TEACHER LOGS AND INTERACTIVE DECISION - MAKING

a case study of contingencies in an EFL organizational culture
and the implications for teacher development for part-time
teachers

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Summary

This is a case study of a program of native speaker part-time EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in a junior college in Japan. It has grown out of a curiosity to ascertain how the teachers have formed and continue to maintain a coordinated program in what would seem to be a disadvantageous national context where as part-time foreign teachers they are expected to do little more than just teach a few classes of mainly oral English. This study investigates the organizational culture the teachers have formed for themselves within their staffroom, and looks at the implications of this for part-time teachers in such an environment.

More specifically, the study highlights that central to the program is an interactive decision-making function engaged in by all the teachers which has not only created but also continually enables an identifiable staffroom culture. This organizational culture is contingent on college and staffroom conditions, program affordances such as shared class logs and curriculum sharing, and on the interactive decision-making itself. It is postulated that the contingencies formed in this created and continually creating shared world not only offer the teachers a proficient way to work in their severely time-constricted environment, but also provide them with fertile ground for the covert self-regulation of a thus created zone of staffroom 'on-the-job' teacher development.

Teacher logs, interactive decision-making, program contingencies, organizational culture, part-time teacher development

Dedication

to my supervisor, Dr. Keith Richards, for his
patience, guidance, expertise and accessibility

and

to my mother, Ruth Wilkie, for her
understanding and encouragement

also

I wish to extend grateful thanks to all those
who helped and supported me during the
long years of this study. Special thanks go to
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for their love and encouragement, and to my
my children Jun and Kei Tanaka who had their
lives rearranged to accommodate my dream

Acknowledgements

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Glossary

ALT	Assistant Language Teacher; NST in middle and high schools
DM.	Decision-making
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
Tandai	A junior college (short university)
Obirin	The name of the study venue
TDM	Transitory Decision – Making
LDM	Long Open Decision – Making
SDM	Secluded Decision – Making
NELP	Native English Language Program
NST	Native Speaker Teacher; a Japanese accepted and applied form for teachers taking languages other than Japanese.
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
Ref.	Reference
Ss	Students

List of Figures

Transcription Conventions

R. B. M. etc.	Initials for teacher's names
...	Dots for pauses, approximately one second per dot.
:::	Colons for the extension of sounds
/?/	To indicate a section or word was inaudible for transcription
(( ))	For reported information adjunct to the transcript
indents	To indicate overlap of teacher's talking

example:

R.	Ok. So:: unit one...		((talking over room to M))
M		n:::o unit two	((calling back))
R.		Ah. Ok.	((seems perplexed))

Chapter One

Establishing Parameters

1.1. The field of inquiry -introducing the setting and study aims

The Native English Language Program (NELP) under investigation in this case study is a sub-section of the English department of the junior college of a private university in Tokyo. The program services students majoring in a two year associate degree program in either the English department, comprising courses in literature, business or secretarial English, or in the Living Culture department (formerly the Home Economics department). The NELP, comprising of native speaker English EFL/ESL teachers, is an autonomous program and runs independently of, but cooperatively with, the main required English Comprehensive Course in the junior college, in which all other subjects are taken by Japanese teachers.

Although the NELP has undergone some structural changes due to downsizing in the face of changing demographic and economic circumstances in Japan since 1999, at the time of this study the NELP serviced about 1000 students in a two year 66 credit course of study in which 6 - 10 credits (depending on the course) from the NELP were required for graduation, and a further 14 credits were possible as elective course options. At the time of this study, the courses being offered in the NELP were: required Oral English over all four semesters in various levels, and elective courses in Speech Communication (presentations and public speaking), Creative Writing, Expository Writing, Techniques for Reading English Literature (later Academic Reading Skills), Seminar (senior thesis), Culture Class, all in the English department, and elective courses in Oral English over four semesters, Business English, Secretarial English, and Business Communication in the Home Economics department. Elective Bible studies in English, and English for Qualifications (TOEIC, TOEFL and STEP), were offered to all students from either department.

The program has been on-going since 1988. The maximum number of classes given to any part-time teacher is set by the college at six, although occasionally a teacher may be assigned a few extra classes for a particular semester, rather than a new teacher being hired.

