Teacher Development through Mentorship

Marc Waterfield

Abstract

This paper focuses on an in-service senior high school Japanese teacher of English (JTE) with limited teaching experience and her struggle to teach English through English (TETE) as outlined by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in the current Course of Study. The steps taken as a more experienced teacher (the author), assuming the role of mentor, guided her through the rigorous process of self-reflection are presented. This case study takes an interpretive and exploratory approach by collecting data through the use of action research (AR) a teacher development framework which is interventionist in principle. It is focused on providing a deeper understanding of the realities of in-service JTEs who are actively trying to pursue their professional development through such things as on-site teacher development projects, co-generative dialogue, and volunteering to participate in research studies like this one. One of the major goals of this study was to empower the JTE by guiding her through the cyclical process of self-reflection and revision.

Key Words: Action Research, Co-generative Dialogue, Learning, Mentorship, Reflection, Teacher Development

1.0 Introduction

Professional development is an ongoing process of growth through reflection and refinement which builds on professional experience. McRobbie (2000) describes teaching as a “lifelong journey of learning” (p.6). An important component in professional development is the active participation of those involved in the process. Kumaravadivelu (2003) refers to teachers who actively participate in their own professional development as ‘transformative intellectuals’ stating that such teachers engage in the dual tasks of striving for educational advancement and, more importantly, personal transformation. However, inexperienced teachers who may be unfamiliar with this process may find themselves in a situation where they want to improve their teaching skills, but are confused about what actions they should take to do so. In such cases the involvement of a more experienced colleague assuming a mentor type role, guiding the

novice teacher through phases of self-reflection may be helpful.

This paper outlines such a case where mentorship played a positive role in the professional development of an in-service Japanese teacher of English (JTE) in a private senior high school in Kumamoto, Japan. In this case, the JTE willingly sought out the guidance of more experienced teachers in her school to help her overcome areas she was struggling with in her teaching. In doing so, a mentor-apprentice relationship was formed and a classroom-based research project was coordinated. Mentoring can play a valuable role in the social context of teacher development. The attributes of mentoring in relation to Vygotsky's social-cultural theory (1978) provide a theoretical framework for this relationship.

In the following, discussions for the purposes of contextualizing the study are presented. First, a brief review of the educational environment that surrounds the JTEs by focusing on mainly institutional influences of working under a national curriculum is given. Then, areas of teacher development relative to this study are addressed. A discussion follows showing the relationship between mentoring and social-cultural theory. These discussions will contextualize this case study and the methodological steps and analysis undertaken, which follow. Finally, outcomes that emerged in the study are discussed and implications are addressed.

2.0 Institutional Influences

One of the main areas of interest in this study is teaching English through English (TETE) as defined by Willis (1982) and as stated in the Course of Study (see MEXT, 2011, 2014); simply put JTEs must, in principle, teach English classes in English. More English in the classroom is arguably a very positive thing. However, to implement lasting change in this area of teaching we must consider the teachers' perceptions, feelings, and concerns related to the curriculum changes and policy reforms (Fullan, 2007; Nagamine, 2014; Nishino, 2011; Tahira, 2012). Moreover, teachers will adjust their beliefs about the feasibility of policy expectations if the changes are seen as working in the classroom (Guskey, 2002).

Although reforms lose their effectiveness when teachers are only regarded as the implementers of others' plans (Borko, 2004), the institutional support of professional development programs for in-service teachers can be seen as a way of encouraging curriculum restructuring (Voogt, Pieters & Handelzalts, 2016). However, we can see that curriculum change and policy reform has the least potential for success when the teachers are 'not' comfortable with the suggested or sometimes demanded changes. We must keep this in mind when looking at how MEXT implemented its new Course of Study stressing TETE.

MEXT has a long history of educational curriculum reform dating back to the Meiji Era (Fujita, 2000). These reforms coming from the Ministry at the institutional level have been implemented in a top-down fashion. However, research on curriculum change has suggested that reforms, if they are to be successfully implemented, need to be understood as feasible by the teachers themselves. This factor concerns the condition that in order for policy changes to

succeed the curriculum change needs to go through the teachers and work from the bottom-up (Fullan, 2007; Guskey, 2002). In other words, gaps occur in policy implementation, when policy made at the top institutional level is in conflict with the realities of those who are expected to implement them at the practical level. Thus, part of the reason for such resistance to the new policy may have been a result of the hasty way MEXT chose to implement the reform without consideration for how the suggested changes might counter what the teachers were facing every day in their instruction (Igawa, 2013; Nagamine, 2012, Underwood, 2012). Although the intentions were good, i.e. the intention to enhance students' communicative competence, a very important factor of considering the conditions and readiness of teachers was overlooked.

In relation to the above, preparing teachers for policy change requires teacher development (TD). Keiny (1994), as cited in Evans (2002), presents a conception of teacher's professional development that involves teachers investigating their practice in order to construct their own theories of teaching. It was one of the aims of this study to help the teacher construct her own teaching theories and practices by guiding her through the rigorous process of self-reflection. In the following, guidance through mentorship underpinned by social-cultural theory within the framework of action research is discussed.

2.1 Social-cultural Theory and Mentoring

Influenced by the Marxist philosophy, of historical and dialectical materialism, which places importance on material, social, and economic contradictions and their resolution in the unfolding of history, Vygotsky (1978) formed his social-cultural theory which places society as theoretically central to the development of mind. Vygotsky's work, therefore, represents the psychological account generally, and developmental account specifically, of how a Marxist social theory is possible. In Vygotsky's theory of child development, cognitive development (i.e. the emergence of mind) occurs through social interaction and the cognitive mediation of the other (usually taken to be the parent, teacher, or significant other); thus, placing society before mind, rather than the other way around. The social nature of Vygotsky's theory goes beyond the biological properties of the individual to emphasize the social embeddedness of cognition and mental development. This view is distinctly different from Piaget's constructivist view, and was in fact offered at least partially as a critique of it, which places the major focus on the development of mind as the biologically enabled engagement of the child with the objective world. Going beyond the isolated individual as the self-driven progenitor to development, Vygotsky's social-cultural theory, sometimes referred to as a social-constructivist view, places explanatory importance on the individual's development as highly situated in social interaction (Wells, 2000); and importantly, social interaction which is mediated by language which is later internalized as inner speech and therefore as a cognitive tool, and the architecture for symbolic thought which liberates the mature cognitive agent from a cognition bound to the perceptual field. Thus, development occurs through mediation by the other, and the zone of

