# Cross-Cultural Paradoxes in a Profession of Values

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This article addresses the theme of the 1995 TESOL Convention: Building Our Futures Together. It takes building to be an activity that, like effective communication, prefers common ground and solid foundations. The common ground proposed is a view of TESOL as an undertaking that provides, for its long-term practitioners, a professional vehicle for self-development. An interdependence of the personal and professional arises from the underlying values that inform our actions in the various cultures and subcultures in which we live. This is where foundations must be laid. We face paradoxes, or dilemmas, when clashes develop between different sets of values: for example, the professional values we espouse as people-who-teach, the political values that dominate the societies in which we work, and the cultural values that predominate in societies with which we interact. The article examines three such paradoxes from a perspective that emphasizes our daily need not only to act, but to act in ways consonant with the values we profess. Finally, in an avowedly personal statement, the article sketches a preferred vision of partnership in futures building for TESOL.

This paper is personal. One connotation of *personal* is subjective; a related connotation is that one knows too little about the topic to make a valid generalisation. Both connotations apply to this attempt to contribute to the study of what it means to be a person-who-teaches in the area of TESOL at the end of the 20th century. Generalisations, however, have not always served us well, either in terms of how languages are learned or how they are taught, for they have all too often lost sight of the people concerned in the learning and teaching. Moreover, it is at the level of the personal that theory-in-use (Argyris & Schön, 1974) is articulated in action. The fundamental theme of this paper is that the theoretical, the professional, and the personal intermingle.

The outline of the above paragraph, as many readers will immediately recognise, is taken from Hymes (1972). This is a deliberate attempt to make a noise. Hymes's argument that the use of language has fundamental importance in linguistic theory has been basic to the development of contemporary TESOL. Short as this period of development has been, it has also been long enough for more than one generation of TESOL professionals to have grown to maturity in the field. TESOL has become a vehicle for a whole working life in a culture where what one does plays a major role in the creation of one's identity.

The relationship I mean to invoke is that of Whitman (1885/1986):

And there is no trade or employment but the young man following it may
become a hero,
And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for the wheeled universe,
And any man or woman shall stand cool and supercilious before a million
universes. (Section 48, Lines 1268–1270)

And the point of departure I am seeking to map out, with Whitman's help, is this.

First, that TESOL (and teacher education in TESOL) is what I do, in a full-time and long-term sense. This is not TESOL as a summer job, or TESOL for a few years until I start a proper career, or TESOL for supplementary income—not that I have anything against any of these. This is TESOL as the form in which I shall express who I am in this life, in the sense and to the extent that we do seek to find and express our selves in the craft, trade, profession, or other form of employment that takes up so many of our waking hours.

Second, that the consciously developing human being, aware of options, constrained by contradictions, and struggling to make high-quality decisions, is indeed a subject of wonder, a source of inspiration, and a vision to which we may aspire without being embarrassed about the fact or ashamed of our failures.

Third, that we women and men who have taken TESOL as a hub for the wheeled universe would like it also to be understood that we are more than variegated bundles of teaching functions. Important though our classroom behaviour is, we are also parents and children, motorists and pedestrians, with our worries and dreams, our fears and our hopes. We are whole people, who teach. And because we are people-who-teach (indivisible the person from the teacher), our actions in teaching arise from the same sources as our other actions and express deeply held values. Stevick (1993) analyses an example of social messages communicated by the choices we make among the teaching options available to us. He shows how a picture-plus-dialogue

can be used in such a way as to serve "the larger aims of having the class go smoothly and efficiently, and of preparing students for standardized—or for standardizable—tests." Alternatively, he outlines a technique "more consistent with the larger aim of producing independent, resourceful, and responsible language users outside of the class." This is not to suggest that a decontextualised technique can be in itself enabling or to ignore the difficulty of multiple interpretations of the significance of classroom behaviour. The essential point is that "just as our choice of technique depends on larger aims, so our choice among larger aims is related to—is an expression of—our deeper values" (p. 433). The importance of clarifying these relationships, and the priority of values, are Stevick's themes, as they are themes of this paper.

Fourth, that we have developed a culture of TESOL (which also reflexively encultures us) through which our values are expressed. Even if we restrict ourselves to its ethnographic uses, the term *culture* is, of course, susceptible to many interpretations at various micro- and macrosocietal levels. In educational terms, Hargreaves (1992) presents a stimulating distinction between the content and the form of what he calls *the cultures of teaching*, and Posch (1994) relates change in educational culture to larger societal change. More overtly relevant to the current discussion of TESOL, Prodromou (1992) discusses cross-cultural factors in language learning, and Holliday (1994) reviews several aspects of culture and suggests the potential classroom impact of each. Holliday is also especially helpful in emphasizing the point that academic and professional cultures can reach out across national or ethnic ones.

