

Supervisory Work with In-Service Teachers: Case Studies on Some Aspects of Teacher-Outsider Communication

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This paper presents an explanatory analysis of the teacher-outsider discussions held in my fieldwork on English teaching at a public primary school in this country, between three in-service teachers there and myself as an outside observer and teacher trainer in training. The major purpose of the analysis is to look into what is entailed in the act of relating oneself to the individual teacher as an outside observer. Behind this attempt lies the perceived need for examining actual communicative events, not only as the observer's interactive behaviour but also as the interaction between two persons at the intersection of two mental worlds. Focusing upon some aspects of these domains of teacher-outsider communication, I present the view that this analysis can be useful for the novice teacher trainer to learn about both his or her interactive behavioural characteristics and the difficulties experienced in searching for his or her own place and future actions in relation to the teacher's inner world.

This study stems from one nagging question which repeatedly arose during my communicative work with the in-service teachers. The question was: "Why is it hard to see the effectiveness of our communication?" I attempt to go beyond this illusiveness in our communication and identify problems arising either on my side as a novice teacher trainer or in the intersection of the two parties' mental worlds.

The paper begins with a brief review of the literature deriving from my previous work⁽¹⁾ and an examination of the social context for a new development of primary English teaching in this country, and then proceeds to a report on the analysis of the communicative events between the three teachers and myself as an observer. The terms of "communicative work" and "supervisory work" are used to suggest the whole context for two parties' dialogue, making it inclusive of both face-to-face and written communication. The word "observer", as well as the term "teacher trainer", is employed without any particular connotation of administrative supervision, to imply not only classroom observation but also observations about the teacher and his or her teaching context.⁽²⁾

Supervisory work as a matter of two-way communication: a review of the literature

Along with an increased orientation towards the primacy of the teacher's inner world in teacher education and training, current approaches to supervisory work have shed light on particular mental processes or

elements thought to be entailed in the development of the teacher 's knowledge and practice, such as: practical experimentation encouraged by alternative approaches (Freeman 1982; Gebhard 1984); clarification of one 's ideas and a process of reflection and self-evaluation enhanced by non-directive approaches (Freeman 1982; Gebhard 1984); reflection on one 's practice projected in Wallace 's reflective model (Wallace 1991); a problem solving process encouraged in Gebhard 's collaborative supervision (Gebhard 1984); and an exploratory ethos valued in Norrish 's work (Norrish 1996).

These elements might be used to formulate the criteria for the teacher trainer 's self-evaluation in the form of questions such as " Did my action help the teacher to clarify his or her thoughts? ", " Did I facilitate the teacher 's reflection? ", " Did I share an exploratory ethos with the teacher? ". However, how might one find answers to these questions? Would the best assurance of the trainer be that communicative work, or talking to the teacher itself, could make it possible for the teacher to think about him- or herself and that this can be useful for the teacher? Or, are there any ways of grasping productive, or unproductive, effects of an actual teacher-outsider communication?

A novice teacher trainer, like myself, may first search models of the supervisor 's interactive behaviour. Some resources are available for this purpose, such as sample questions and utterances usable on the side of the trainer (Freeman 1982; Gebhard 1984; Bowers 1987) and observed reactions of teachers (Perlberg and Theodor 1975; Gebhard 1984; Bowers 1987). However, these can serve just as starting points, as the teacher trainer needs to go beyond that by coping with what takes place in an actual communicative situation and evaluating his or her own behaviour. The trainer 's behavioural tendencies, his or her own techniques, the teacher 's behavioural characteristics, his or her knowledge, and the two parties ' interaction at the intersection of their mental worlds. All of these may be involved in their communication. The novice trainer, getting lost somewhere in the midst of the illusive effectiveness of his or her communicative work, may be prompted to ask for discourse studies on supervision or teacher counselling, or to search records of actual interaction between the teacher and the trainer. However, these resources are limited.

How might one be able to deal with the teacher-outsider dialogue as a matter of two-way communication? The notion of a better understanding about the teacher may first come to the outsider 's mind, and non-directive approaches to supervisory work are intended to serve this purpose, perhaps to a greater extent than other approaches. However, even an understanding of the teacher may not be an easy thing to do, let alone the two parties ' mutual understanding, the outside observer 's projection of his or her own actions, and the two parties ' shared exploration. The observer, being aware of the very fact that the teacher has his or her own world, might find him- or herself searching some sort of mind map, looking at bits and pieces of what has been done, said, or written by the teacher. Further, it is likely that the outside observer is required to know about him- or herself during his or her communicative work with the teacher, either being under self-monitoring or under self-reflection evoked by the teacher 's reactions.

