I analysed them using the Atlas software program without transcription. Data collection techniques are illustrated in diagram 22 below.

Commenting retrospectively, teacher diary writing went well. I wrote a teacher diary entry after every single lesson and almost always immediately after it, with little exception. Even then, the teacher diary entry was always made within a few hours and always before the next research-related class. Audio-recordings generally went well, although I failed to record a small number of lessons towards the end of the second term due to an undetected problem with the equipment.

Diagram 22: Data Collection Techniques
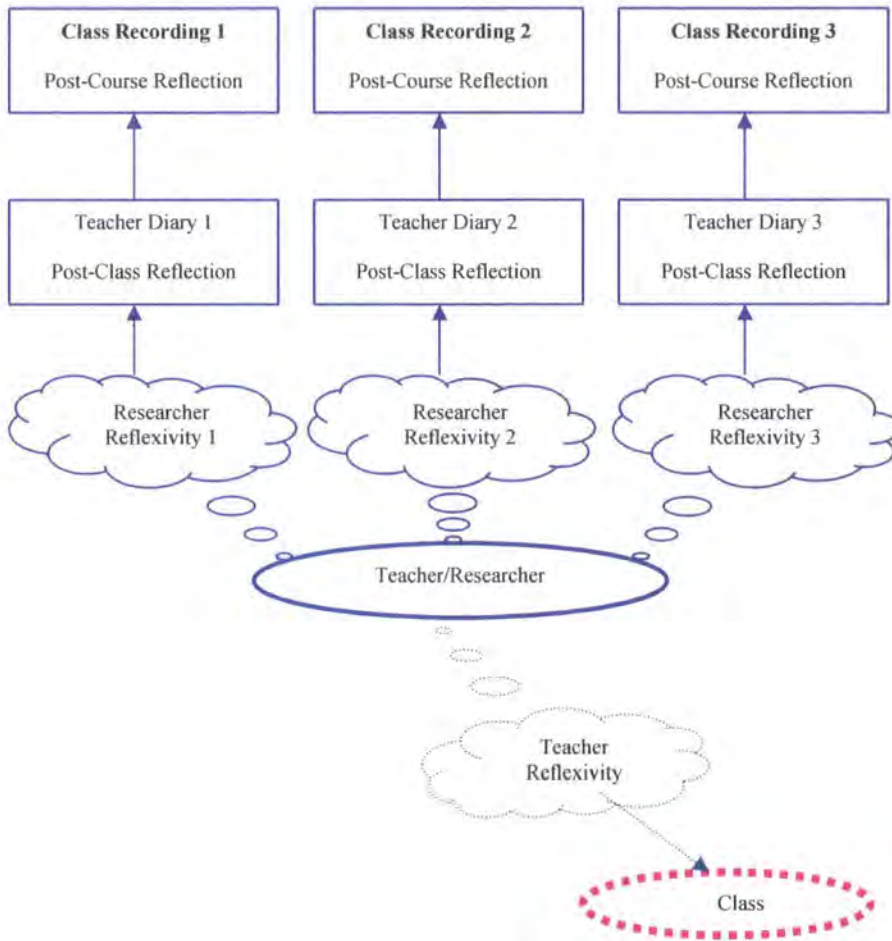
6.3.3.2 Interactive Student Diary

I gave students time to write carefully to develop conceptual richness and depth. Having students email their diary entries not only saved transcription time and costs but could be accessed unobtrusively at my own convenience (Creswell, 2003: 186-7). I provided students with the following guidelines for diary-writing around which they could write freely (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 127-128).

- What did you learn in each class?

- How did you feel about the class?

- Comments/questions for Stephanie.

I received up to thirty-six diary entries per week by email. I read and responded to them on my free research day each week, engaging in email dialogue with students as a kind of interview (Blaxter et al, 2001: 172). These discussions were all stored and filed on hard disc. After I had sent my initial reply by email, I then left students free to engage in email dialogue with me if they so wished but as a matter of policy thereafter, responded to all student replies unless the dialogue was clearly exhausted. This process is illustrated in diagram 23 below. The following problems were possible:

- Distortion of data as research participants try to help researcher and behave differently (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 63)

- Students may have been reluctant to express their true opinion in line with (what perceive to be) Japanese norms

- I might have misinterpreted students due to my lack of familiarity with Japanese norms

To overcome these issues, I engaged in email dialogue with students individually to create a communicative space in which students would not worry about possible reactions from other students. I also hoped to create an unfamiliar space in which the unfamiliarity itself might cause the natural collapse of student preconceptions. However, my interactive diary response was also constrained by course-specific teaching

approaches. In particular, empathy-oriented teaching approach 2 seemed more likely to promote the accurate reconstruction of student perspectives, whereas teaching approach 3 threatened it insofar as it allowed the freer flow of unconscious teacher subjectivities in the struggle to promote social justice. Notwithstanding my recognition of the need to (a) interpret student voices accurately, and (b) develop conceptual depth and richness, the course-specific teaching approaches were implemented in interactive student diaries.