I follow the above writers in not attempting to pin culture down to a specific level of description. I begin by using the term to refer to what others might prefer to call educational subcultures. I then contextualise what I am calling *TESOL culture* in the progressively larger cultural environments of national politics and international exchange.

I shall also follow the above precedents by not attempting any essentialist (Janicki, 1989) definition of what culture really means. Rather, I shall stay with the perspective of underlying values referred to by Stevick (1993) above, the sometimes tacit implementation of which corresponds, I believe, to Holliday's (1994) concept of *deep action*.

In attempting a characterisation of TESOL culture, I expect to sketch a terrain that is, for some, common ground. For others, I offer it as a partial chart of a position, and I do so in the belief that the building of futures together—the theme of the 1995 TESOL Convention—requires a clear view not only of the topsoil but also of the bedrock on which we attempt to lay our foundations.

# TESOL CULTURE

Let me say this once more: I am not claiming that what follows is a definition of a monolithic essence called *TESOL culture*. I am saying that for the purposes of this paper, I am using the expression *TESOL culture* to mean a set of shared values that include the following as central. Readers will make their own decisions as to whether or not they see themselves as members of this culture.

## Diversity

We recognise and value diversity. We have moved beyond the perception that there is one best way of learning a language (e.g., Nunan, 1995; Stevick, 1989) or one correct way of teaching it (e.g., Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Stevick, 1980). Prabhu (1990) also moves us explicitly beyond the idea that there is a best method for each different teaching situation because diversity and the need for changing, sensitive response will manifest themselves in each context, at all levels, and on all scales of operation. We also affirm that there are different valid ways of researching our practice (Cumming, 1994), all of which have their individual strengths and weaknesses.

## Inquiry

As a consequence of all this, we value ongoing inquiry and encourage both learners (e.g., Kenny, 1993; Wenden, 1991) and teachers (e.g., Allwright, 1993; Altrichter, Posch, & Somekh, 1993; Nunan, 1989) to investigate their practice in order to become more aware of themselves and more effective in their work.

## Cooperation

Balancing these two individualistic aspects of our culture, we value cooperation: among learners, between learners and teachers, and among teachers (e.g., Edge, 1992; Fanselow, 1992; Handscombe & Becker, 1994; Nunan, 1992). We seek to explore, to discover, and to develop, and we see both knowledge and ability as created by the interaction of the people concerned (e.g., Bartolome, 1994; Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Niemi & Kohonen, 1995).

## Respect

Underpinning these other aspects of our TESOL culture, we value respect for difference, respect for the right of other people to come

to different conclusions and proceed in different ways from our own (e.g., Nunan, 1991; Rogers, 1983; Sunderland, 1994).

And these are not merely abstractions: These values are made operational in the TESOL class every time a teacher says, "I want you to get into groups." Or, to put that more carefully, the strategic and contextually sensitive use of group work is one way in which a teacher can communicate a respect for the diversity of learning process and learning outcome while encouraging cooperative inquiry. And it is as an expression of those underlying values that group work has emerged as such a widespread teaching technique in the realisation of the TESOL culture with which I am most familiar. This is not to iconise group work as either necessary or sufficient evidence for the presence of that culture. It is the values base that counts.

In teacher education, similarly, it is this values base that makes it possible for Elliott (1993) to write, "Teacher education becomes largely a matter of facilitating the development of teachers' capacities for situational understandings as a basis for wise judgement and intelligent decisions in complex, ambiguous and dynamic situations" (p. 188).

There are, of course, difficulties. Roemer (1991), for instance, describes the breakdowns in communication, based on radically different conceptualizations, between teachers and researchers who had thought themselves collaborating towards common goals. I am not suggesting that we inhabit a world of constantly instantiated delight. However, in terms of my personal values and my professional culture, my personal culture and my professional values, this is where I live.

# PARADOX 1: SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

And we have now reached the first of the three paradoxes I want to consider: the paradox of sociopolitical context. This set of values, this TESOL culture, is operating, in my country (Britain) at least, in a broader educational context in which sociopolitical forces are well on their way to imposing standardised curricula and tests, along with a centralised conformity that will be supported in the long term by the deliberate separation of teacher education from higher education (Department for Education, 1993). We are reverting to a view of teaching as a technical delivery system, whereby teachers are trained on the job to deliver a basic education to a mass work force that is to be prepared just sufficiently to service incoming capital investment.