proximal development (ZPD) which is explained as the space in which development occurs via such mediation. According to Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD represents the developmental space occupied by tasks that the learners cannot do without assistance; i.e. without the help of a mediator (e.g. teacher or a more knowledgeable peer). While Vygotsky's work is primarily related to child development, his ideas have been extended beyond such. For example, Warford (2011, p.253) applies Vygotsky's theory beyond young learners to teacher education in talking about the zone of proximal teacher development (ZPTD), and describing it as: "the distance between what teaching candidates can do on their own without assistance and a proximal level they might attain through strategically mediated assistance from more capable others (i.e. methods instructor or supervisor)." The ZPTD construct built on Vygotsky's theory emphasizing mediated joint activity to increase learning provides a strong rationale, and indeed a foundation, for the use of the mentoring approach in this research. Mentoring is theoretically associated with mediation, in that it naturally implies mediation, but additionally implies that the mediation has a longitudinal and enduring aspect to it. In this sense, and similar to apprenticing, it represents the formalization of mediation over a significant period of time.

The term mentor can be traced back to ancient Greece. The word is said to have been inspired by the character "Mentor" in Homer's *Odyssey*. There are a number of definitions of the common meaning for the term mentorship. A relevant definition that focuses on the mentor's role in professional development, presented by the American Psychological Association (2006), defines a mentor in the following way:

> A *mentor* is an individual with expertise who can help develop the career of a mentee. A mentor often has two primary functions for the mentee. The career related function establishes the mentor as a coach who provides advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development. The psychosocial function establishes the mentor as a role model and support system for the mentee. Both functions provide explicit and implicit lessons related to professional development as well as general work-life balance. (p. 5)

There are three important points to note in the definition above, all of which are commensurate with Vygotsky's notion of mediation, if not instantiations of it. Firstly, mentoring is a process that develops out of a relationship based on the sharing of knowledge; i.e. from someone who is perceived to be a more experienced practitioner to someone who is considered to be less experienced. Secondly, that the role of a mentor is to provide affective support for the mentee and that sharing of knowledge may occur through interactions and even informal conversations. And finally, that the process occurs over time.

McRobbie (2000) states that research supports the use of mentoring in TD, because "beginning teachers who have mentoring and other kinds of support are more likely to stay in the profession, will continue to learn during… critical transition time, and will be more effective in helping students learn" (p. 5 - 6). The JTE in this study was actively seeking the help of more

experienced colleagues in order to assist her in making such a transition so that she could be a more effective teacher to her students (see, sections 3.2 Participants and 4.0 Data Analysis sections that follow).

The above definition is consistent with how the term mentor is meant in this paper, although the work of Vygotsky lends itself better, as a theoretical optic, to understanding what is actually going on at the close-up level of interaction; i.e. in any particular iteration of mediation offered by the mentor to the mentee. With the aim of facilitating professional development, the author, a colleague of the JTE, assumed the role of mentor. As such, he guided the less experienced colleague through a structured approach of rigorous self-reflection. This was done in order to develop the JTE's self-awareness in the aims of refining her teaching approach in accordance with the Course of Study and specifically with regard to TETE.

In aligning this study with Vygotsky's social-cultural theory, and in emphasizing that learning is a largely social process, both the JTE and the author (in the role of a mentor) are considered active participants in the research. Both of these participants embarked on a journey of self-reflection with the aim of achieving professional development.

2.2 Facilitating the Teacher Development Process

Learning occurs in many different aspects of practice for in-service teachers. Some of these aspects include their classrooms, school communities, and professional development courses or workshops (Boroko, 2004; Richards & Farrell, 2005). An important part of this process, according to Lempert-Shepell (1995) is that, "teachers must be given the opportunity to construct their own frame of reference and professional action in a situation of cultural self-determination" (p.439). For in-service teachers in Japan, annual workshops or lesson studies may provide opportunities for professional development. However, these opportunities are limited. For example, lesson study is a TD process that originated in Japan where teachers work collaboratively to focus on an action research 'Plan-Do-Check-Act' approach to decision making designed around forming a research lesson (Lewis & Hurd, 2011). However, it is often the case, at least from the author's experiences of participating in lesson study that in junior or senior high school, the teachers, who are assigned to do lesson study research lessons, are left on their own to plan the lesson. Having the teachers plan the lesson on their own is a missed opportunity for them to share and get valuable insights from other teachers. After the lesson is individually planned, other teachers watch the research lesson, and then later attend a post-lesson feedback session. It is only at this stage that the lesson is somewhat collaborative.

Workshops are intensive, short-term learning activities designed to provide opportunities for teachers to acquire specific knowledge and skills. Participants are expected to learn something that they can later apply in their classroom. Part of the appeal of a workshop is that teachers get hands-on experience with the topic of focus, such as developing procedures for classroom observation or conducting action research (Richards & Farrell, 2005). However, it can

be argued that the workshops provided for in-service teachers do not really help with developing pedagogical competence. McRobbie (2000) points out that, "while good teacher preparation programs do exist, there has been no systematic way to ensure that all teachers acquire and continue to develop the knowledge and skills they need" (p. 1).

Workshops are beneficial, but they simply cannot go into the same depth of focus as on-site research projects that are designed to help individual teachers deal with specific areas of concern relevant to their classroom conditions. Lesson study is a useful TD model if it is collaborative. Thus, TD frameworks, when they are collaborative and conducted within the institution, are recommended as a means of facilitating TD for in-service teachers. Such collaborative projects facilitate the acquisition of specialized abilities which are relevant to the teachers' and students' specific needs. In this study, action research is used as a collaborative development model.