Wallace (1991) incorporates into supervisory work the four constants which Schön (1983) sees among various professions: " media, language, and repertoires ", for instance, the teacher-student relation as a medium, the word ' task ' as a technical language, and teaching techniques as repertoires; " appreciative systems " or

value systems, which make possible the initial framing of a problem; “ overarching theories, which supply language to describe a phenomenon and offer themes to develop specific interpretations ”; and “ role frames ”, which lead to the setting of one ’ s tasks and one ’ s institutional settings (Schön 1983: 268-275). This newly developed framework would enable us to perceive the teacher-outsider communication to be a situation where the two parties ’ similarities and differences in the constants might intersect, and the teacher trainer ’ s work to be a process in which he or she converses with this mental intersection so as to project, implement and evaluate his or her own actions. This communicative work does not seem to be an easy thing to accomplish. Schön (1983) points out:

Across processes of inquiry, differences in evaluation may not be objectively resolvable. Resolution of such differences depends on the little understood ability of inquirers to enter into one another ’ s appreciative systems and to make reciprocal translations from one to the other. (1983: 273)

A further step could be taken towards an examination of actual communicative events between the teacher and the outside observer in terms of both the outsider ’ s interactive behaviour and the intersection of the two parties ’ inner worlds. What would take place in an actual supervisory work situation, how might the observer deal with the situation and what would he or she plan to do for the teacher? In this paper I shall attempt to explore these questions by examining the communication between the participants in my fieldwork and myself. The major methodological query should be about the way of dealing with the characteristics of the outsider ’ s behaviours and techniques and the constants coined by Schön (1983) and incorporated into supervisory work by Wallace (1991).

Social context

Behind the teaching practice of the participants in my study is a new development of primary English teaching which has been introduced into the public sector by the central government of Japan. The government first assigned experimental studies at two schools in 1992 and then, in 1996, extended the number to 47 from a total of some 24800 public primary schools.⁽³⁾ The school of the three teachers was among them and I visited them in the last term of their three-year experimental study. The study ended in March 1999, when the school decided to continue its exploratory work in teaching English.

Unlike in secondary English teaching, curriculum guidelines were not offered by the government. According to one participant in my study, the school developed its curriculum by reference to a forerunner school in another prefecture. They have two types of English classes: 45-minute English lessons offered to 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-year pupils once a week, and 15-minute sessions called “ Kids ’ Time ” offered to all years.

The school was small, with 174 pupils, one homeroom each year, and 12 teachers, including the principal and the vice-principal. Three participants in my study: two Japanese homeroom teachers and one native-speaking part-time teacher from Britain.

Teacher education and training in primary English teaching has been an unexplored area for research studies, although the urgent need for its development has been called for. The current primary school teachers do not have any undergraduate training in the field of English teaching, unless they obtained a secondary school teachers' certificate in foreign languages in addition to a primary school teachers' certificate. English has not been included in the school subjects in the undergraduate certificate programme in primary education. Nogami's study (1993) suggests that there is a small number of colleges and universities in this country which offer seminars and/or lectures in teaching English to children.

What have the in-service teachers' learning opportunities been like? I am not aware of any long-term courses offered in this country specifically for the teachers involved in the development of primary English teaching, except for some master's programmes which are open to in-service teachers in general. An examination of the final report of the school I visited shows that there were at least three aspects of human contact related to the teachers' learning and development: 1) the administrative supervisory work conducted by a group from the Ministry of Education and by an adviser from their local board of education; 2) the exchanges with other primary schools where experimental studies had been conducted, and with a junior high school in their local area (e.g., visits); 3) the activities conducted within the school, such as peer observation and feedback and committee meetings. It is worthwhile to add that one participant in my study highly valued this third aspect of their learning.

There is one noticeable feature of the school I visited and many others, namely, a type of team teaching conducted by one of these three types of international team: a combination of a native speaker teacher and a Japanese homeroom teacher, which is applicable to the school I visited, a team of a native speaker teacher and a Japanese teacher who is qualified in teaching English, or a group of these three.

Demonstration and observation of lessons are entailed in all the above-mentioned aspects of teacher learning, as a primary practice. The word "gakkyu-oukoku", which means homeroom kingdom, is used among primary school teachers to indicate each teacher's monopoly on his or her class. The traditional practice of lesson demonstration to outsiders may well have encouraged teachers to become more open to outside observers, but it might also have reinforced a gap between what they would do on formal occasions for demonstration and their everyday practice, such as better preparation on a formal occasion.

Other aspects of teacher learning are university faculty involvement and teacher participation in a professional organisation. It is possible for primary school teachers to contact members from a university or a research centre, at a workshop or a conference, or through inviting them as lecturers or advisers. Incidentally, my senior professor gave a lecture in the primary school before I approached it about doing the project. Having a novice trainer, however, was their first experience.

Case studies

1. Participants

I call the two Japanese participants “ Sakura ” and “ Momo ” and the British participant “ Ann ”. I was the outside observer. All of these participants are female teachers. Sakura and Momo were in their early forties, Ann was the youngest, and I was in my middle forties. Table 1 shows these participants ’ teaching experience.

Table 1 Participants ’ teaching experience (as of 31 March 1999)

	primary	English teaching			pre-service
	education	primary	secondary	higher	teacher training
Sakura	20 years	3 years	-	-	-
Momo	18 years	3 years	-	-	-
Ann	2 years	2 years	-	-	-
Observer	6 months	-	4 years	15 years	3 years

Both Sakura and Momo have been working as full-time teachers in the public sector throughout their professional lives. Sakura had her first experience offering 45-minute English lessons in the final year of their experimental study, in the last term of which I observed her. Momo holds an undergraduate teachers ’ certificate in secondary English teaching. She had been teaching English lessons since the beginning of the experimental study.