Goodman (1995) traces the history in the U.S. of such a social-functionalist vision of education, beginning with a quotation from a leading U.S. reformer of the early 20th century, Ellwood Cubberly:

Our schools are, in a sense, factories in which the raw products (children) [his parentheses] are to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the demands of life. The specifications for manufacturing come from the demands of twentieth-century civilization, and it is the business of the school to build its pupils according to the specifications laid down. (as cited in Goodman, 1995, p. 5)

Although we may shake our heads at the now-archaic metaphor, Goodman's point is that the ideology underlying this position is no different from that underpinning what passes for much educational reform today: It is simply that current "specifications" include the ability to solve problems via the accessing of information available through the use of advanced technology. The vision continues to "place teachers and their students in the passive role of merely getting prepared for a destiny that someone else has determined for them" (Goodman, 1995, p. 7).

The teaching experience becomes in part a de-skilling process, in the description of which Romanish's (1991) expression, *technocratic accommodationism*, stands out for its thoroughly appropriate ugliness. Teachers are pressed to accommodate to the demands of being cast as technicians and deliverers at the cost of their abilities to explore and to facilitate growth.

This paradox is a constant presence. As I work with teachers and teachers-to-be in a world of discourse that foregrounds such concepts as investigation, reflection, and negotiated response (e.g., Schön, 1983, 1987; Wallace, 1991), I know that the political context that surrounds me is forcing teachers more and more into a mould of acceptance, limited behavioural skills, and standardisation in order to fit in with the dominant social-market perspective (Elliott, 1993). In this broader context, furthermore, the "greed is good" governmental philosophy of the 1980s and early 1990s has soured millions of people across the generations and greatly diminished the scope for educators at any level to teach effectively the values of respect for oneself, respect for others, and respect for society at large on which democracy depends. This educational/political clash is so bitter because it is in essence a cross-cultural clash, a conflict of values at the heart of society.

The potential for friction at the political/educational interface is well recognised, of course, for any educational project worthy of the name must include a social vision as well as methodological provision, and the teacher-as-researcher (Stenhouse, 1975, 1983), action-research (Adelman, 1993; Kemmis, 1985) traditions on which I am drawing have always had overtly sociopolitical roots. In a different, but related, tradition, I must also acknowledge the work of those educational theorists who meet under the banner of critical pedagogy (e.g., Giroux,

1988; Giroux & McLaren, 1989) and whose work has been accessed and developed so effectively for TESOL by Pennycook (1989, 1995a). Smith and Zantiotis (1989), for example, make the following point with regard to the need to consider ethical and social goals prior to (and rather than) placing emphasis on technical efficiency toward unexamined ends:

In our view, it is the knowledge position, the moral and ethical bases for doing teaching at all, that teacher educators need to be clear about. A serious implication of this position is that it necessitates the active autoethnography of teacher education in the contemporary world and an intentional focus on why it is like it is, rather than on how it can better fit what is apparently there today. (p. 118)

I find it easy to applaud such a vision, although the quotation also highlights one of the difficulties that has been pointed out regarding writers of the critical school: that they sometimes make linguistic demands that many readers, including practising teachers, will find beyond the call of duty. And if active autoethnography is to be understood as investigating one's own practice, most especially in terms of the principles one preaches, Gore (1993) is most specific in her charges that the work of Giroux and McLaren not only distances itself from teachers linguistically but also fails this basic test of reflexivity: They offer little evidence of the investigation of their own practice. Furthermore, she points out that, although their writing is resonant with statements of what teachers must, should, and ought to do in terms of general social vision, one searches in vain for their ideas on, or experience of, actual methodological provision. This leaves teachers "with the task of both conceptualizing and implementing critical pedagogical practice in terms of specific content and form" (Gore, 1993, p. 108). Janangelo (1993) is even more forthright in his assertions that the discourse of liberation pedagogy, with its tropes of vocation, militancy, and martyrdom, "has sold teachers a flattering, yet delusory bill of goods" (p. 148).

For my purposes here, however, it is almost enough to indicate the presence and nature of these disputes and thereby to reiterate the essential interdependence of the social and the methodological, both in the evolution of pedagogy and in the deliberate devising of a self-aware pedagogy. Almost enough, but not quite.