2.3 Action Research

Action research (AR) can be used as a collaborative conceptual framework to solve an immediate problem in the classroom or, alternatively, as an ongoing reflective process of progressive problem solving making it an appropriate model for this study (Burns, 1999; Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The form of AR used in this study was participatory in nature applying the typical cyclical format to proceed through phases of reflection and refinement. In AR, the data that are collected and analyzed are used to inform each subsequent stage (referred to as phases in this paper) of the cycle. Collaboration was set into the AR design with the author assuming the role of more knowledgeable teacher, or put another way, the mentor guiding the novice JTE throughout a six-phased cycle of AR which was adapted from Nunan (1992).

3.0 Research Methodology

The study took a qualitative approach as it was socially situated with the aim of exploring and interpreting the TD of one JTE. The core characteristics of qualitative analysis as outlined by Creswell (2013), Hatch (2002), and Marshall and Rossman (2011), were used to frame the data collection and analysis: *Natural setting* (Observations in the classroom); *Researcher as key instrument* (The researcher's role as a mentor); *Multiple sources of data* (Interviews, classroom observations, stimulated recall); *Inductive and deductive data analysis* (open coding of data to generate analytical insights for further investigation); *Reflexivity* (Participants' self-reflection).

Because this study focused on one JTE in a private senior high school it follows the procedures of a case study offering an in-depth analysis, in this case of a single individual, that is consonant with a qualitative approach. That is, it gives a specific aim to the broader selection of qualitative research in a study. Njie and Soaib (2014) write, "the case study is one such direction which is prompted by the need to thrust deep into a specific unit, person, program or institution for a greater understanding which would not have been possible through other means" (p.36). Hence, the study does not attempt to generalize, but to stay within the

contextual bounds of a teacher providing a detailed analysis of her developmental process under mentorship. A case study, therefore, contributes to research on TD by presenting the findings that focus on specific cases.

3.1 Participants

The participating JTE had one year of full-time teaching experience at the senior high school level at the time of this study. This study focused on her teaching approaches, theories, methods, and pedagogy for one 1st grade class (grade 10) of communicative English which was comprised of 38 students; 20 males and 18 female students enrolled in a private senior high school in Kumamoto, Japan.

The data were gathered and analyzed by the author who also assumed the role of mentor in the study. He was a full-time teacher of English with 10 years of teaching experience at this school at the time of this study.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The data collection and analysis were an iterative process that was conducted through comparative analysis. Data were subsequently highlighted and used to inform each AR phase. The data emerged through six phases of the AR cycle listed below in Figure 1. Thus, AR was used as the conceptual framework to collect and analyze the data within each phase of the cycle. Spradley (1979) stated nearly four decades ago that, any kind of analysis involves the systematic examination of something with the purpose of determining the parts and how those parts work in relationship to other parts and the whole. This still holds true to date, the AR framework facilitated such inquiry and helped the author organize his examination through the six phases.

In Phase One, a general interview was conducted, audio recorded and transcribed; in Phases Two and Four, the lessons were video recorded and observation field notes were taken; in Phases Three and Five, the feedback sessions were carried out using stimulated recall, and the JTEs responses were audio recorded and transcribed. The ongoing cycle included the key phases of planning, observation, reflection, and refinement. These phases were aimed at facilitating growth in teacher cognition of the JTE as she proceeded through the cycle (see Figure 1.).

In taking an exploratory and interpretive approach, the study attempts to link why the JTE acted the way she did in the classroom. Lessons were observed and field notes were taken so that in the author's capacity as the mentor he could engage in productive dialog with the JTE. One of the JTE's major goals at the onset of the study was to attain confidence in her English abilities so that she could more effectively increase her students' English abilities (see Appendix 1).

3.2.1 Data Collection and Analysis within Phases of the Study

Merging aspects of the Six Phase format of AR allowed each phase to produce data which guided further collection and analysis. The phases, outlined in Figure 1, continue in a cyclical

fashion which can be repeated for further revision or to accommodate multiple points of focus. It is important to note that data were generated and analyzed as the participants went through each of the phases.

The cycle began with a planning stage consisting of providing the JTE with a questionnaire given to determine her view of the TETE policy and any actions she was taking in her own development as a teacher and specifically what areas she desired to improve upon (see Appendix 1). Two aspects of the results of the questionnaire were that she wanted to know more about motivating students and learn how to create more interactive activities (more details are presented below in section 4.1). These data points informed the author to include two readings, one on student motivation in language learning (Takase, 2007) and the use of assisted questions to increase interaction in the classroom (Tharp & Gallimore, 1989) aimed to help the JTE better conceptualize these points.

This was followed by observing a lesson in Phase Two. Observing the lesson revealed a gap between what the teacher wanted to achieve in her lessons and what was really happening (presented in detail below in section 4.2). This insight guided further advice which took place in the Feedback Session in Phase Three. This advice which made use of data from observation field notes, stimulated recall, and the JTE's comments on interview questions contributed to the changes made in the second Observation Lesson (referred to as the Revised Observation Lesson in this paper). This was again followed by another feedback session. The cycle concluded with a report of the findings as is common in studies of this sort.

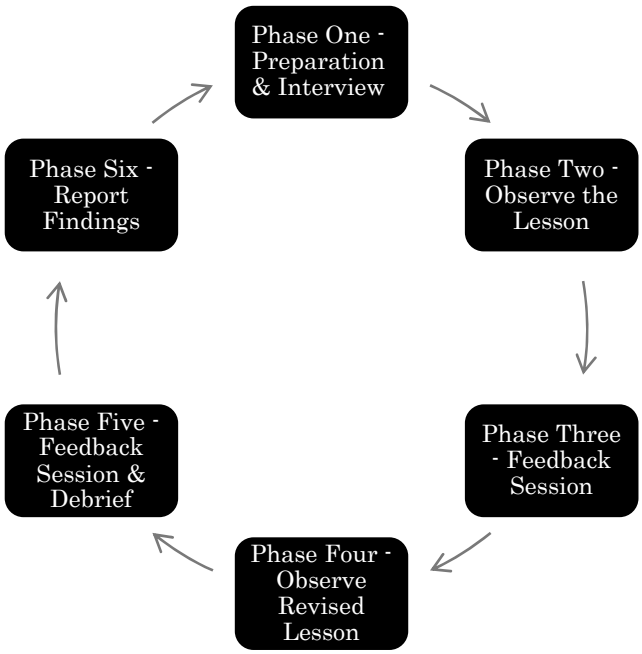

Figure 1 chronologically details the six phases of the AR cycle showing the purpose of each stage and its relation to the succeeding one.