Ann was a Coordinator for International Relations working at a City Hall and one of the two native-speaking part-time English teachers in the school. This teaching job was her first experience in teaching primary school children, and she taught with all the homeroom teachers there one day a week. Ann holds a TEFL qualification, and had some previous experience in teaching adults.

I was a faculty member of a private university. I had some past associations with a group of Japanese children living in Canada but no previous experience in primary English teaching, neither as a teacher nor as an observer.

2. Procedures

My fieldwork was based on a general framework of teacher-observer communication given in a postgraduate module offered by the Institute of Education, University of London. Among the elements of the framework were: the purpose of exploring ways of helping the individual teacher; an increased understanding of the teacher ’ s professional situation; and the need for a non-judgmental attitude towards the teacher ’ s competence. The study included four small projects, each of which consisted of classroom observations and subsequent discussions. One specific aim of the teacher-observer discussion was to explore the two parties ’ histories to examine the differences and similarities in their views. We, participants in the module, were

encouraged to have a person to observe us in each session for discussion. I had three observers, one time with each participant: the principal of the school with Sakura, a Japanese colleague of mine with Momo, and a British colleague of mine with Ann.

The major phases of my project: 1) my initial contact with Momo at a conference; 2) the prior formal procedure proceeded with the principal of the school, in which correspondence through fax was set up for contact with the participants and the school; 3) my visits for classroom observations and discussions (4 times), in which the classes observed and the sessions for discussion were all tape-recorded; 4) the final mutual feedback through fax correspondence. At the outset of the project a letter was sent to each participant to invite them to the project and explain its general framework. It was emphasised in the letter that the purpose was not to evaluate their competence but to explore ways of helping them.

Table 2 and Table 3 indicate the frequencies of our face-to-face and written communication respectively.

Table 2 Face to face communication: frequencies

	discussion	classroom observation	
		English lessons	Kids ' Time
Sakura	2 (26 Jan., 16 Feb.)	3 classes (4 th year)	-
Momo	2 (2 Feb., 2 March)	3 classes (6 th year)	-
Ann	1 (2 Feb.)	7 classes (4 th , 5 th 6 th)	6 classes

Table 3 Printed materials offered by the observer (mostly through fax): frequencies

	Sakura	Momo	Ann
Query about the aspect to be observed	1*	1*	-
Summary accounts on the 1st discussion	1	-	1*
Agenda for the 2nd discussion	1	1	-
Questionnaire substituted for the 2nd discussion	-	-	1*
Comments on a lesson and transcription/analysis of the lesson	-	1	-
Final summary and feedback	1	1	1
Final query	1*	1*	1*

* Indicates that the teacher offered a written answer or written feedback.

The language chosen for communication was each participant 's first language: Japanese for Sakura and Momo, which is also my first language, and English for Ann.

3. Methods of analysis

The data utilised in this study are tape-recorded and transcribed discussions between each of the three

teachers and myself, my observers' comments on our discussions, the written materials used for our communication, and my field notes on what was done and observed during my visits to the school. The specific method employed to examine the observer's interactive behaviour is to look at discussion sessions in terms of turns of varied length and frequencies of a group of semantic categories of the observer's utterances. The issues examined to see the intersection of the two parties' inner worlds are: focal points of individual tutoring; language, conceptions and values; the perceived social relationship between the teacher and the observer; and the use of written materials for communication. All of these aspects of teacher-observer communication are tentatively chosen under the intention of looking at whatever can be examined at this stage of my inquiry.

The determination of turns was based on several factors: 1) whether the hearer's verbal response is located after the speaker's completion of an utterance or in the middle of the utterance; 2) in the latter case, whether the speaker completed his or her utterance or switched to offering a reply; 3) in the context where a unit shows a form known as a minimum response (e.g., " ee " in Japanese), a copying or completing of part of the interlocutor's utterance, or a formulaic pattern (e.g., " sodesuka " <Is that so?>), the criterion was whether or not the interlocutor's reply was given to the unit. In the following sample turns Ann is talking about the JET programme through which she was invited to Japan.

- Ann: They expand the range every year. There are more countries they include in the programme. As it is I'm not sure how many, maybe seventeen countries or something, not all the
- Me: Seventeen?
- Ann: Maybe approximately, yea, um, but largely the main countries, America, England, Australia, New Zealand, yea.

For a qualitative account of the observer's interactive behaviour, 13 categories are drawn out of the observer's utterances contained in the transcriptions of discussions. They are: statement of purpose; question about past experience; confirmation or interpretation of the teacher's remark; response to question; stage or topic shift; classroom observation or interpretation on it; the observer's situational unfamiliarity; question about teaching practice; alternative viewpoint or teaching method; suggestion; agreement; positive evaluation; the observer's own experience or situation.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 The observer's interactive behaviour

4.1.1 Turns of varied length

Table 4 indicates the total number of the observer's and the teacher's turns in each session and the percentage of the individual person's turns of varied length⁽⁴⁾. Two of my observers participated in our conversation at the final stage of the discussion sessions. The length of these discussions and the turns contained in them are not included in the figures in Table 4. Also, the data from the second session with Momo is not examined in this section.