Turning to face again the paradox with which I began this section, I have to conclude that disputes about the nature of postmodernist discourse, and about the amount of reflexivity demonstrated in the writings of educational theorists, though important to me at one level, remain disputes about how we are to defend and further a more or

less shared socioeducational vision that we see to be under attack. I feel indebted to all who make their contribution in the light of the analysis articulated by Dewey, as cited in Goodman (1995):

The problem of education in its relation to the direction of social change is all one with the problem of finding out what democracy means in its total range of concrete applications: domestic, international, religious, cultural, economic, and political. . . . The trouble . . . is that we have taken democracy for granted; we have thought and acted as if our forefathers had founded it once and for all. We have forgotten that it has to be enacted anew in every generation, in every year, in every day, in the living relations of person to person, in all social forms and institutions. Forgetting this . . . we have been negligent in creating a school that should be the constant nurse of democracy. (p. 7)

Teacher education is one of the central places where a society keeps its own self-image. This is an area in which the values which a society holds dear are passed on, often subconsciously, to the next generation (Goodlad, 1990; Lynch & Plunkett, 1973). I have my stake in my society and my right to struggle in my work and through my pedagogy for the values I believe represent it at its best. And I will. But the pursuit of a response to this first cross-cultural paradox has carried me to a position that may be indefensible in terms of the second.

## PARADOX 2: LIBERATION AND DOMINATION

TESOL is by its nature cross-cultural in large-scale, international terms. Put simply and bluntly, English is so dominant in the world today because the military and commercial power of the British empire was followed by the military and commercial power of the U.S. The fact that two sequential centres of dominance such as these share a common language might be seen, at least in part, as an historical accident, but it is by now an accident that has been forged in the mill of governmental policy and cast in the shining, relentless form of multinational free enterprise (Kachru, 1993; Pennycook, 1995a; Phillipson, 1992).

Moreover, the relationship between the language and the power is both mutually supportive and implacably two-faced. Every time our students are successful in getting that TOEFL score that means that they can study at a U.S. college, we celebrate this step towards personal liberation. And at exactly the same time, we have put another little brick in the wall that holds back all those other people who would have wanted to be a doctor, an architect, a choose-your-own-example, in their own country, but whose aspirations will be blighted because they failed to learn enough English.

We may see this happen before our eyes, in our own classrooms, and we know, when we stop to think, that we are linked into the same bleak process on a worldwide scale. Writing of an education system in which the medium of instruction is English, Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1995) quote Wasuka:

Schooling is often talked about as being the key to well-being and prosperity. It is an irony of modern Solomon Islands history that it has instead become for many people an occasion of failure and disappointment, a sign of their exclusion from the development to which they aspire. (p. 59)

I see no way out of this. To be involved in TESOL anywhere is to be involved in issues of liberation and domination everywhere. We may choose not to think about this too much, but that does not mean that it will go away.

In his resonantly titled *Linguistic Imperialism*, Phillipson (1992) indicts us on two main counts: first, because of our professionalism, which we have based on a set of essentially monolingual fallacies and, second, because of the disruptive values we have covertly introduced into other societies under the guise of methodology.

Thus, the TESOL professional abroad who is deliberately moving away from a teacher-centred style of teaching is seen as threatening the position of colleagues in that country for whom the centrality of the teacher is the culturally sanctioned basis of their teaching. The TESOL professional is introducing a lack of proper respect for teachers and, by extension, for elders in general. The TESOL professional who insists on peer correction in order to foster student autonomy is, from another perspective, demonstrating a lazy and self-indulgent lack of real interest in whether the students' work is correct or not. If the teacher doesn't care, why should the learners? Holliday (1994) provides field notes to document actual examples of similar cross-cultural interpretations in the context of an aid-funded teacher education project in Egypt.

If what we (and particularly we who live in or draw on such centres of TESOL as the U.S. or Britain) have to offer is essentially methodological, and if those methods are subversive and inappropriate, how exactly do we justify our activities? What sorts of future are we attempting to build with other people?

### Emergent Methodology

I have already committed myself to the proposition that methodological procedures arise from and express underlying values. And clearly, with regard to other people's societies, one cannot talk so easily of

values being passed on to the next generation or of having the right to struggle for one's vision of what that generation should value.

Giroux (1988) writes,

> I am acutely aware that my context is almost exclusively North American, but I believe that the radical discourse provided in this book can be used by educators in other countries and critically appropriated and selectively applied to the specific context in which they work and struggle. (p. 36)

When I read this, I want to applaud the awareness and pause over the straightforwardness of the belief. When I read the liberation pedagogy of Freire (e.g., Freire, 1972; Shor & Freire, 1987), I feel my belief supported that we are indeed dealing with broadly human aspirations, but that is no necessary justification for me as an outsider to introduce my beliefs and values into another society.