As the participants (the JTE and the author) progressed through each phase of the cycle they were able to see more clearly the areas in the JTE's teaching where improvements for future lessons could be made. The data that were generated from each stage are presented next.

4.0 Data Analysis

Each phase of the AR cycle is used below to present and discuss the data. Presenting the data in this way demonstrates the reflective and interventionist flow of the framework that is socially situated and dialogically structured.

4.1 Phase One – Preparation and Interview

Discussions in this phase produced the theme of student motivation which informed advice given by the mentor on possible ways for the JTE to improve her lessons. Making the lessons more communicative, for example, by helping the JTE to better conceptualize student-centered lessons and increasing the amount of English used in the classroom both by the JTE and the students, as well as making better use of pair and group work emerged as points of interest through this process of considering ways to increase the level of student motivation. In other words, the preparation and interview phase helped the JTE to conceptualize the communicative lesson. This was also a learning experience for the author (as the mentor) to gather informative insights in order to co-construct the communicative lesson.

Before the interview was conducted the JTE was given a questionnaire which comprised twelve questions designed to assess the teacher's depth of understanding of the TETE requirements according to the Course of Study (MEXT, 2014) as well as her teaching beliefs toward TETE in general (as mentioned previously). Several segments of the interview regarding the JTE's answers to the questions in the questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for complete questions and answers) are presented below. The JTE initially responded to a question asking about her familiarity with the recent Course of Study revisions in the following way:

> Yes. I think they should use English during lessons without grammar. (Without grammar was clarified in the interview to mean, teachers should be able to use Japanese when teaching grammar lessons)

When asked if she was satisfied with the amount of English she used, she answered with a negative response and then mentioned she felt her use of classroom English was limited, using it only to manage the class:

> No, I don't. I use it several times. Greeting, Open the page ～, Repeat after me, Memorize new words, etc. My English skills are still not developed.

In a follow-up question during the interview, to the above response, the JTE mentioned that she would not only like to improve her teaching of reading and writing, but that she would very much like to engage more with the students in English during class time. She specifically wanted to do so when giving feedback and having conversations with the students. However, she

felt that her English skills needed more development to do so. The JTE also stated that she did very little in seeking professional knowledge about teaching because she was too busy, but she offered a positive view toward improving her teaching in a collective manner with co-workers. These last two comments are relevant to the purpose of this study. In addition, the JTE stated that she tended to evaluate the quality of her lessons not only through student examinations, but also with affective considerations including, for example, students' enthusiasm through non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and verbal cues such as voice tones.

She concluded the interview by saying that she wanted to motivate students, and repeating that she would like to focus on improving her English abilities. These answers were the first real glimpse into the realistic concerns of the JTE. They provided valuable information which allowed for more focused advice on specific areas of concern that were perceived as areas most important in helping the teacher to reflect on her teaching practices and revise them while still empowering her throughout the process of change.

The purpose of this interview was twofold; to clarify some of the answers given in the questionnaire and to help the teacher better conceptualize her lesson. The following excerpt represents the exchange between the participants. The exchanges show the role the author played (referred to in these exchanges as Mentor), in trying to be a facilitator and not a controller of the interview in order for the JTE to take more ownership of her TD process. The following excerpts from the transcripts are presented (pauses are indicated by … and quick responses are listed as //):

Mentor: Are there many opportunities, many chances right now, in your class to have conversations with students?

JTE: … Yes… (Sounds unsure)

Mentor: Yes? That's good.

In your…introduction, activity, lesson//

JTE: Do I have a chance to eh, to… do I have a chance to ask them to, speak English? Like that?

Mentor: Like now, it's an interview but, really, we are having a conversation. We are talking//

JTE: Ahh… (Seems to get it)

Mentor: …Do you have a chance like this during class time, to talk to your students, to have a conversation?

JTE: …ahhh… It depends on the class. Mmm. Reading, for reading, I don't have… grammar, ah, sometimes I ah, I talk to them. Like conversation.

These responses indicated that she was unsure and having trouble conceptualizing a class centered on conversational activities conducted by the students and facilitated by her guidance in English. As we continued with the interview it became evident that she wanted to inspire her students to think about their future dreams, as seen in the following exchange, but she was

unsure about how to incorporate activities in her lessons to achieve this.

> **JTE:** …mmm… When, when they make themselves understood in English, to others, mmm, and I think … mmm… Having their dream is very important and I, I have to inspire …
>
> (*Nan to iuka* under her breath) themselves to… (*Nandaro* under her breath) to find their dreams and their goals. So, … most of students, especially first… *Ichi nensei*? Freshmen?
>
> **Mentor:** Yes, first grade is OK.
>
> **JTE:** First grade student…mm… don't think, don't, don't think about their future. They don't have. So, I want to help them, ah find their dream and their goals.
>
> **Mentor:** Yes. That is a very good goal to have, that's very good. Each teacher should feel strongly about inspiring their students and helping students realize their dreams. Do you think we have to think of ways, methods, ah… techniques, things that we can try and then see if the students react positively, negatively, or not at all to the things we are trying in the classroom?
>
> **JTE:** Yeah, Yes, mmm. Ah, the teacher's role. OK.

After the discussion, it was thought that the use of assisted questions (Tharp & Gallimore, 1998) would be applicable to bring the content of the textbook, which she was required to teach, closer to the students' realities so that they could have more authentic conversations regarding the material presented in class. It is suggested in the article that assisted questions be directed at developing higher order production skills as they help students make more meaningful and richer connections to the material in relation to their own lives whereas assessment questions are the usual lower-order types of questioning that check for comprehension of content only. The use of such questions was something that the author looked for when observing the lesson as presented in the next section.