Table 4 Total number of each participant 's turns and percentage of turns of varied length for the individual participant

	Total	0-10 sec.	10-30 sec.	30-60 sec.	60-120 sec.	More
	(number)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
	O / T	O / T	O / T	O / T	O / T	O / T
Sakura Time 1 (37 min.)	37/36	54/25	22/28	16/25	8/17	0/6
Sakura Time 2 (55 min.)	139/140	79/68	15/18	3/7	2/7	1/0
Momo Time 1 (48 min.)	125/124	76/69	18/17	4/12	2/1	0/2
Ann (38 min.)	74/72	77/49	15/24	7/19	1/8	0/0

O: observer T: teacher

This table suggests that the first conversation between Sakura and me had the greater ratio of longer turns than in the other samples, especially on the side of Sakura. In addition, interruption and overlapping were rare in this sample. If these observations can be interpreted as our initial tendency towards a formal interview type of exchange, our second-time meeting seems to be more like an informal type of conversation, in the sense that, like in the first session for Momo, the sample shows that more than eighty percent of turns were either the shortest or the next shortest ones, for both parties. Sakura 's sincere attitude towards responding to my queries was observed in both sessions.

The high ratio of shorter turns revealed on both sides of Momo and myself at Momo Time 1 may have been affected by the fact that we had previous contact at a conference and on the phone.

The session between Ann and me shows high percentages of my shortest and second shortest turns. On the other hand, Ann 's pattern is closer to Sakura 's at Time 1 in terms of having a larger ratio of longer turns. Her statements about her own rationales and assumptions take a large portion of my transcription, although I did not ask many why questions. This contrast may be related to the non-native state of my English.

4.1.2 Semantic categories of the observer 's utterances

Table 5 indicates the major categories used to examine this writer 's verbal behaviour and their frequencies as revealed in the first sessions for the three teachers. Some turns were explained by one category, whereas others by a group of categories. The purpose of this analysis is to explore the questions of what I did to the participants through talking to them and what problems can be seen in my behaviour.

The highest frequencies are shown in three categories. One is the confirmation or the interpretation of the teacher 's remarks. This includes a repetition of part of the teacher 's utterance, a completion of the teacher 's incomplete utterance, an enquiry about the teacher 's implication (e.g., " You mean mainly in English? " from Ann 's session), and an interpretation of the teacher 's remark (e.g., " You did it as an experiment, didn 't you? " from Momo 's session). This category could be utilised for our consideration of the kind of understanding which is valued in non-directive approaches, but it should be a more discourse- and interaction-oriented notion than expected in the models.

Another category showing a high frequency is classroom observation and interpretation. This reflects the fact that all the sessions had an observational basis.

Table 5 Categories of the observer's interactive behaviour: frequencies

Sample (in chronological order)	Sakura 1	Ann	Momo 1	Total
statement of purpose	1	0*	2	3
question: past experience	0	5	6	11
confirmation/interpretation of T's remark	8	17	26	51
response to question	1	1	12	14
stage shift / topic shift	6	4	9	19
classroom observations/interpretations	15	12	15	42
O's situational unfamiliarity	2	4	2	8
question: teaching practice	10	6	22	38
alternative viewpoints/methods	7	6	12	25
suggestion	4	1	2	7
agreement	4	3	4	11
positive evaluation	6	0	2	8
O's own experience/situation	2	0	7	9

* A brief statement of the purpose of our discussion was offered before the recording.

The third category of high frequency is questions about teaching practice. The discursual context where my questions took place varied from sample to sample.

In the first session for Sakura I started with an attempt to clarify her own purposes of the observed lesson. However, because of a difficulty arising on my side in understanding and accepting her conceptual framework, I switched to raising some of the questions which I had obtained from the classroom observation and maintained this framework up to the end of our conversation. The stage shift was made without a sufficient response to Sakura's accounts, but she was responsive enough to follow the overall path set up on my side.

In the session for Ann, I began to offer questions about her teaching practice in my twenty-sixth turn. Two of the six questions raised were about whether she felt comfortable with the frequent occurrence of the pupils' talk about Japanese culture. What I was concerned about were whether she wanted to talk more about her country and whether it was appropriate to encourage the pupils so much to talk about their country. What Ann gave me were these comments: " They should learn to be proud of it (i.e., their culture) and I think, I think it's good, um, it also makes it easy for me to say ' We don't have that in England ' . " The other questions were more challenging ones. One sample utterance is this direct enquiry about Ann's classroom language choice which was made after she had requested my criticism: " Do you have any policy about choosing between English and Japanese? " We continued talking about this issue on other occasions.

The questions which I raised in the first session for Momo were for understanding rather than for challenging. As we have already observed, the session was characterised by our exchange of short turns. Sample events of this type from the data include: at one time I offered a series of questions about the way she had been dealing with her classroom teaching, with the use of our familiar words, such as structures, vocabulary, grammar and listening comprehension; at a later stage I expressed my unfamiliarity with one of her vocabulary items and asked her to explain its meaning. It was also in this context of short turn exchanges that I was able to raise why questions rather spontaneously.