So, what is our current vision of TESOL in the world, methodologically speaking? The lodestone of our current thinking, as I am aware of it, is the concept of *appropriate methodology*. The expression in itself is open to various interpretations (e.g., Budd, 1995; Holliday, 1994)—and clearly no one is going to launch a counterargument for inappropriate methodology. The necessary basis of the idea for me is a process of teachers exploring their own situations in order to become more aware of how they do actually go about their work. Naidu, Neeraja, Ramani, Shivakumar, and Viswanatha (1992) provide a luminous report of such a process, of which they say,

> By naming what we do we have recovered our practice, which otherwise might have been lost irretrievably (a fate we believe that many teachers have suffered). Further, we can now identify for ourselves what aspects of our practice we are confident of and what we need to strengthen. We can also account for our more satisfying lessons in terms of our appropriate and timely use of some of these skills. What for us has been most valuable is the awareness-raising exercise that we collectively experienced by articulating our unacknowledged repertoire of skills as teachers. (p. 261)

On the basis of this increased awareness and sensitivity, and this reclaiming of their own expertise, teachers begin to develop their practice in ways appropriate to their learners, their colleagues, and their societies.

There is no given point at which to begin. The most appropriate way for a person to teach is exactly the way that person does teach, provided that he or she is committed to this process of exploration, discovery, and action. Nor are particular procedures, such as group work, ruled in, any more than other procedures, such as learning lists of vocabulary, are ruled out. Appropriateness to context is best judged by informed, sensitive insiders. And finally, there is no end product!

Appropriate methodology is always in a state of becoming. *Emergent methodology* may be a term that captures this idea well.

What, then, is the contribution of outsiders, in terms of methodology and teacher education? Is there a way we can lean rather towards liberation than domination, given that we must serve both?

In terms of content, well networked as we are, we may function to ease communication and as sources of information. More importantly, I suggest that a contribution can currently be made by our each demonstrating a commitment to emergent methodology in our own teaching, at whatever level that takes place. Relevant here is Pennycook's (1995a) citation of Kothari's call for the development of a "listening intellect, instead of the usual pontificating one with which the intellectual merely hands out both specific solutions and larger visions" (p. 305). Teacher educators need to demonstrate their own abilities to listen, to understand, and to act on what they hear. In Argyris and Schön's (1974) terms, they must show themselves to be people who

> are strong enough to invite confrontation of their teaching and to make themselves vulnerable to inquiry into the incongruities in their teaching and practice; and who, finally, will confront themselves with the conflict of values implicit in these incongruities. (p. 196)

In the context of this process, we will demonstrate (and might also be able to offer suggestions on) possible ways of gathering information on one's context, on how one involves the perspectives of other concerned insiders, such as students, colleagues, administrators, or parents, and how techniques of inquiry and exploration can be employed both by teachers who are informally interested in the development of their own teaching (e.g., Allwright, 1993) and by others who want to take a more formal, research orientation (e.g., Somekh, 1993).

I should reemphasize, before leaving this point, that I am not proposing this open, investigative approach to teaching as another topic for teacher education but as an overt commitment required of teacher educators (Edge, 1995).

## Empowerment

At this point, it becomes obvious that we are talking about TESOL again not as a technical matter, separate from our lives, but as one expression of the aspirations of people-who-teach, who are themselves just a subset of people in general. And all of these people, in their own ways, might be looking to be involved in a process of self-empowerment. For this is where our discussion has brought us: to the burgeoning culture of empowerment.

*Empowerment* is another term that is open to different interpretations

(see, for example, Gore, 1993, with regard to feminist and critical theory, and Bullivant, 1995, for an educationally contextualised treatment) and one which has probably been devalued through overuse and deliberate political misuse. For me, however, it remains helpful as a portmanteau term for different aspects of self-motivated growth, central to which are issues of authority, ability, and responsibility (Edge, 1994).

By authority, I mean to evoke not power over others, but the author element of the word. Empowerment involves a growing sense of self-authorship as one becomes more in charge of how the story of one's life unfolds, more in control of one's own narrative (Clarke, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986; Day, Calderhead, & Denicolo, 1993). Alongside this process, one becomes keen to increase one's abilities in areas that become relevant, eager to be able to increase one's sense of self-authorship.

Because individual development is also a social phenomenon, increases in authority and ability are accompanied by a desire for increased responsibility—for one's decisions, for one's actions, and for their outcomes. One steps free from the culture of blame into the culture of responsibility. At the same time, one remains sensitive to the self-empowerment of others: Disempowering other people in areas of their own legitimate responsibility can never be valid. And all this requires for its further legitimisation is an acceptance that other people will develop differently and act in different ways, based on different and equally valid discoveries of their own.