4.2 Phase Two – Observe the Lesson

In this phase, the author in his role as researcher, observed the lesson and took field notes. Key points regarding the teacher, students, materials, and class flow were noted and reviewed. These field notes enabled the advice given in the feedback session which followed the lesson. The lesson was also video recorded, as outlined earlier in Section 3.2.1 (Phases of the Study), to be used in the stimulated recall session in Phase Three. A DVD copy of Observation Lesson was supplied to the teacher for personal viewing and for use in the stimulated recall session. The following three points of concern were taken from the field notes and analyzed comparing them to the interview answers and video of the lesson.

It was also noted that the JTE made her own worksheets for the students to use in class (see Appendix 2 for the worksheet used in the first Observation Lesson and Appendix 3 for the worksheet used in the Revised Observation Lesson). A point of interest in connection to the

theme of this study and the use of assisted questions in particular was that the questions, as seen in Section (f) *Answer the Following Questions* (in Appendix 2) of the worksheet used in the Observation Lesson, were assessment questions focusing only on checking for comprehension of the content in the textbook reading. Revision of the worksheet was suggested in the following feedback session when it was noticed that the worksheet had the potential, with facilitation from the JTE, to offer the students with the opportunity to work in groups or in pairs with assisted questions related to the content of the textbook passage. In doing so, the students would be able to consider their original ideas focusing on topics which connect the information from the textbook to their immediate environment.

Three major points of concern were noticed through cross comparison of the data gathered in the observation of the lesson. Firstly, it was noticed that the JTE spent the majority of the class standing in the front of the room by the chalk board directing the class with the use of a CD player, which the JTE relied on for the majority of the English content of the lesson. Secondly, the lack of English used by the JTE was a concern. Rather than giving directions and comments in English, which she had shown desire to do in the interview, the JTE quickly reverted to the use of Japanese early in the lesson and continued to use Japanese for the duration of the class. The final point of interest at this stage of analysis was that the students were not active in the lesson. It was thought that this may have been caused due to their role in the class being restricted to that of a passive learner (Stewart-Wingfield & Black, 2005); i.e., the activities did not require the students to actively produce any spoken English of their own. A work sheet was used, but student involvement was limited to raising their hands to indicate their answers to questions asked by the JTE and to writing translations of passages selected from the chapter in the textbook that they were working on (see Appendix 2).

Regarding the teacher-centeredness of the lesson, there are two defining factors which classify a lesson as teacher-centered as opposed to student-centered (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). First, in a teacher-centered lesson the teacher provides instruction generally from the front or middle of the classroom. The second defining factor is that there is little to no input from students in such lessons. Although these students appeared to be attentive, their participation was limited by a lack of communicative activities or opportunities for peer-work such as working in pairs or groups. This created a passive learning environment for the students and although the JTE had mentioned she sometimes converses with the students, it was not observed in this lesson.

As a point of focus for the TD process, the textbook material was interesting and could easily accommodate such things as task-based learning or more communicative activities through the use of assisted questions which was addressed in the feedback session that followed the lesson. Even though the teacher stated that she was eager to improve her English, as seen in the initial interview (that was conducted entirely in English), she used very little English during the Observation Lesson. She communicated with the students almost entirely in Japanese accept

for the greeting and repeating after the CD with the students.

This outcome has implications for research on teacher practice in that it indicates teachers need time to implement suggested changes in their instruction. Just exploring the thought processes of teachers by interviewing and talking about change is not enough. Being in the classroom with the JTE and watching her actions created the productive follow-up sessions with her as reported immediately below.

4.3 Phase Three – Feedback Session using Video Stimulated Recall

In the feedback session, the participants discussed their perspective on how they felt the lesson went. A brief informal discussion took place immediately following the lesson and then the formal feedback session consisting of stimulated recall and a follow-up interview. In the feedback session the video of the lesson was shown to the JTE to illustrate the points made in the field notes (mentioned above). The use of the stimulated recall was very beneficial to this process because the teacher was able to see where she was in the classroom; in front of the board in the middle of the room for most of the lesson. She was also able to hear how she conducted the lesson; mostly in Japanese. Moreover, she was able to see how the students were reacting to the lesson; passively responding by silently raising their hands. In addition, recording and transcribing the stimulated recall sessions provided insights for the mentoring role as well.

During stimulated recall, the JTE was surprised to see that she was talking so much, embarrassed that she was using so much Japanese, and noticed that the lesson was indeed very teacher-centered. When asked if she felt she could have given directions or comments in English at various points in the lesson, she responded that she felt she could use more 'classroom English' saying repeatedly throughout the interview, "I should use more English." It was also obvious to her that the students assumed the position of passive learner, using very little English and answering most questions, not by speaking, but only by raising their hands.

Feedback and discussion from the stimulated recall session allowed the JTE and the author (as the Mentor) to become co-constructive in the lesson planning to consider ways to make lessons more student-centered. It was decided that the JTE would try to implement the following: 1) use more English when introducing tasks and commenting on students' answers, 2) use pair and group work to make the classroom activities more communicative, and 3) revise the worksheet for the task-based portion of the lesson to achieve a more ideal class as indicated by the JTE in the interview and feedback session. The JTE made the abovementioned changes to her lesson in accordance with the advice which was based on the author's interpretation of the data gathered and in his role of mentor.

The changes listed here were implemented in an attempt to shift the lesson from a teacher-centered one to a more student-centered one as explained above. Also to provide both the teacher and the students with more opportunities to use English throughout the lesson in concurrence with the Course of Study outlined in section 2.0. Time was then given to the JTE to apply the

revisions to the next section of the same chapter of the textbook.

4.4 Phase Four – Observe the Revised Lesson

Observing the revised lesson was essential in assessing the benefits of the changes implemented. Careful attention was paid to the revisions made to the lesson and the students' reaction to those changes.