A closer look at the data from the first sessions for the three teachers would reveal some weaknesses of this novice trainer in training. One of them was that I made explicit the purpose of our discussion not only in the above three samples but also in the other two sessions (i.e., Sakura Time 2 and Momo Time 2), but I scarcely went beyond that to a joint search for our conclusion. In addition, the purpose of the session for Ann was defined rather vaguely and the following written comments I received from Ann seem to suggest that the vagueness of my intention was reflected in the whole process of our discussion.

I agree with Vincent (as I shall refer to my observer in the session for Ann) that perhaps you should have thought of some concrete, stimulating questions beforehand. It was difficult to know what you wanted me to talk about because you were a little vague and uncertain in your comments.

The comments given by the observer of the discussion between Ann and me seem to pinpoint my interactive characteristics, at least those in English. According to the observer, I was a good listener and Ann obviously felt much ease with me; I managed to create a good dialogue after the first 15-20 minutes, but I should have asked more questions; and criticism was well made and it did not make Ann upset. In conjunction with this, a criticism was made by the observer of my discussion with Momo, regarding the fact that I had occasionally been more oriented towards understanding the teacher and letting her talk than towards guiding the conversation and keeping it on track.

Another problematic feature was that, on the whole, utterances for a stage shift or a topic shift occurred along with very brief comments on the teacher's remarks, or even without any comments on them. This feature needs to be examined in terms of its effects on both parties. The teacher may have felt left behind where she had offered a long talk. I may have missed a good opportunity to probe some issue/s entailed in the teacher's talk.

Still another problem concerns my familiarity with alternative approaches. It is shown in the data that I tended to offer an alternative viewpoint without any request from my conversational partner, very much like an image of a teacher who tries to say, "You can look at the issue from this perspective as well" and thus easily imposes her inner world where the teacher is not ready for the perspective or where she is not familiar with it. This feature, together with the occurrence of my positive evaluative comments, may be interpreted as an evaluative mode of my communication. The occurrence of my positive evaluative comments seems to have been affected by another factor, for instance, my consideration of the innovative situation in Sakura's

professional life.

4.2 The intersection of the two parties 'inner worlds

4.2.1 Focal points of individual tutoring

As rightly pointed out by Bowers (1987), continuity of contact is necessary for the development of teacher-observer relationship and discussion. Over the course of my fieldwork I developed one focal point of our communication for each participant: helping Sakura to clarify her own framework, encouraging Ann to consider the issue of language choice, and exploring with Momo the instructional language and the roles of the Japanese homeroom teacher. Among the major results of our discussions were; with Sakura, Sakura's perception of positive effects of a written presentation of my tentative views and questions on her self-reflection; with Ann, my recognition of a gap between Ann and myself in the intensity of probing into an issue; and with Momo, my perception of the strength of Momo's values. Details follow:

Sakura

In the second session for Sakura, I presented a printed summary of my tentative views and questions about her teaching context, her teaching methods and her positionality, and asked her to examine those views and questions.⁽⁵⁾ Sakura gave me a lot of comments, modifying my views or expressing some uncertainty about a particular view of mine or hers. Thanks to the printed agenda, Sakura occasionally initiated our conversation, by saying "No, the next topic is this one." While we were talking about the pupil's self-monitoring, and also in her reply to my final query, Sakura mentioned positive effects of this particular method: realising some of the things which had existed in her mind in a chaotic manner, including the "something" which she had been searching for; and putting her own views into question (e.g., her view on the secondary level English teaching). As a consequence, it was necessary for me to see whether any radical undesirable effects on Sakura had arisen from this session.

Ann

I observed in the sessions for the three teachers that distinctions were made between those native-speaking teachers who were competent in Japanese and those who were not, i.e., Ann versus the non-Japanese-speaking teacher. This contrast was reflected in the Japanese teachers' observation about the differing positive effects of the two teachers' instructions on the pupils, namely, the security given by Ann and the real need to use English encouraged by the other.

Ann mentioned that there were problems arising in the communication between Japanese teachers and those native-speaking teachers who were not proficient in Japanese. I intended to encourage Ann to go beyond that aspect of the contrast between Japanese-speaking and non-Japanese-speaking native speaker teachers and to highlight the greater flexibility she could have in terms of language choice. Although I introduced the viewpoint of the classroom linguistic environment for the pupils' development in English, I was not proficient enough to make my intention transparent to Ann in our discussion. Furthermore, Ann responded to my criticism much earlier than I had expected. She wrote two weeks later: "I had never evaluated myself or the way I teach before, so it was useful to listen to your comments. I will try to use more English!" These

comments led me to decide to simply suggest to Ann my continuous interest in her classroom language.

Momo

I had an ongoing dialogue with Momo over the issue of the Japanese homeroom teacher's instructional language. While attempting to clarify her reasons and framework, I presented a transcribed lesson which had been analysed in terms of the types of language Momo had used in the lesson, with foci on the aspect of the roles which she had assigned to herself. The major categories showing frequent occurrence in the aspect of Momo-student interaction were: request for students' repetition (e.g., "Let's say it together, one, two."); public comprehension check (e.g., "Raise your hand if you have understood most of Ann's story."); interpretation of students' difficulty, praise, calling on students, and administration. In our final written exchange Momo gave me the following view on the sharing of transcribed lessons, together with an interest in the above-mentioned categories:

It enables us to see Ann's intention, the homeroom teacher's (i.e., Momo's own) intention, and causes for a breakdown of the children's activity, etc. more objectively. I once tape-recorded my lessons to examine the development of the children's vocabulary. It's hard for me to talk in the classroom while monitoring my roles and language, but I can learn from it.