This means a maximum number of weekly working hours of nine, most of which are usually taken over two or three days in the week. All classes for all subjects are taken in the English language and all classes are required by the main college to be orally focused. The NELP employs one tenured teacher currently of assistant professor status as Head, a visiting professor from one of the university's sister schools, one semi-full-time teacher who takes an added supervisory or coordinator role, one Japanese administrative assistant who also operates the NELP's mini-library (self-access included), and a fluctuating staff of 10 - 13 part-time teachers.

The study takes place within the teachers' staffroom which is both the focal and concrete setting of the NELP. The study is of teacher-to-teacher communication, and makes no attempt to investigate the private thoughts or working processes of the teachers at the individual level (a body of research well established, see Clark and Peterson, 1986, Richards & Lockhart, 1994, Woods, D. 1996). Thus the outcomes are not extended beyond the staffroom to the classroom nor to the teaching life of any specific teacher. Nor does the study concern itself with any direct investigation of the interactive relationship between the teacher and the student, or with studies directly investigating the decision-making processes of the teachers in regard to in-class planning and student responses (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, Woods, D. 1996, Nunan & Lamb, 1996). Although reference and extrapolations will be made as regards professionalism for teachers (Hargreaves, A. 1994, van Lier, 1996), and to the numerous references to professional development of teachers, (Clark, 1987, Richards, J. C. Nunan, D. 1990, Allwright & Bailey, 1991, Kessler, ed. 1992, Edge, 1992, Hargreaves, A. 1994, Freeman, 1996, Nunan, 1988, 1991, van Lier, 1988, 1996, 2000, Jarvis, P. ed. 2002, Little, 2002), the focus of this study will be the role and means of *teacher-to-teacher* interactive decision-making in the *staffroom* and how this enables an interaction with the program itself, the results of which allow the teachers to operate efficiently within their teaching environment despite severe time-constraints and to derive and maintain a sense of professional commitment in and to it.

The study occurs in the natural setting and is informed by the observations and the voices of the teachers in real-time over a period extending from 1995 to 1999, focusing the years of

1996-1998, from a well documented program epistemology, and from insider knowledge extending from 1986, through the formation of the program in 1988 until the time of writing in 2002. Since the dynamics of the program are complex, constantly evolving and changing, the study does not search for evidences or proofs of theoretical claims but rather aims to be descriptive and interpretive in explanations of situations and events observed from a broadly ethnographic and sociocultural perspective.

Over the course of the study several "groups" of teachers participated in various aspects of the study. Perhaps the most significant and common factor is the sharing of classes by part-time teachers and how teachers manage to communicate class work, especially in those partnerships in which they did not meet with each other throughout the week. The focus of the NELP study is on the interactive aspects of the teachers' decision-making and how teachers manage their work in their particular teaching environment. The researcher is the founding member of the NELP and is an active teacher in the program, a factor important in the choice of a research perspective which will be detailed in chapter three.

Over the course of the study, areas of importance have emerged in the organization of teachers and their cognitive functions which are evidenced in their interactive decision-making both in the keeping of course class logs and in the staffroom discussions and it is hoped that this study will be of sufficient interest to the community of scholars, teachers and readers in the fields of teaching and education (particularly in curriculum, teacher learning and development, political and emanicpatory empowerment, and ecological perspectives, especially for part-time teachers), and to those interested in those fields with a sociocultural perspective (particularly in discourse cultures, shared knowledge or distributed cognitions), as to warrant serious consideration and possible further investigations of the findings in other settings.

1.2. Outline of the thesis

This introductory chapter will look at the dynamics inherent in the study of the NELP and how, drawing on initial observational data and an exploratory pre-study, the research

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areas of organizational culture, curriculum, teacher logs and teacher interactive decision-making emerged as contingencies of the program and therefore vital to the understanding of how the NELP provides the part-time teachers a professional work environment. The conceptual frameworks for the study will be explored in chapter two, and the research perspectives, including an investigation of the position of the researcher and a discussion of the data collection and analysis will follow in chapter three. These two chapters inform the theoretical underpinnings of the study.