The JTE's use of English throughout the whole lesson was impressive because she was able to increase her English output in such a short amount of time. Furthermore, the students responded positively by attempting to reply in English first and to the best of their ability. When asked in the previous interview, the JTE expressed concern regarding whether or not the students would be able to follow her English. When the students were asked about the revised lesson later, they answered unanimously that the JTE's use of English in the lesson was a big change. In a follow-up question intended to assess whether this change was considered a positive or negative one by the students they answered, once again unanimously, that it was a positive change. Many students further stated that the JTE's use of English also gave them more opportunities to use English.

The second thing that the JTE did in an attempt to make the lesson more communicative was the inclusion of more pair and group work. After a fast-paced warm up and vocabulary review in English, the students checked their model sentences in pairs. Then the students were divided into groups. The JTE outlined the tasks in English and the students used a revised worksheet (see Appendix 3) to help them proceed through communicative tasks.

Some of the benefits of working in groups that were noticed in the analysis of the lesson data by comparing the videos of the two Observation Lessons were that the students appeared to communicate with each other more easily which resulted in the use of more English by the students in the revised lesson. The use of group work allowed the teacher to move more freely around the classroom which she capitalized on by helping the students who needed assistance in a more personal one to one approach. This was very different than the first lesson where she stood in the middle of the room and spoke to the entire class when giving advice. It was also noted that leaders naturally emerged in the groups and that they helped to keep other members on task, thus taking the burden of keeping the students focused and on the task, off of the teacher.

The use of significantly more English by the JTE and students was a major positive outcome of the Revised Observation Lesson. Woods (1996) observers that teachers have two major concerns; conceptual and chronological. With respect to the former, the teacher was able to get students to better conceptualize material with interactive work. The group activity made the lesson more communicative and the teacher allowed the students more freedom to perform the tasks together in their groups. However, with respect to the later, i.e. time management, concerns emerged. Two new points of interest were noticed when analyzing the data. First, the

students remained seated for the whole 50 minutes of class, only standing up to make their groups. Second, too much class time was allotted to the group activity. This was determined due to the fact that the JTE was unable cover all of the points she intended to in the lesson.

The group activity was introduced with the aim of saving time and increasing opportunities for the students to communicate in English with each other. These two points of interest were discussed in detail during the final feedback session with the aim of further improving the use of class time and giving the students opportunities within the class to get up and move in order to refresh and to help them stay focused for the majority of the lesson.

The students' participation level appeared to be high in the early stages of the lesson as seen in the observation field notes and on the video of the lesson. However, some students became bored as the lesson progressed. It was thought that by reducing the amount of time allotted for the group activity and having the students stand up to perform some takses could positively impact future lessons. Due to the amount of class time spent on the group activity, the JTE was only able to ask students one assisted question at the end of the class. She attempted to personalize the information in the passage being studied, as discussed in the first feedback session. But, the question fell short of its intended application. It was felt that it would be appropriate to 1) shorten the group activity and 2) have the students perform more tasks focused on opinion sharing about the theme of the passage being studied in the text. In this case the passage being studied was the bombing of Yokohama and Nagasaki during World War II, both attacks well-known to the students. The JTE, with guidance from the mentor, came to the conclusion that there should be ample opportunities made to activate students' background knowledge. From there the JTE could progress to tasks which required further critical thinking by the students, in the scope of this theme. This progression would enable the JTE to ask multiple assisted questions related to this topic over the course of the lesson.

4.5 Phase Five – Feedback Session and Debriefing

The feedback session that took place after the Revised Observation Lesson was key in assessing the JTE's perceptions toward the changes made. In this case, the JTE's thinking toward such things as her ability to use English in class and her concern regarding students' ability to follow along in English shifted. Examples, taken from the interview transcripts presented previously, triangulate this inference.

The final feedback session focused on discussion about the changes implemented. Stimulated recall was once again used and the JTE's reaction at specific moments in the lesson was of particular interest. She paid attention to the students more than herself this time and noticed what the students were doing after she assigned them specific tasks. She said things like, "I didn't know so and so a student became the group leader," following up with reflective statements such as "I'm very glad to see that he/she did that" and "Oh, they look bored now." The stimulated recall helped her see the students in class from a different perspective and

assisted the participants in conceptualizing ways to further improve future lessons; which lead us to the sixth and final phase of this study, the reporting of the findings which is discussed below.

4.6 Phase Six – Report Findings

Reporting outcomes in the public domain is the only way to make the information which comes out of a case study like this useful on a wider scale, which is an important step in AR. The outcomes of research projects like this one can be presented in a number of different ways. Some of the most common and important ways to report the findings of AR have been through presentations at educational conferences or through published articles in educational journals, but perhaps one of the most overlooked and underappreciated ways of reporting the findings of such research is through co-generative dialogue with colleagues. Co-generative dialogue has been defined as "a form of structured discourse in which teachers and students engage in a collaborative effort to help identify and implement positive changes in a classroom's teaching and learning practices" (Martin, 2006, p. 694, as cited in Smith, 2016). Every professional exchange among colleagues is an opportunity to share what we have noticed in our classroom observations. One tends to find that as colleagues begin to collaborate in such research projects, their everyday conversations tend to become more focused on their lessons and their students. In the case of this study, we were able to discuss the concerns we had and shared ideas on how to overcome problems being faced within a lesson. This collaboration has been shown to have had a positive impact on the working environment and lends to further participation in future classroom-based research projects among the participants (Miller & Burden, 2007).

5.0 Discussion

The adaptive and on-going process of AR as presented in this paper allowed the participants to attain insights into the realities that teachers face in their classroom on a daily basis. The data generation and analysis were grounded in an evidence-based approach by proceeding through each phase of the AR cycle which helped the JTE to see things in her teaching that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. The use of stimulated recall further strengthened the impact of, and brought focus to the feedback sessions.