Thus, we have returned to the issue of respect—respect for difference. And this return is a signal that the argument, too, has made another kind of return—a return to a fundamental value. And we are coming to a point in my thinking where the paradox I have escaped into becomes impenetrable.

## PARADOX 3:
## FOUNDATIONS AND FUNDAMENTALISM

When we looked at our TESOL culture in terms of our methods, we found them based on certain human values. Challenged at home by our political masters, we might opt for overt struggle. Challenged by the justified accusation that we have exported methods without being sensitive to contextual difference, without being alert to the situated nature of cognition itself (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989) and without being open to the formulations of local theory (Geertz, 1983), we respond by developing an approach to method that ditches the discredited theory/application model (Clarke, 1994) in favour of

the exploration of, and development from, whatever individual, social, and cultural perceptions and preferences actually exist in any given situation.

But we have not left behind that one basic value that has underpinned our work and our argument from the beginning: respect for the right to be different. So what do we have here? Is this linguistic imperialism simply becoming more subtle? Are the same old disruptive values being smuggled in at another level of sophistication? Before responding to that question explicitly, I should like to turn aside to acknowledge an important influence on my thinking.

### Professor Igarashi and the Threat of Certainty

I did not know Hitoshi Igarashi or know that he was an associate professor of comparative literature, until he was stabbed several times in the face and neck in 1992. He bled to death outside the elevator he had intended to take to his office. The people who killed him have never been caught. I have to assume that they did not regard their killing as a crime but as an expression of cultural values. They have certainly been supported in this by their political and spiritual leaders, who continue to call for more such killings.

Professor Igarashi's crime in their eyes was to have translated Salman Rushdie's novel, *The Satanic Verses*, into Japanese. In other words, he was a language professional trying to make a contribution to cross-cultural communication. For this, he was brutally killed.

I have chosen to refer to the example of Professor Igarashi because he stands so close to our own professional interests and because he paid so grievously for them. But let me be clear that I mean no disrespect here to Islam. The problem is not in Islam; the problem is in certainty: the kind of certainty and the attitude associated with it that some people feel gives them the right to impose their views on others—if necessary, to the point of death.

This is my third paradox. How do I exclude the right to aggressive totalitarianism from the right to be different? I have no fixed views on the goals people should set themselves, the directions people should move in, or how they should proceed. But I know that I cannot extend my respect for people's choices to those people who choose to use their power to force their choices onto others.

I make this as a general statement about living, because that is what it is. Because I am a person-who-teaches, and TESOL is my field, I also need to make sense of that statement in terms of TESOL and teacher education. This is not just abstract philosophy; we have to act on a daily basis, and that part of the complex concept of professionalism (Palmer, cited in Argyris & Schön, 1974; Gottlieb & Cornbleth, 1989;

Popkewitz, 1994; Welker, 1992) which is of most importance to me is that I act in ways that are consonant with the values I profess. Indeed, what is a profession if it has no values to profess?

Moreover, if I am to work, I cannot abandon the values which make sense of the procedures I employ. Therefore, the only acceptable way I can see of escaping an accusation of covert neoimperialism is to make these values explicit. For me, this has become a professional responsibility, as a part of my job. To those whose values validate, for example, the killing of novelists and translators, I can only say, "You need to find ways of language teaching and teacher education consonant with your own values. Until we can resolve this issue of the right to articulate one's thoughts towards diversity of development, I do not want to pretend to be building futures with you. No structure built on that pretence would last, or deserves to last." And the implications of this reach out into all aspects of our work, including issues of sources from which one is going to accept students and funding.

Even in my own words, which I know I have picked at long enough, I hear echoes of positions with which I do not wish to be associated. I also hear Said's (1993a) warning about "not remaining trapped in the emotional self-indulgence of celebrating one's own identity" (p. 277). And I would like to find a way of sounding nonconfrontational that does not at the same time appear to water down the strength of the commitment I feel and take as seriously as some take divine revelation, some take scientific truth, and some take common sense.