Diagram 23: Interactive Student Diary Approach
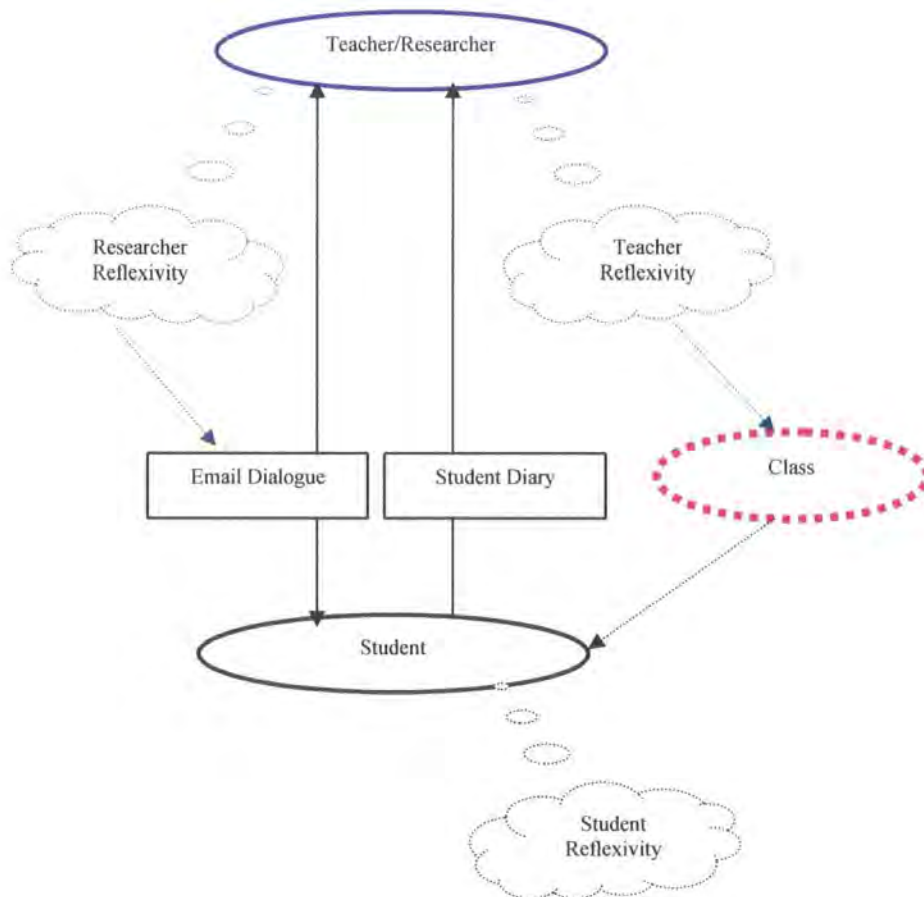
Commenting retrospectively, some students responded very well but others did

not, causing some data imbalance perhaps because some students were (a) too busy

outside class (b) did not have computer/internet access at home, or (c) had trouble

typing in English using a bilingual keyboard. Incomplete data gathering is a limitation

of diaries and email discussion (Creswell, 2003: 187). My research was not immune

from this.

6.3.3.3 Documentary Data/Group Interviews

Student classwork and homework were important forms of documentary data

(McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 208). I recycled selected pieces of work back into

the courses by distributing them to other students asking them respond in writing for

homework before recycling those comments into plenary discussion in later classes

and/or interviews to generate student development of research themes. Commenting

retrospectively, some students failed to do their homework every week, but a wide

spectrum of documentary data were still gathered from many students and the basic

problem did not arise from defective research design or conduct.

Selected pieces of student work were discussed in mid-course and end-of-course

group interviews. Cohen et al (2000: 287) recognise that group interviews are quicker

than individual interviews and indeed, these were the only kind of interviews possible at

the end of each term. The mid-course and end-of-course interviews were unstructured

insofar as the list of issues was treated as a loose agenda built around issues formulated

in outline only (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 184) as a general interview guide

(Cohen et al, 2000: 271). I divided each class of 12 students into two groups of 6 students interviewing them separately using the same lists.