It is understood that TD works best in collaboration, but this should not also imply that the groups of participants need to be large. As this study shows, teachers can work well with as few as two participants, working together to address teaching concerns. When the more experienced participant assumes the role of mentor, he or she can guide the less experienced participant through the necessary phases of self-reflection using such approaches as AR. This study also shows that during the processes of giving advice and idea sharing, TD has the potential to become even more rewarding. This was evident in the JTE's comments during the study. Her comments, which suggested thinking about her teaching behaviors during the span of this

study was a cause for stimulation to continue the process of reflection and refinement even after one cycle had concluded. As in classroom-based research, the final act of reporting the findings must be carried out. In this case, the author assumed both the roles of mentor and of teacher researcher, presenting the outcomes of this case study in this academic journal. However, it must be pointed out that, and more importantly, although the intended developmental cycle came to an end with the reporting of these findings, the process of reflection and refinement continued.

The process of TD should be an empowering experience leading to positive change in the classroom, and therefore increasing the potential for students to participate in effective lessons. Working collaboratively from the bottom-up with colleagues can lead to such a process. Including more experienced colleagues in the role of mentor can provide the guidance needed so that the less experienced teacher can proceed smoothly through phases of reflection and refinement. Furthermore, such guidance will more likely lead to lasting change.

By helping the teacher proceed through the rigorous phases of planning, acting, and reflecting the participants embark on a transitional journey (Melrose, 2001). When this occurs in on-site research projects, the issues addressed are personal and pertain directly to the teacher's and student's realities as the JTE poignantly observed:

> We continue to actively participate in our own professional development in order to help our students to find their dream[s] and [reach] their goals, to develop the necessary skills to be successful.

This statement made by the JTE in the later stage of this process indicated a transition had been made from not being able to conceptualize a student-centered communicative task-based lesson to being able to get right to the heart of the matter, the position of the teacher as a facilitator rather than just as an instructor.

6.0 Conclusion

This paper outlined the rigorous, investigative, and developmental framework of AR as an appropriate means of conducting TD collaboratively for in-service teachers. The need for such projects addressing the realities of teaching English in Japan, which are particular, is relatively easy to argue for. These programs, however, require specific and appropriate approaches tailored to the individual cases of the teaching environment in order to implement positive and lasting change.

A key point of this paper was the influence of the mentor within the context of Vygotsky's social-cultural theory which contextualized this particular case study and underpinned the methodological steps taken to collect and analyze the data that was produced herein. While the findings from this study cannot be generalized, in-service teachers who are interested in continuing their professional development might consider incorporating and formalizing such roles for any teacher development program pursuing such ends. As such, this study may act as a guide for such an endeavor.

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Appendix 1

Initial Questionnaire

Questionnaire Questions	Teacher's Answers
1. Are you familiar with the current course of study, especially the overall goal to develop students' communicative abilities and that high school English teachers should basically conduct their classes in English	1. Yes. I think they should use English during lessons without grammar. ★ "Without grammar" means, teachers should be able to use Japanese when teaching grammar lessons
2. Do you have any questions or concerns with regards to these policy guidelines of the course of study?	2. Nothing
3. Do you feel you use enough English in class?	3. No, I don't. I use it several times: Greeting, Open the page ～, Repeat after me, Memorize new words, etc.
4. If not, what has prevented you from doing so?	4. My English skills are still not developed.
5. In what areas do you want to try to use more English in class?	5. Greetings, Feedback, Conversation with students ★No time to talk in reading class
6. In what areas do you feel you are struggling with your English lessons?	6. Motivating my students to work hard, especially 1F3, 1F4, and 4J. (1S1 good)
7. In what areas do you feel you could improve upon your teaching within the classroom?	7. The way of looking up words in dictionary, Writing activity ★for preparation for university entrance exams
8. Do you have any ideas that you think could help you overcome the difficulties you are facing and improve your lessons? If so, what are they?	8. I'm not sure. Discussing what I want to improve with coworkers.
9. How do you assess the standard of your class, i.e. whether a lesson is successful or not?	9. Judging by the reaction (facial expression and voice volume), Regular examinations.
10. Are you involved in her development? Do you read articles/books about teaching? Do you participate in teacher development workshops? Training at school?	10. Once a Year? ★In University, Yes. Not now, no time too busy
11. I really appreciate your participation in this study. Could you tell me why you agreed to participate?	11. Improving my teaching English and my English abilities, and for developing my student's motivation and English skills
12. Are there any comments, suggestions or questions you'd like to ask me?	12. Thank you. ★ Clarified in the Interview

Appendix 2

Pre-revision Worksheet

English Communication II **ノートに貼付 or ファイルすること**

Lesson 3 Predictions of the Future (part 3)

Class ( ) NO. ( ) Name ( )

(6th paragraph)

①Asimov was not the only person that made predictions about the future. ② Another writer, Arthur C. Clarke, got almost all of his predictions right for the year 2014. ③ One example is wireless communications. ④ He said, "We can be in contact with each other at once anywhere we like. ⑤ Perhaps only 50 years from now we may be able to carry out our business from a small island just as well as we could from London." ⑥ Clarke also said that he was not joking when he said, "We may carry out brain surgery in one city on a person in another country." ⑦ He was right again. ⑧ Remote surgery using robots is already becoming popular.

(7th paragraph)

⑨ Next, let's take a look at some of the predictions for the future made by the world's top scientists today. ⑩ They say computer power will double every 18 months. ⑪ That means in ten years or so, computer parts will be as cheap as a piece of paper. ⑫ Computers as we now know them will be gone. ⑬ They will be everywhere but hidden, just like electricity and running water.

(a) New Words

1 Arthur C. Clarke		**6 surgery**	
2 wireless		**7 remote**	
3 contact		**8 double**	
4 anywhere		**9 hidden**	
5 perhaps		**10 electricity**	

(b) Idiomatic Expressions

1 get O C **O** を **C** にする	彼らは試合の準備をすっかり整えた。
2 be in contact with A **A** と連絡を取る	「拓弥どうしているんだろうね。」「さぁ分かんない。最近連絡取ってないしなぁ。」
3 at once すぐに、同時に	同時に二つの事はできないよ。
4 carry out 名詞 **carry** 代名詞 **out** 名詞・代名詞を行う、実施する	彼は友人との約束を実行した。 彼はそれを実行した。
5 take a look at A **A** を見る	地図を見て下さい。
6 A or so **A** かそれくらい	彼は５分かそこらで戻ってきます。
7 be gone いなくなる	熱が下がるまで横になっていなさい。

(c) Choose the correct title for each paragraph (There are some unnecessary options.)