The communication I conducted with Momo regarding the transcribed lesson made me realise the strength of her values. In response to my query about the things which came to her mind while looking at the transcriptions and the results of my analysis, Momo offered both negative and positive self-evaluations. She first mentioned that she had not told Ann before the lesson about her pupils' total unfamiliarity with past tense forms and because of that the lesson had been a little hard for them to cope with. Momo then said that she had performed the function of helping Ann and the pupils to communicate with each other rather smoothly. She places a high value on this role of the Japanese teacher. Behind the value lies her assumption that the Japanese homeroom teacher knows more about his or her pupils than the native-speaking teacher.

What Ann attempted to do in the lesson was to have the pupils listen to her simple story including some past tense forms and the word "yesterday". Momo reacted to a seeming difficulty of her pupils and switched to the task of learning a group of past tense forms. Assuming that Momo was oriented towards starting with word units, and also recalling her interest in listening comprehension, I suggested, as an alternative, her letting Ann continue her activity and then examining the pupils' comprehension with the use of some more indirect devices. In the final written exchange, I took a further step towards encouraging Momo to distance herself from the basic role she had assigned to herself, by suggesting possibilities for alternative roles. However, the effect of my approaches is unknown to me. What was sure was that the need for communication which led to my actions was not Momo's but this outside observer's, and it was not based on any clear understanding of her pupils.

4.2.2 Language, conceptions and values

All three participants and I are teachers and this indicates that it can be assumed that we have a certain range of common vocabulary, common conceptions, and common values. The term "lesson plans", regarding

teaching practice as a progression from preparation through implementation to feeding back, and the importance of the teacher 's attentiveness to each individual student are sample items which I observed among Sakura, Momo and myself. ⁽⁶⁾ The four participants, including myself, have some group differences. I, as a teaching practitioner, am living outside their sphere of primary education. Ann is from another country. It is in this context that the participants ' social and cultural differences in language, conceptions and values need to be examined.

The existence of common vocabulary items, conceptions and values not only makes our communication easier but also offers starting points for discussion. For instance, as mentioned earlier (see 4.1.1), I was able to raise questions to Momo easily, thanks to our familiar terms concerning English teaching. Another example is Sakura 's familiarity with the concept of self-monitoring, which made it possible for Sakura and myself to grasp what we were trying to do in the second session and talk about it together. At the same time, however, we are aliens to each other in that we possess certain vocabulary items, conceptions and values which are unfamiliar to the other party or person.

Based on my fieldwork I assume that whether or not the teacher can have a mode of sharing a particular concept introduced by the outside observer depends on the context and that this may also be the case with the outsider being faced with a new concept from the teacher. For instance, I presented and explained the concept of content-area related instruction to both Sakura and Ann, as it was suggestive of one major aspect of their lessons. I saw Sakura being reassured, with the help of this concept, that she had been positive about the incorporation of what pupils have learned or are learning in other school subjects, whereas it was difficult for me to draw Ann 's attention to this aspect of their instruction and share an interest in it with her.

I obtained a group of words which seemed to be widely used among those who are engaged in primary education, for instance, " taiken-gakushu " (learning by doing) and " mondai-kaiketsu-gakushu " (problem solving). There was one pair of concepts which was hard for me to understand and accept, namely, " kokusai-rikai kyouiku "(education for international understanding) versus " eigo kyouiku "(English language teaching). At the very beginning stage of our first discussion, Sakura highlighted the value of the former, while devaluing the latter, attributing to it the aim of developing the ability to pronounce beautifully and produce correct sentences. This served as a motivator for setting up the focal point of my tutoring for Sakura (see 4.2.1).

A progression was made through communicating with the other teachers in that I obtained some understanding of their meanings. Momo 's remarks suggested that in her concept of international understanding she implied the value placed on her pupils ' direct contact with people from other countries, especially with those native-speaking people teaching them, which, as Momo pointed out, was rare when we were children. She emphasised that such experience would enable children to develop " kyoukanteki rikai " (sympathetic understanding) in her terms. Ann 's remark was consistent with Momo 's: " My main aim is to make them realize that I 'm a normal person. " In other words, Ann feels that she is helping the children to get used to being with people from other countries. In addition, Ann used the English translation " international understanding ". This served as an oasis for me, as I had always needed to see the meanings of commonly used terms in Japanese and their translatability.