Chapters four and five will look at the macro-culture of the NELP, and investigate the micro-culture, including its historical development and the influences of the researcher, who is an active member of the NELP. These chapters rely on documentary evidence and will also explore the influence of the first major executive function of the NELP, namely the curriculum. Chapter five further looks at the staffroom culture of the teachers in more detail through an exemplification of the daily routine in a vignette constructed from observations and tape mappings. Chapters six and seven are data driven from observations, interviews, and tape recordings and will investigate the workings of the teacher records (logs) and teacher interactive decision-making, respectively, as the functions of the NELP that create its contingencies and enable its survival as an organizational culture over time and teachers. Chapter eight will further explore the contingencies of the NELP and consider the implications for part-time teachers. The theme of teacher development is evident throughout, but is more fully explored in chapter eight as a contingency of the program. The study will conclude with recommendations for areas of on-going research and for the organizational cultures of part-time teachers.

1.3. Establishing conceptual frameworks

> Another disadvantaged group were the casual [emphasis mine] teachers who had no security of employment, (who were usually required to take a class at short notice), who had no consultation time and who had very little opportunity for systematic professional development.
>
> Nunan (1988:155)

> "I like it here, it's the only place I get to talk with the other teachers"
>
> (NELP teacher: 2002)

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1.3.1. Introduction   the researcher pauses for reflection

It is early 1996, a few months into my observations, but rather than noting anything I find myself sitting at my desk in the NELP (Native English Language Program) staffroom musing on the scene before me. So far, it was typical, one I had witnessed and noted time and again: teachers busily going about their ways – a constant buzz of activity and chatter, the copy machine whirring, people coming and going around the room, plans being made, and specifics being discussed as the names of students, textbook pages and language activities pop into and out of hearing. But what was all this action? From experience, my own and others, I knew few other colleges in Japan had such busy staffrooms, so was all this noisy action needed for a few part-time teachers to go off and teach a few classes of Oral English to some 18 - 20 year old Japanese college females?

What struck me as I perused the room was that these teachers did not look or sound disadvantaged, although they had conditions rather like those casual (an unfortunate choice of word if taken as an antonym for serious) teachers in Nunan's quote above. The part-time teachers in this staffroom did not appear to be very casual in the relaxed and carefree sense of this word either. On the contrary they seemed to be very professional. As the noise level increased and questions, answers, requests, reminders and advice went flying about the room, I wondered if all this seemingly chaotic, but clearly purpose-driven, action and *interaction* had anything to do with it. From my vantage point, I did not see uncertainty, indecision or a lack of direction. I saw an energetic, dynamic *group* of teachers who, despite the noise and rushed atmosphere, seemed to be very much in charge of their teaching agendas.

I was taken aback by the curiosity of it all. What motivated the teachers to work this way when they were part-time, came to the college only once or twice a week and could probably find less demanding work elsewhere? Is this the way they wanted it to be? Clearly yes, since turnover occurred only when teachers found full-time work, returned to their homelands or moved on, or found they could not maintain traveling distances.[1] Clearly teachers were complicit in agreeing to be involved in this work environment.

Clearly they found value in working this way because they elected to stay. But what exactly was going on? *What allowed them to work this way? What kept them at it?* These two questions became the driving force of this study.

Although program coordination requiring teachers to work together surely accounted for much of the witnessed interaction, it was clear that day that the teachers were doing much more than just working together on program requirements. There was a particular communication going on here, the dynamics resonating in the teacher quote above ... "I like it here, it's the only place I get to talk with the other teachers".

Although there is no one definition of what it is to be an EFL teacher in the Japanese environment, clearly the teachers in the NELP have a strong sense of themselves as being teachers referring to each other as teachers and valuing the chance to talk together. English teachers in Japan are a varied group, so to gain some sense of definition, this study will begin with descriptions of teachers and teaching situations in Japan and specifically in the NELP. This topic will be taken up again in chapter five in the discussion of the formation and characteristics of the NELP itself.

1.3.2. The NELP teachers

All staff in the NELP, except the Japanese assistant, teach including the head, and all teachers have at least a first degree from a known university and a minimum TEFL qualification; some have considerably higher degrees and long-term experiences in EFL. Although the university classifies the teachers as part-time, this refers to their status within the whole university system and not to their teaching load. The university provides standard salaries, long paid holidays, bonus, and reasonable working hours. Although it does not provide visa sponsorship or housing for part-time teachers it does provide a measure of acceptance of "foreign staff", who are respected as members of a valuable and promotable program of "native speaker teachers". The teaching situation here can be considered advantageous when considering other situations in Japan, and positions are not difficult to fill.