6 ( ) 7 ( )

(a) Predictions for the Next 18 Months

(b) Modern Top Scientists' Predictions

(c) Predictions Made by Arthur C. Clarke

(d) Arthur's Predictions about Animals and Plants

(d) Answer T (true) or F (false)

1. Asimov was the only writer who got most of his predictions right. ( )
2. Clarke used to tell jokes about the future which have turned out to be real. ( )
3. According to some scientists today, computers as we now know them will be gone. ( )

(e) Choose the correct answer

1. According to paragraph 6, not only Asimov but also Clarke _____.

(a) wrote a novel about future technology

(b) did research on brain surgery

(c) predicted about our lives today

2. In paragraph 7, _____ today also made predictions for the future.

(a) computer specialists

(b) the world's best scientists

(c) top medical doctors all over the world

(f) Answer the following questions

1. What is an example of Clarke's predictions?

_____

2. What is "remote surgery"?

_____

Appendix 3

Post-revision Worksheet

English Communication II **ノートに貼付 or ファイルすること**

Lesson4 Twice Bombed, Twice Survived (part 2)

Class ( ) NO. ( ) Name ( )

(4th paragraph)

① It was an atomic bomb. ② The American bomber Enola Gay dropped it near the center of Hiroshima, only three kilometers away from Yamaguchi. ③ He lay dazed on the road for a moment. ④ When he recovered, he felt terrible pain in the left side of his face and on his left arm.

(5th paragraph)

⑤ When he looked up at the sky, he saw a big mushroom cloud rising high into the sky. ⑥ He felt that he had to get away from there as soon as possible. ⑦ When he reached a big tree in a field, he looked around. ⑧ He realized that most houses had been destroyed. ⑨ He had never seen anything like that before.

(6th paragraph)

⑩ It was almost noon, and he decided to continue to his office to meet his colleagues. ⑪ When he arrived, he saw many damaged houses, but the survivors came out and put their arms around him.

(a)New Words

1 atomic		**6 mushroom**	
2 Enola Gay		**7 destroy**	
3 dazed		**8 colleague**	
4 recover		**9 damage**	
5 pain		**10 survivor**	

(b)Idiomatic Expressions

1 for a moment **一瞬、少しの間**	「あなたはいつも自分の話ばかりするよね。」「ちょっとは私の話を聞きなさいよ。」
2 as soon as possible **できるだけ早く**	できるだけ早く私に教えてください。
3 manage to do なんとかして～を成し遂げる	寝坊したけど、なんとかいつもの電車に間に合ったよ。

(c) Choose the correct title for each paragraph. There are some unnecessary options.

4 ( ) 5 ( ) 6 ( )

(a) Yamaguchi's Colleagues Injured
(b) The Bomb Dropped on Hiroshima
(c) Return to the Office
(d) The Structure of the Bomb
(e) The Sight after the Bomb Attack

(d) Put the following sentences about Part 2 in the correct order.

1. Yamaguchi saw a huge cloud in the sky.
2. Yamaguchi felt pain in part of his face and body.
3. Yamaguchi arrived at his office.
4. Yamaguchi moved to a large tree in a field.
5. Yamaguchi lay on the ground for a while.

[ ] → [ ] → [ ] → [ ] → [ ]

(e) Answer T (true) or F (false).

1. Yamaguchi thought he had to get away from the mushroom cloud. ( )
2. When Yamaguchi decided to go to the office, it was almost noon. ( )
3. Yamaguchi realized it was an atomic bomb. ( )

(f) Choose the correct answer.

1. According to paragraph 4, the bomb was dropped _____.
   (a) far away from the center of the city
   (b) around the corner from Yamaguchi's office
   (c) a short distance from Yamaguchi
2. In paragraph 5, Yamaguchi saw a scene _____ when he looked around in a field.
   (a) which seemed familiar to him
   (b) which he had never seen before
   (c) which he had dreamed of
3. In paragraph 6, Yamaguchi _____ from colleagues who survived.
   (a) received hugs
   (b) received cheers
   (c) received a cool response

(g) Answer the following questions.

1. How far away was Yamaguchi was Yamaguchi from the bombing?

_____

2. Which part of Yamaguchi's body was seriously injured?

_____

3. What did Yamaguchi try to do when he saw a mushroom could?

_____

4. Why did Yamaguchi decide to go to his office?

_____

(h) Summary

Yamaguchi was only three kilometers from the atomic bomb. He felt (s) pain on the left (s) of his body. He (m) to get away and saw a terrible scene he had never seen before. When he arrived at his office, many survivors came out of the (d) house and put their (a) around him.	山口は原子爆弾からわずか３キロの距離にいた。彼は左( )の( ) 痛みを感じた。彼は( )離れ( )して、そして今まで見たことないようなすさまじい光景を見た。彼が会社に着いた時、多くの生存者たちが出てきて家から離れ、彼らが彼を出てきて( )を抱いてくれた。

(i) Discuss the following with your partner

What did you feel when the Kumamoto Huge Earthquake occurred ?

I felt ( ) because ( ).

指導「助言」による教師の資質向上

ウォーターフィールド　マーク

要約

この論文は教職歴が短く、文部科学省の指導要録の骨子である英語による英語授業に努力しているある現職の日本人の英語教師に焦点を当てている。自己反省を促す厳正な過程を通して、その教師を指導した助言者の役を担っている一人の教職経験豊かな教師が講じた様々な手段が提示されている。このケーススタディは、アクションリサーチを通してデータを集める探索的かつ解釈的方法をとっている。 それは教師の信念、態度、認識を論じており、教育現場の教師発展プログラム、相互の創造的な対話、調査研究への自発的参加によって教師としての資質向上を積極的に追求しようと努力してる現職の日本人教師の現実をより深く理解することに重点を置いている。この研究の主な目標の一つは自己反省という周期的な過程を通し指導することによって該当教師に自信を持たせることである。