There was one critical phase at Sakura Time 1 where I needed to reflect on what I, as a teacher of English, had long taken for granted. As mentioned earlier (see 4.1.2), our first conversation was mostly about an English lesson which I had observed. Starting with greeting and singing songs, the lesson focused upon practicing using two patterned dialogues concerning the weather, and then proceeded to Ann's lecture on the winter season in Britain. A question raised to the 4th-year pupils was why it is warmer in winter in Britain than expected in light of its location as compared with that of Japan. Two theories, the Sea Theory and the Sun Theory (as I shall refer to the pupils' hypotheses), showed up in the class. The lesson led me to raise a group of issues to Sakura, such as the pupils' mixed use of English and Japanese (e.g., a group of loan words used in the sentence pattern 'I use X', such as "hotto kapetto" (hot carpet) and "eakon" (air conditioner), the development of their vocabulary, ways of dealing with errors, and the role division between Sakura and Ann. I was oriented towards the further development of the pupils' English, assuming that some students were motivated to use more English. A motivator for this assumption was the fact that one pupil said, "Eigo-de nan-to yuu-noka wakaranai-keredo," (I don't know how to put this in English, but).

The principal's comments on our discussion were instructive. According to her, I was looking at classroom instruction from the viewpoint of English language teaching and, in this respect, I was hasty in considering the effects of instruction on the development of pupils' English, whereas Sakura was considering her pupils' growth within a more general framework of primary education.⁽⁷⁾ The message made me wonder if any productive way of coping with this intersubjectivity could be developed.

A consideration of children's growth in general terms as applied to English teaching can be seen in the view of children's inner development which is presented in the final report of the school. In their view, children develop the ability to communicate with others through acts of communication to be enhanced in a spiraled way, along with recurrent enhancement of self-concept and understanding of others. This view was both refreshing and problematic to me. It was habitual for me to consider the students' development in terms of language content and language skills. In conjunction with this, it was natural for me to be concerned with the language being used by the teachers and the pupils in the classroom, especially in the context where activities were conducted largely in the pupils' first language. Further, the concepts of communicative competence as coined by linguists come to mind. The question arises as to what I, as a teacher engaged in higher education, might gain from the viewpoint of young people's growth in more general terms. Likewise, it was natural for primary school teachers to utilise concepts and frameworks available to them. What would it be for them to incorporate perspectives of teachers of English? It seems to me an orientation towards a general framework of primary education may easily lead to disregarding considerations of whether or not English is used as classroom language and whether and how it would be possible to improve children's skills in English.

4.2.3 The perceived social relationship between the teacher and the outside observer

The relationship of an outside observer to a group of teachers is not mono-dimensional in the observer's mind. At the initial stage of his or her contact with the teachers, or in the actual processes of his or her communicative work, the observer might hold varied criteria which are vaguely suggestive of group divisions, for instance, in my case, the educational level in which we are engaged, the educational sector in which we

work, whether and how we have been trained as a teacher of English, and whether we are acting as users of English in our daily lives.

Such criteria might produce, to the outside observer, differing expectations and assumptions for the individual teachers and/or the groups of teachers. The observer's expectations and assumptions might be reflected, in some way or another, in his or her own approaches and actions, and thus affect the dynamics of the two parties' communication. For example, I expected that I was sharing more with Momo than Sakura, and this affected my differing approaches to them. To Momo, I offered more professional approaches to classroom teaching, and our communication ended with my perception of her values and unknown effects of our dialogue and Momo's request for my views on teaching English to children. From Sakura, I learned that it might be erroneous to assume that those teachers who had been outside the area of teaching English were less flexible in thinking and teaching than those having background knowledge in the field.

On the whole, I had some notions which seemed to be divergent from the traditional model of supervision, such as "helping", "collaborative manner", and "joint research". I also believed in the evolving nature of our relationship. The first stumbling block was a formulaic expression in Japanese which I received from Momo and some other teachers at the school, namely, "iroiro oshiete-kudasai" (Please teach us various things). This suggested to me a little hierarchical relationship and a distancing between the teachers and myself.

After going through a series of communicative actions, my eventual query was whether we had communicated with each other basically under a rather unchangeable view of our relationship. Sakura once said to me, "Please don't be tough on me". This puzzled me, and I asked her in my final query why she had said so. The following were Sakura's comments, which gave me another opportunity to ponder on my identity:

I had an image of a professor continuing her study with an innumerable amount of data. That was probably why I said such a thing, but through our communication I've begun to have an image of a gentle older sister.

Momo maintained the expression of "iroiro oshiete-kudasai" and, in response to my final request for her feedback, she mentioned that she wanted me to tell her more about my views on teaching English to children.

As for the model of collaborative supervision, Gebhard (1984) points out that there might be a resistance to the idea of sharing under the notion of equality, with a subsequent lowering of the teacher's esteem for the supervisor, in a specific social context where a more directive and authoritative role of the supervisor is expected by the teacher. Another possibility is that the teacher may perceive his or her relationship to the supervisor to be one of the teacher to the expert and researcher. Wallace (1991) suggests that this mental contrast could imply a gulf of "mutual contempt and antipathy" (1991:11). My contact with Sakura and Momo suggested that these views of Gebhard's and Wallace's would not apply to our relationship, perhaps partially because of the teachers' perceptions of the novice state of my skills in helping in-service teachers. The view which I obtained from our communication was that getting useful input from the outsider might be a major expectation. In my view, this expectation does not necessarily exclude a sharing mode from the teacher, such

as offering information and openness to the outsider 's remarks, and it does not always include the notion of inequality or the superior/inferior contrast residing in the teacher 's mind.