As Said himself (1993b) has written,

> Uncompromising freedom of opinion and expression is the secular intellectual's main bastion. To abandon its defense, or to tolerate tamperings with any of its foundations is, in effect, to betray the intellectual's calling. That is why the defence of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* has been so absolutely central an issue, both for its own sake and for the sake of every other infringement against journalists, essayists, novelists, poets, historians. And this is not just an issue for those in the Islamic world, but in the Jewish and Christian worlds, too. (p. 65f)

We might add teachers to that list, and other cultural worlds beyond those that Said mentions, but the central point is clear: There is a line and it must be held. Not a line in the sand, with its militaristic overtones, nor a bottom line, with its commercial implications. We can choose to live by better metaphors than those. We might choose, for example, a line of music, invoking Said (1993a) yet again with his metaphor of an atonal ensemble as representative of multicultural futures together. And in the holding of this line, a respect for other people's values must be clearly distinguished from having no values of one's own. I want to build futures together with people who see in our human

diversity a celebration of our common humanity and who respect the space that we all need as individuals, as societies, and as a species to develop in diversely meaningful ways. A future where, to return explicitly to education in Greene's (1984) words, "There will be diverse individuals in diverse contexts, engaging in continually new beginnings as they work to make sense of their worlds" (p. 63).

I acknowledge continuing feelings of unease with regard to this last paradox. I acknowledge a type of fundamentalism of my own, and I cannot otherwise. Where does this leave me with regard to so much of our contemporary thinking? Postmodernism, deconstruction, critical theory, feminist theory—they have all taught us to step back from grand narratives and general solutions, and our current embracing of local exploration and appropriateness as guiding concepts is entirely in tune with this lesson. As Gore (1993) puts it,

> It seems to me that there is something about the educational enterprise that leads to the local, partial, and multiple foci of poststructural theories: there is something about the lives of those in classrooms, as well as the lives of social "classes," about activities that deal with people as thinking, feeling individuals, that requires the phenomenological, personal accounts of multiplicity and contradiction that are beginning to emerge in the work of feminist poststructuralists in education. (p. 49)

In trying to resolve this last paradox, I do not so much escape from it as pull others into it. Pennycook (1995b), for example, situates his work in

> the era of postmodern and poststructuralist thought, when fundamental questions are being raised about the whole Enlightenment project and the very notion of modernity and its most cherished beliefs in positivism, in the rational, unified subject, in the dichotomy between knowing subject and known objects, and in universal truths. (p. 46)

I should like to suggest that none of the above beliefs are, or ever have been, nearly so cherished by "the whole Enlightenment project" as is the process of thought and articulation that produced those powerful working hypotheses of their time and of which Pennycook's own writing, expressive of "a sense of culture as the process by which people make sense of their lives" (1995b, p. 47), is such a welcome, worthy, and impassioned heir. Similarly, I see Giroux and McLaren's (1989) credo, involving the development of "a language of critique and possibility" dedicated to "a project of democratic empowerment" as a profound and striking commitment to the essential moving spirit of Enlightenment (p. xxxvi).

When Gore (1993) writes that "it is difficult to conceptualize educating others without adhering to a certain conception of change or

progress" (p. 122), this is cultural bedrock, and she goes on to associate her work explicitly with the continuing project of Enlightenment. Foucault (1984), a central source for so many postmodernist writers, makes the same assertion when he associates himself with

> an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them. (p. 50)

And in commentary on Foucault, Dreyfus and Rabinow (1986) write that

> he seeks to be responsive to what is intolerable in his current situation so as to frame both a general problem and to embody a style of action which allows us to see, through a test of limits, that there are meaningful differences in the kinds of society we can have and there are ways of being human worth opposing and others worth strengthening. (p. 113)

I hope that these examples suffice to make the point: Postmodernism insists that we take the time for, and make the effort with, and pay the respect due to, each perspective we can unravel. In Popkewitz's (1994) terms, "'post' literatures re-vision the intellectual and political projects associated with the Enlightenment" (p. 113). It would be ludicrous to claim that only the Enlightenment, as a period of European history, has led to this type of perception, but it would be equally futile to deny that any of the perspectives referred to immediately above are not the inheritors of that Enlightenment tradition. And as such they stand, whether or not this is the focus of their interest, in the shadow of this last paradox.

This is not to deny that a central message of our time (and certainly our time in TESOL) is the need to avoid becoming trapped in either/or choices when we know ourselves to be faced with multiple realities (Kolb, 1984; Throne, 1994). But, chary as we are of unchanging absolutes, we are still called upon to commit: to make what Kolb (1984) refers to as "commitment within relativism" (p. 108)—to assert the need and the right to find our ways in the tension-filled spaces between dialectically opposed forces. This, I take to be a contemporary stance of Enlightenment. And at this level, I would agree with Stevick (1993) that there do remain some issues of larger aims and underlying values, of which he says, "that even after we have exercised our greatest ingenuity, we do have to choose" (p. 433).