Commenting retrospectively, discussions moved in different directions affecting the degree of comparability between groups possibly causing inadvertent omission of important issues (Cohen et al, 2000: 271). But I had still developed a sense of context in each of the three classes even after the first term and think I was familiar enough with student concerns to draw them together in these unstructured interviews (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 184). I think I sparked individuals into perceptive lines of discussion yielding wide-ranging responses (Cohen et al, 2000: 287 and McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 185). Further, I had many chances to verify what students meant to say when they seemed to be having trouble expressing themselves in the target language of English (McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 185).

Some students may have been inhibited both by my presence and the language used (Creswell, 2003: 186), so I arranged for mid-course and end-of-course interviews to be followed by a short interview in the native language of the students by a research assistant giving students the chance to express themselves in Japanese to a Japanese person. The Japanese research assistant signed a confidentiality form and was familiarised with both the research project and the course material in advance.

Commenting retrospectively, the mid-course interviews were least successful since I failed to record them properly and had to ask students to write reflective essays after the event which at least captured what they had retained of the interview. The end-

of-course interviews were, however, successfully recorded. The interview schedule was inescapably tight. Some interviews ran over time delaying the start of the next set of interviews, even shortening their length in some cases, probably causing some data imbalance. Interviewer exhaustion may have adversely affected the quality of interview responses.

Diagram 24: Approach to Documentary Data and Group Interviews
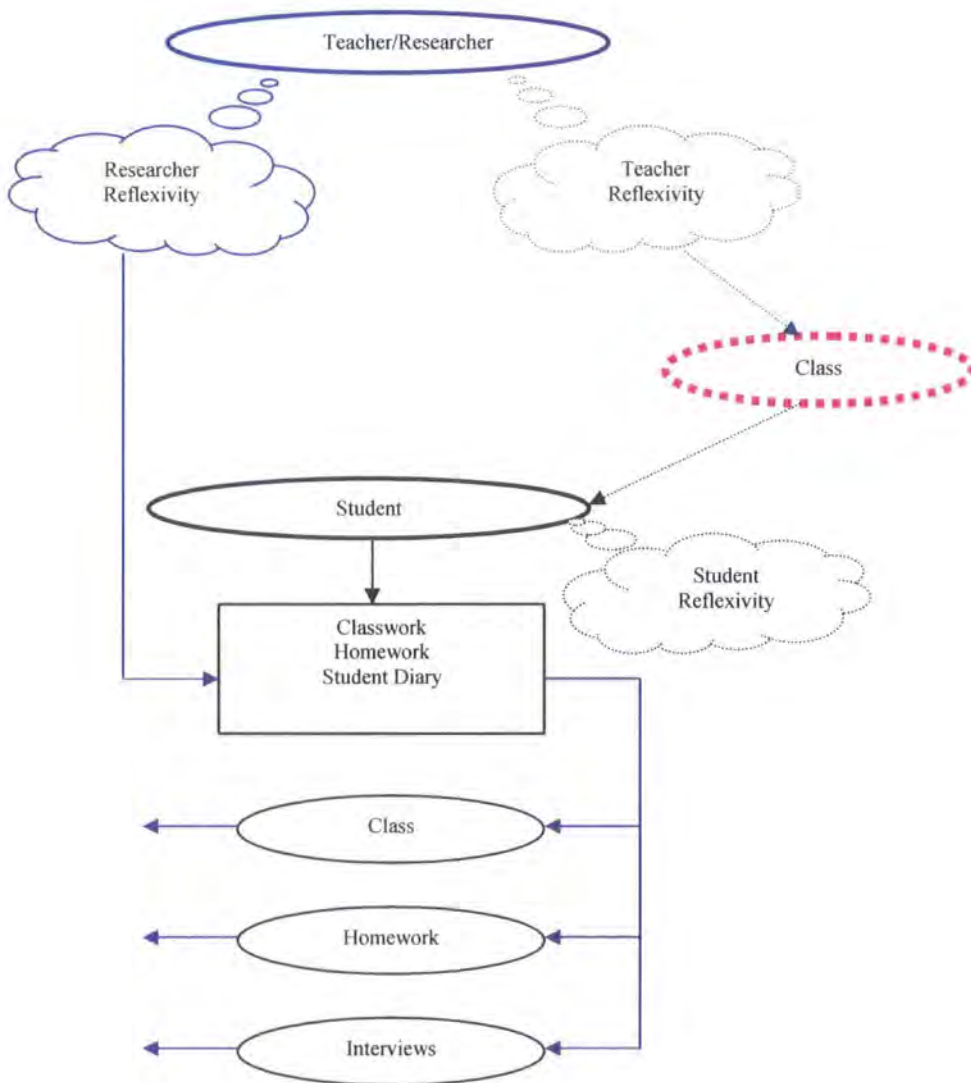
The Japanese research assistant was also a student at the university whom I had previously taught, so we had an existing relationship which may have affected her view of the research project and line of questioning. She also knew some students personally and whilst I had hoped that students would feel free to speak openly because of this, the interview was possibly affected by pre-existing relationships. However, there was really nobody else I could have asked and I still thought it was worth giving students a chance to speak in their native language to someone other than myself. Their comments may have differed with language choice, but I was unfortunately not well-placed to make allowances for this possibility in this particular research project.