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1.3.3. Teaching in Japan

i. kinds of teaching

Teaching English is almost a given activity for any native speaker of English living in Japan. So many do it, it almost seems as if everyone is doing it —anything from voluntarily "teaching" locals, often housewives or children, by way of establishing friendships in the community and allaying fears of the "foreigner" (Wadden 1993), to talking with eager students on the street who politely thank you for "instructing" them, to teaching "privates" for generous fees in your living room or a local coffee shop, to teaching in any number, level, type or condition of English schools, to taking evening (often language-school contracted) classes in businesses and companies, to teaching weekend retreats, holiday programs, special company Saturday classes in posh surroundings, to teaching in mainstream schools, or in full or part-time positions in colleges and universities.

Teachers invariably bring their own knowledge, histories, experiences, beliefs, assumptions and expectations of life, teachers, teaching and ways of learning with them to their schools. However, most studies referring to teacher beliefs and assumptions are of teachers in their native environments (Little, 1993, Hargreaves, A, 1994) and most often in compulsory educational institutions. Although there do not seem to be any direct studies done of EFL organizations to note, extrapolations from the works of Bailey (1990), Bailey and Squires (1992), Nunan (1992), Nunan and Bailey (1997), Richards, J (1996), van Lier (1996) Woods, D (1996), and Verity (2000) prominent among many others in the fields of individual or collaborative teacher development, and individual class planning in EFL/ESL environments, seem to suggest the influences of teacher beliefs and assumptions in real situational contexts are as pertinent in EFL/ESL environments as they are in any other situation involving teachers and their work.

However, since most colleges in Japan require at least three years experience for EFL teachers (Wadden, 1993), teachers not only bring their personal perspectives, they also invariably bring a vast array of past teaching experiences from one or more of many

scenarios, and often from other countries they have worked in as well. It is, therefore, of great interest to investigate just how such a divergent group of part-timers could ever find a way to work together in the serious time-constraints of their work schedules.

ii. positions available for part-time foreign teachers in Japan

That the Japanese seem to have an insatiable wish to learn, or to appear to be learning, English from a foreigner (not to be confused with their actual participation when given such chances – see chapter four) is evident to anyone who spends any length of time in Japan. Despite this wish however, mainstream schools seem to have an equal reluctance to acknowledging the expertise of the EFL teacher, feeling more comfortable keeping such teachers in the position of a guest to the country and in doing so thus creating a very characteristic work ethic for the native speaker teacher in which native speakers are much like either cultural ambassadors or "the icing on the cake" (Wordell, C. 1993). [2]

However, as a result of the Japanese wish to "learn English" (Hansen, 1988), and their willingness to pay handsomely for this, by the time Japan had become a superpower in the 1980s, the country was inundated with "teachers", many without any qualification or experience of any language teaching (including large numbers of non-native speakers with varying degrees of English proficiency) and many often on inappropriate visas.

Thus, "English teachers" in Japan are any persons ranging from those simply having an adventure, studying various arts, or earning the money to enjoy themselves and finance either their stays in Japan or the next leg of their world travels, to those paying off mortgages in their home countries or saving for retirement, to those who have married into the local population (again often non-native speakers) trying to find a job, any job they could do, or are permitted to do under often significant Japanese cultural and language restraints, to "cultural ambassadors" on government sponsored programs, to an increasingly large group who began to arrive in the early 1990s as fully qualified, experienced ESL teachers with the express intent of teaching English in Japan; a group who challenged an equally growing body of long term teachers already in the country, many of

whom had come through a long apprenticeship of experiences on their teaching journeys and who were now playing qualifications catch-up in the increasingly more respectable field of ESL. (3)

The last of the situations mentioned above has created a large highly qualified work force of part-time and often very experienced EFL teachers in Japanese colleges. After an initial period of turnover and stabilization (see chapter five), the NELP now consists of such teachers, and it was such a group that I was observing from my desk in the staffroom that very day in early 1996 when I resolved to investigate the workings of the NELP as a whole *in interaction* with the teachers, rather than investigating teachers in the NELP as if these were separate aspects. This perspective much resembles the social interactive learning ecological perspective, (van Lier, 2000) and will be discussed in more detail in chapter two.