4.2.4 The use of written materials for communication

There were four major motivators for my use of written materials. First of all, contact through fax was initially set up by the principal of the school. Secondly, I assumed that the teachers were used to writing and, thus, would be able to easily respond to my query in a written form. The third motivator concerns the agenda of our conversation which I presented to Sakura and Momo before our second sessions for discussion. I presumed that they were used to using written agendas in their committee meetings. The last one was the hope arising on my side not to make our communication ephemeral. I simply wrote about this hope when sending my final summary and comments to the three teachers. All of them were flexible enough to respond to my final queries in their own ways, for instance, by using another sheet of paper so as to give me a fuller account.

Besides the positive effects perceived by Sakura (see 4.2.1), two problems were observed regarding the use of written material. One is an individual teacher 's preference for face-to-face communication which is suggested in the following written exchange between me and Ann:

Me: Do you find talking in feedback session more comfortable or useful than filling in questionnaires? Why?

Ann: Definitely. Filling in questionnaires is extremely one-sided and does not encourage direct communication which I believe to be essential. Talking in a relaxed atmosphere and sharing opinions is the best way to exchange information and solve problems.

Another problematic issue is the restrictive effect of the words used in written material on the teacher 's thought. A sign of this issue was suggested when I communicated with Momo and Ann individually about the kind of teacher education and training course which they might wish to take. Incidentally, I offered different sample elements of the course; to Momo: " course content " and " particular issues of interest "; and to Ann: " some of the subject areas you might want or need to learn ", " the main strands of the course ", " modes of instruction ", and " theoretical and practical components ". It was found later that Momo 's answers in my oral interview and Ann 's responses to my questionnaire corresponded to these written concepts respectively. This observation, if it were to be interpreted as the influence of the written words, would need to be examined in a more general framework, as the issue of the influence of the observer 's inner world.

One might add that some contextual factors, such as constraints on the frequency of contact, might make it hard for the outside observer to get involved in all the problems and solutions on the side of the teacher. For the outsider to conduct a more continuous and intensive communication with each individual teacher, a particular instrument for communication might need to be developed. Sharing a diary on the basis of the two parties ' agreement could be one workable device.

Concluding remarks

The communication between the teacher and the observer would offer the teacher opportunities to open his or her private world to the other. In the case of the three participants in my study, all were rather articulate, and, through talking with me, they may have been reassured as to what they had been thinking. I tried to understand what they said, but such communication involved more than that.

The observer 's interactive behaviour is a major aspect to consider in supervisory work. The examination of turns of varied length and frequencies of semantic categories of my own utterances, as well as my observers ' comments, has enabled me to reflect on my interactive behavioural characteristics which may have depended largely on force of habit, in a more explicit manner than the way I had occasionally been aware. Among the issues to be considered for my future opportunities are: skills in guiding the conversation in the direction of a shared conclusion, ways of responding fully to the teacher 's utterances and his or her world implied in them; possibilities of too readily jumping into an evaluative mode and into a pursuit for a shared exploration; and skills in conducting interviews and discussions in English.

Another important aspect is the intersection of the two parties ' inner worlds. I have tentatively chosen four issues concerning this matter. In the light of the short period of time spent on my fieldwork, it may be possible to assume that it is rather premature to explore the effectiveness of the work. However, this analysis has enabled me to see what actually took place in our communication and to see some of the major factors involved in it more clearly than otherwise might have been captured: expectations for communication and actions reflecting them; language, conceptions and values; the perceived social relationship between the teacher and the outside observer; and difficulties arising from differences in these factors. It is a profound recognition that the outsider him- or herself does affect the process and the result of the two parties ' communication.

I thank all the teachers in the school, especially the principal, the vice-principal and the three teacher participants in my study, for letting me share time with them to think about what could be done for their pupils and for primary school children in this country. Sharing the feelings of ' our children ' was a precious experience for me.

Notes

(1) Fukushima, M., ' Approaches to Supervisory Work: A Review of the Literature ', in the *Journal of Toyama University of International Studies*, Vol. 10(March 2000).

(2) The term " teacher trainer " used in this paper concerns both " training " and " development " as discussed by Freeman (1982).

(3) This information is from a URL published by Kenkyusha: <http://www2.ascii.co.jp/kenkyusha/mag/gendai/Databank/shogaku.html/>. The total number of public primary schools is from Ito et al. (1992).

(4) Fractions of .5 and over have been counted as a unit and the rest has been cast away.

(5) Several terms indicative of Sakura 's teaching methods were presented: Sakura 's skills in initiating classroom activities and her use of L1 registers for primary school children; songs, jazz chants, and games; teaching of patterned dialogues and the importance of content; pair pattern practice and group activities; and an incorporation of other school subject matters.

- (6) Another common resource for teaching obtained from Sakura and Momo, and also from the principal, was the teacher's own experience in learning English. For example, I shared with the principal an observation on the pupils' holistic way of acquiring English (e.g., getting chunks) as opposed to our analytical way of learning English.
- (7) What was said by the principal seemed to be related to the fact that they were engaged in public education: " We just don't want our pupils to dislike learning English. " Sakura, in our second discussion, mentioned that she had wondered whether the introduction of English teaching into their curriculum would be a burden on pupils.

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