6.3.4 Triangulation of Data Collection Techniques

Let me define what I mean by triangulation recognising its wide-ranging definitions, before highlighting what I will take to be its core meaning for the purposes of this research project. McDonough and McDonough (1997: 71) define triangulation in terms of the use of several techniques in data collection to enhance the credibility and plausibility of interpretation draw upon Denzin (1978) to note that triangulation can take place in four different areas:

- Combining data sources
- Using comparisons of theory and individual accounts
- Using multiple methods
- Using several observers where possible

Cohen et al (2000: 113-115) also draw upon Denzin (1970) to note these triangulation types:

- Time triangulation

- Space triangulation

- Combined levels of triangulation

- Theoretical triangulation

- Investigator triangulation

- Methodological triangulation

Denzin seems to have changed his account and since there is a lack of clarity in the terminology, let me clarify my own. For my purposes, the key point is that different perspectives on the phenomenon are gathered from different people (Hopkins, 2002: 133-134). In this research project, the phenomenon under investigation is the teaching and learning process, and the experience of it. The source is the person providing a perspective on the phenomenon (the data provider) and the perspective is the point of view contained in the data provided by the source on the phenomenon. This view of triangulation is supported by Creswell (2003: 196) who notes that different data sources of information can be triangulated by examining evidence from the sources to build coherent justification for themes.

I take the different perspectives of research participants as separate data sources and take triangulation to mean the gathering of valid data from these different sources.

In terms of the people involved, the main data sources were the students (through interactive student diaries) and me (through the teacher diary).Whilst I did not have a separate observer in lessons, the audio-recordings allowed me to listen to the lessons during the data analysis period, from the standpoint of a researcher, to provide a third perspective on the phenomenon in line with action research theory. To some extent, this can overcome the limitation imposed upon this kind of action research by the fact that the teacher and researcher are one and the same person.

Teacher and researcher roles need to be distinguished with regard to the interactive student diaries when I interacted with students as a teacher and implemented course-specific teaching approaches. Since an important aim of all three courses was to develop student reflexivity and meta-awareness, interactive student diaries were used to encourage student self-reflection and analysis. The same can be said of many other tasks. Teacher reflexivity was thus deployed for pedagogical purposes during the teaching period, and was supported by researcher reflexivity as I monitored and commented on my conscious implementation of the teaching approaches.

These data were available for post-course analysis, from a researcher standpoint as I retrospectively considered my degree of success, as a teacher, in achieving my own teaching aims through data analysis guided by the research questions. The higher the degree of congruence in the answers to these questions arising from data sources, the more valid the data were likely to be. The fixed point for data collection was basically a particular lesson but each course had 27 fixed points in the form of 27 lessons. Data analysis would hopefully reveal evolution between the fixed points over time.

Diagram 25: Triangulation of Data Collection Techniques
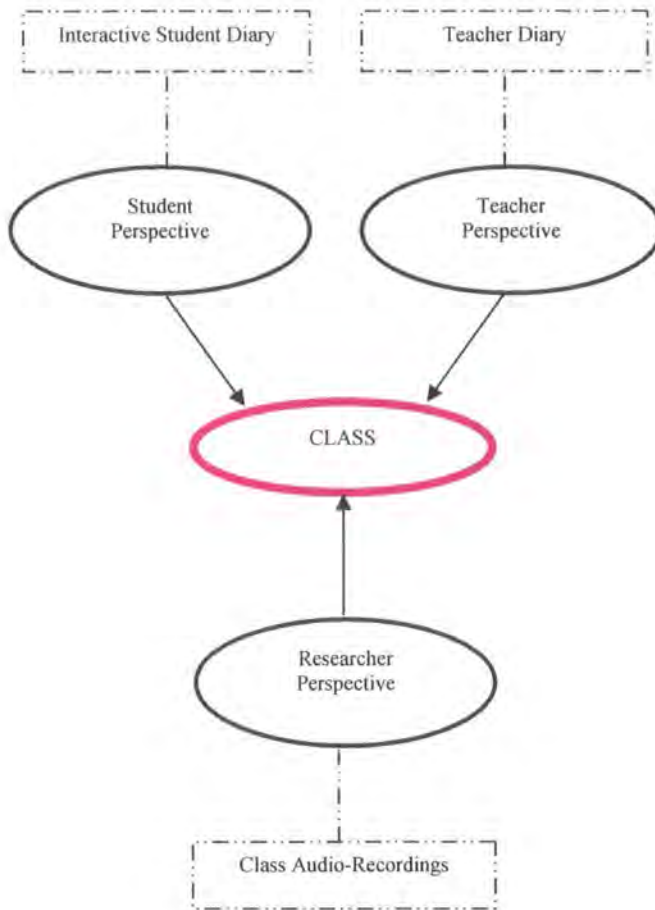
6.4 Ethical Issues