From my desk back in 1996 my first observation was a view of workings that suggested a clear, easily detectable degree of professionalism, despite all the teachers being part-time. The initial question arising as a result of this observation was, that given a sense of professionalism (briefly defined here as a sense of connectedness and purpose) is immediately, if only subjectively, evidenced and felt on entering this staffroom of teachers, what then informs this persuasion and what creates the formation of this sense of professionalism under these teaching circumstances?

It was these concerns that set off the inquiry parameters of this study. Clearly the historical evolution, setting and context of the program would need investigation and illumination, as would the concept of professionalism in teaching, (Hargreaves, A. 1994) and issues of empowerment and emancipation (Gitlin A, et. al. 1993, Hedge & Whitney, (ed.) 1996). But what in the staffroom itself should, or could, be investigated to show the overall workings of the NELP and its teachers that might illuminate or even explain how the daily practices of the NELP inform and motivate its energies?

A few years earlier I had sat at this same desk searching for a master's degree dissertation topic from my work environment. I had selected to investigate the use of teacher course

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logs wanting to know what the teachers thought of them, and had chosen this aspect of staffroom teacher work because logs were a program requirement and were both a visually noticeable and easily accessible function of the teachers. Now I wondered if the logs might somehow be more instrumental in the interaction observed in the staffroom. Thus from the start position of "there is something else going on here and logs have got something to do with it", I began the broadly ethnographic investigation of the NELP which led to the identifying of key functions that appear to motivate and maintain its life, and then to further more microethnographic investigations of those functions.

1.4. Pre – Study: establishing study perspectives and parameters

Having decided to study the NELP with the view of unraveling how the part-time teachers operate in a coordinated program in which they have serious time constraints, in a university in which they have limited executive power, and having decided to focus on logs as a way into this, I set about observing from this fresh perspective. The initial observation had been an informal diary recording of my thoughts and impressions of the day from having observed the teachers in a casual way. It was not always kept on a daily basis as I picked up only the points that seemed to engage the teachers. However, I found most comments centered on events evolving around personalities, characteristics of the teachers, their likes / dislikes, and the political issues that arise in a staffroom of about 13 rotating teachers, and I had often done so from my own participation in these issues. Clearly such a personal point would have little of relevance to the academic community I wished to address on the subject of how part-time teachers manage to operate in a coordinated program such as the NELP.

Going back over the diaries I did indeed find constant references to logs; the required daily record books all teachers keep of all their various courses (see chapter six). My previous study of logs had established that teachers considered them vital to their teaching and teacher communication, but I realized now a look into their place and influence in the NELP, how they featured in the discussions and "shop-talk" of the teachers, could possibly

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be more informative of the way they helped the NELP and the teachers to function. The logs became my way into the NELP, my springboard as it were, into its dynamics. I resumed observations of the teachers from the point of view of their log use and was rewarded by finding myself drawn past personalities and into the content of teachers' discussions. Before long I found myself immersed in the many kinds of decisions the teachers were making everyday in the staffroom as they negotiated the discussions and inquiries of their colleagues as they planned their classes, and in how the logs reflected or affected this.

1.4.1. Difficulties encountered

The observations continued intently and generated voluminous notes. Unfortunately some teachers had shown resistance to any taping they could not control (I did not gain permission until the latter half of 1997), which meant that, although I had managed to tape a few consented recordings controlled time and content-wise by the participating teachers, I did not have any tapings of spontaneous conversation to work from. With verbal permission, I continued observations, but soon found myself recording much of the same thing. I began to feel pressured from lack of direction in the study and finally decided on a time-frequency study to establish some "hard facts". I knew from the earlier log study (see chapter six) that the teachers considered the logs indispensable, especially when sharing classes, and that most felt the time spent on logs was neither intrusive nor troublesome, and adequate enough for their needs; although there were a few teachers who had said the keeping of logs was time-consuming. Hypothesizing that frequency of use and time spent on logs is an indication of the value of logs, I set out to observe just one teacher a day in rotation over several days, selecting the exact amount of time spent on logs, and whether the activity in that timeframe was reading or writing as the variables for recording.