We have to choose because the terrible alternative vision is still available. The alternative vision is implemented and enforced: the vision of people who always know the correct answers because the answers have already been fixed unalterably. Exploration, personal

narrative, and appropriate development become redundant, partly because they rely on the concept of growth through time, and the alternative on offer, in Rushdie's (1988) fictional, metaphorical version/vision, is one in which "every clock . . . begins to chime, and goes on unceasingly, beyond twelve, beyond twenty-four, beyond one thousand and one, announcing the end of Time, the hour that is beyond measuring, the hour of . . . the commencement of the Untime" (p. 215).

Let me make one further acknowledgment: The emphasis I have put on the personal is itself a cultural position. It is a part of the song that I have to contribute. Furthermore, it is a counterbalance to the massive chunking of millions of people into categories, such as Hindus or Californians, that sometimes goes on when cultural differences are discussed. For one thing that I have learned through TESOL is that there are individuals in any society for whom action towards development comes as naturally as the air they breathe. They see and enact the human principle beyond the cultural detail and realise the appropriate next step into whatever space lies before them, whether that space is intimidatingly constrained or dauntingly vast. The theoretical, the professional, and the personal intermingle.

## TESOL FUTURES

And so, notwithstanding the dilemmas and the difficulties, I also feel that the openness, the plurality, the enthusiasm, and the self-critical honesty that we have available in TESOL do give us a chance to lead other areas of education towards the vision I have sketched above in the words of Said and Greene. Where else should one look for educational experience of finding one's home in the world, not just the nation (Said, 1993a), or for a collective understanding of what it means to work and function "between domains, between forms, between homes and between languages" (p. 403)?

We are the people most directly addressed by Pennycook's (1995a) challenge to enable others to use English to develop "counter-articulations" (p. 326) with which to oppose domination. Furthermore, we have here the opportunity to be involved in a reconceptualisation of the very "location of culture" (Bhabha, 1994), inasmuch as we can help establish English as a language keen to realise the avowedly hybrid nature of an emergent pluralism that transcends the concept of *cross-cultural* as meaning something existing between fixed cultures.

These may sound rather elevated ventures, but I do not see that we need be embarrassed to name them. They are what we have to offer in the balance, when asked in what ways we serve the purposes of liberation and domination or how we continue in the face of paradoxes

we cannot resolve. And to the extent that we do become involved in the building of such futures together, we, as whole people-who-teach, may find much more than methodological enlightenment. For in the same way that the values by which we live inform our teaching, what we discover through our teaching can illuminate our lives. We know that we are not seeking the ultimate teaching procedure: Our explorations are intended to help us understand a little more about ourselves as teachers and about the people with whom we work. The aim is not to explain the mystery of learning but to be more closely involved in its celebration. And this type of realisation can feed back into our lives outside teaching.

Early in this article, I took inspiration from Walt Whitman. I should like to close by seeking the support of another U.S. visionary as I try to explicate that last comment:

> People say that what we are all seeking is a meaning for life. I don't think that that's what we are really seeking. I think that what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances within our innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive. (Campbell, 1988, p. 4)

I hope for futures together in TESOL that are built on the common ground of respect for difference, characterised by an inquiring attitude, and dedicated to actually feeling the rapture of being alive.

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# Academic Oral Communication Needs of EAP Learners: What Subject-Matter Instructors Actually Require

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One of the most vital steps in needs analysis for English for academic purposes (EAP) is to describe the expectations and requirements of instructors at a variety of institutions and across a range of contexts. Though much work has been done in identifying academic literacy tasks, little attention has been thus far paid to describing the listening and speaking tasks required by instructors in academic settings. To examine and describe these expectations and requirements, we surveyed over 900 professors at four different institutions: a community college, a public teaching-oriented university, a public research-oriented university, and a private university. The results demonstrated that instructors' requirements vary across academic discipline, type of institution, and class size. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses also indicated that U.S. instructors' lecturing styles are becoming less formal and more interactive and that this trend places new expectations upon the students. The implications for EAP teaching are that genre-specific listening/speaking courses and tasks may be necessary and that EAP teachers need to prepare students for comprehension of and participation in a variety of lecture/discussion formats.

As we have learned from the English for specific purposes (ESP) literature and from recent discussions of task-based language teaching (TBLT), needs assessment is vitally important for course design and materials development in specific contexts (Johns, 1991; Long & Crookes, 1992). For ESP and TBLT, the analysis of authentic, baseline data gathered from real-world sources is an essential first step in needs assessment. The description of listening/speaking tasks required by instructors in academic contexts is one area in which such baseline data are scarce.

As Long and Crookes (1992) point out, "Task-based syllabuses . . . require a needs identification to be conducted in terms of the real-