6.4.1 Research Site Access

Though I was not required to provide any information on the Durham ethics form regarding research site access, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 68), Creswell (2003: 65) and Cohen et al (2000: 53) all note that it should be sought. I did not because I was paid to conduct research by my employer and would have been in breach of contract if I had not. My research was partly self-funded and partly funded by a research

grant provided by my university attached to my post. But in the spirit of openness, I

informed colleagues involved in the organisation of advanced second year classes about

my research.

6.4.2 Selection of participants

A preliminary selection of 36 students was made from the initial list of first-year

applicants based on English language ability demonstrated in the first year, but since I

had taught roughly half of them the previous year, I had a prior link with some students.

To maximise fairness, preliminary selection was made in consultation with the only

colleague whose students had also applied for the advanced courses. Research

participation was mandatory if students wanted a place, so there was an element of

coercion on my part which requires justification.

As a teacher, I took the position that there was sufficient reciprocal benefit to

research participants to offset the problematic issue of coercion to some extent

(Creswell, 2003: 65) making sure that the advantages of making research project

participation mandatory outweighed the disadvantages of not doing so (Cohen, Manion

and Morrison, 2000: 50). Students would (a) develop their English language ability (b)

their strategies for responding to cultural difference, and (c) their research awareness in

preparation for thesis writing in later years. I tried to ensure that research participants

understood the nature of the research by promising to send them a project summary at

its conclusion. The courses were likely to be emotionally demanding as students

explored cultural difference, so I made it clear that support would be offered throughout

the course (see Appendix 7).

6.4.3 Informed Consent

I tried to ensure that student consent was informed, considering points made by Cohen et al (2000: 50) and Creswell (2003: 64) by providing students with information about the research project in an information session and asking them to sign consent forms (see appendices 6 and 7). Information was provided in English with Japanese language back-up. Colleagues observed how I presented information about the research project to students and sought consent.

I told prospective research participants that I was researching how foreign language teachers could best develop intercultural communicative competence in foreign language classes but did not give them any course-specific detail. I am confident that I provided enough information for the nature of the project to be understood without deception, which is possible at this stage of research according to Creswell (2003: 62) and Cohen et al (2000: 63-4). In fact, the final selection of research participants for the three courses had not yet been made, so it was impossible to provide them with course-specific information in any case.

Students then had a few days to make a final decision before placing the signed consent form freely into a box located in the main university administrative office. Students were divided into three groups by listing them alphabetically by surname, numbering them 1, 2 and 3 in series from top to bottom, before sorting them by computer into three groups by number. Prior knowledge of students played no part in group construction.

6.4.4 Confidentiality, Data Ownership and Disclosure

Considering points made by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 68) and Cohen et al (2000: 61-2), the confidentiality of research participants was partly protected by insisting that all members of the class took part in the research project to prevent data leaks by non-participants. Research participant anonymity in the thesis was promised on the information form (see Appendix 7), although student names were freely used in data collection and storage to avoid confusion during the research period. Research location confidentiality was not divulged in the thesis. Data confidentiality was protected by keeping it in a lockable area. I sought permission on the consent form to use the data in this thesis, considering points made by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 68) regarding data ownership and disclosure.

6.5 Summary

In this section, I explained why a complex case study was the most suitable approach for my particular research project, and presented its design noting how it was structured for possible replication by other researchers later. I explained how I dealt with the issue of researcher bias in data interpretation with specific reference to researcher and teacher reflexivity within my three teaching approaches. I considered the need to develop conceptual depth and richness over a sustained period of time to uncover generic features of local contexts and facilitate transferability, explaining how I did it noting how I gathered multiple sources of evidence and tried to establish traceable chains of evidence. I concluded with discussion of how I handled important ethical issues.