However, I very quickly ran into a number of problems, the first being the start point: in the first run I found that some teachers uncharacteristically arrived before me and already had their logs out for use. Clearly if I wished to observe the daily use of logs in the natural setting, I could not give them a start line for beginning, as such a constraint would have

affected their use of the logs and thus not given me the naturally occurring data I sought. I also found it was not always possible to observe just the one teacher, as the dynamics of the teacher's movements and connections with the other teachers often became too complicated to focus the chosen variables: that is, it was not possible to record the time spent on a log or to make sense of what was being done with it without looking at the other teacher(s) involved. Essentially, I kept finding myself back on whole staffroom observation.

Furthermore, although I had set myself the task of recording time-frequency of log use for reading and writing acts intending to correlate time spent on the logs as a measure of log value, even with careful observation it was not easy to categorize log use, and therefore the time period spent on them. For example, I found the teachers often walked around with the logs briefly looking at them or simply crossing out a word, making it difficult to decide whether or not to categorize this as log use. Finally, it was the sheer brevity of time teachers spent on their logs on any one log-use activity that presented the greatest difficulty in recording in this little study.

1.4.2. Results of the Study

Despite these difficulties, I did manage to observe 12 teachers over the first selected time period. A sample of the study and the results appears in appendix A. p. 286. In summary I found that the teachers spent an observed average of only 4 minutes 97 seconds reading or writing in logs, although the range was from a few seconds to 18 minutes, over a day that ranged from classes starting at 9: 00 am (teachers arriving on average 10 minutes before, although some arrived on the run and others arrived as much as 30 minutes earlier), and finishing at 2: 20 p.m. with a 10 minute break at 10: 30 am and a 50 minute break at 12: 10 p.m., and with only some teachers staying on after the end of classes to complete logs or for discussions, while others hurried away to make other teaching stations.

Although I initially set out several runnings of the study, I did not repeat it as I felt enough information had been gathered to enable important insights on log use and data collection,

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and to extract important influences within the NELP; the main one being that nothing stands alone – everything is interrelated rendering it of limited value to attempt to objectively study any one thing isolated from all the others. More significantly, being unable to isolate teacher interaction from teacher use of logs indicated that the process of interaction was itself a major "variable" in log use, and that interaction was an important aspect in the NELP culture.

1.5. Comments on the results of the study

Clearly, if time spent on logs was any indication of importance, the infrequency of their use did not appear to be supporting this. I was disappointed as this did not tally with my observations nor with what the teachers stated when giving their opinions on their use and perceived value (see chapter six), although it certainly added weight to countering any comments from teachers stating it was time-consuming to keep up logs!

I searched the observation notes for an explanation as to why logs seemed so important when so little time was actually spent on them. Perhaps it was because the teachers often took the logs to class, where it was not possible for me to observe what they did with them (permission having been granted only to observe them in the staffroom). Perhaps I just happened to observe "dud" days and that if I had recorded each teacher over several days as originally planned, I might have found they were used more. However, I did not feel that recording more would provide any significant differences from what I had already recorded. The question then became, well, did it matter? A careful look at the log entries on the days of the time-use study showed that even in the case of teachers who did not appear to be using logs at all (as evidenced by no observed time spent on them in the staffroom), log entries were somewhere, somehow recorded and did not appear to be any more or less extensive than what was written on any other day.

However, despite the little observed time they spent on them, logs were clearly functioning well enough for the teachers' needs as indicated by teachers' comments (see chapter six).

Perhaps logs just were not important after all, despite what teachers said about them, and although I felt this was not so, I realized the little time teachers spent on them did not warrant trying again to collate information on time spent on logs, or choosing time and frequency of use to be any indication of value. Clearly the influence and value of the logs was more intrinsic and lay elsewhere in the NELP.

I also had to conclude that being an active, involved participator in the staffroom with student, course and teacher-coordinating responsibilities, along with the very short and intermittent times the teachers spent on the logs, made it too difficult to engage in any empirical investigations. And yet, I could not shake the knowledge that the logs played a vital role in the running of the NELP even though the study did not highlight or inform on this point. From my observations, I had strong impressions of logs being an integral part of the teacher's teaching tools and teaching practice. Logs were used quickly, quietly, and apparently efficiently, or at least sufficiently, throughout the day in a seemingly very surreptitious way. While time spent on the logs showed that entries can be read and recorded very speedily, which could be interpreted as indicating logs were not used much and were perhaps of no especial or particular importance, observations showed the teachers always had the logs with them whether working individually, in pairs, or in groups. Logs were visually very apparent in the staffroom, they were always recorded, and while teachers may forget a pencil, a handout, or their lunch, they rarely ever forgot the logs, observations showing some teachers even coming in on non-teaching days to complete them.

The results of the time-frequency study then clearly showed the futility of attempting an objective research approach to unfolding the dynamics of the teachers' work behavior in this context and under the data collection conditions available (see chapter three), and I concluded that studies of a qualitative kind would be ultimately more revealing in coming to understand the dynamics of the NELP and the work behavior of the teachers than studies of a quantitative kind.

1.6. New directions

A further semester of observations afforded me a deeper intuition of the processes and culture of the NELP. However, the sheer volume of the entries left me drowning under a sea of words and struggling to find a way to present all or any of it as a description or explanation of the NELP. Taking a different approach then, I looked carefully at my notes in conjunction with the results of the frequency study and I decided to go back and flesh out the results based around my diary and individual observation entries of the NELP teachers. The integrating of the observations with the diary accounts and the recorded log responses in this way enabled me to write a vignette – a story if you will – on a day in the life of the NELP, which, as an example of "rich text" (see chapter three), shows in detail the complexities, interests, attitudes and atmosphere of the teachers and program. This was the real turning point that allowed the executive functions of the NELP to emerge and ultimately reveal that the dynamics and workings of the teachers in the NELP were much connected to the *type* of interaction they engaged in.

The full text of the vignette, followed by a more detailed commentary, appears in chapter five. Here I will briefly summarize those functions the vignette was able to identify, and relate how the observations were reduced into categories and affordances illustrative of how part-timers negotiate their work; and thus enabling suggested areas of conceptual framework for this study.

1.7. Insights gained from the Vignette

The vignette enabled me to clearly see the logs working in the context of the program and the parameters of the staffroom. It also enabled me to see that while the logs are clearly one of the major functions and focuses of the teachers in the program, they are not the only function operant in the essential dynamics of the staffroom. Firstly the logs operate in a well defined and contained environment, a room with a very apparent and evident context and culture of its own. The logs also function in this specific context in conjunction with the

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teachers, who have been hired, thus selected as being suitable for the program, and with the texts, syllabus, curriculum and teaching perspective of the NELP, giving other very specific areas of investigation, description and interpretation. Most of all, the vignette shows the logs functioning within in a distinctive verbal interactive decision-making framework.

The vignette also revealed interesting insights into the various discussion formats and "types" found in the staffroom, highlighting how they are tailored clearly to the different purposes teachers expect to achieve through them. These will be dealt with in chapter seven in detail, but briefly the three identified types are 1) passing transitory exchanges, 2) longer open discussions, and 3) longer secluded discussions. The most common discussion type being that of the longer open decision-making in which decision-making is shared with other teachers, and where explanations or "stories" on past teaching experiences, and the accessing of shared and distributed cognition and knowledge are offered as a means of exemplification, agreement, opposition, or persuasion in the decision-making process.

It is very apparent from the vignette that the real bloodline of the NELP, of which the web of connections is contingent, is the constant on-going interaction that takes place between teachers throughout the day and that the environment, logs and discussions, and the connection between them, would be the focus of investigation and interpretation. This study aims to show how teacher conversation is both stimulated by, and results from, the curriculum and daily class work, how the logs both record as feedback and inform as forward planning, and how the decision-making discussions operate as the functions in the NELP that give it its dynamics, enables its characteristic culture and garners from its part-time teachers a sense of professional commitment.

1.8. The conceptual frameworks of the study identified

The observations, tapings, interviews and analyses of the teachers' work over the study period have allowed for the isolation of four concepts essential in coming to understand the way in which the part-time teachers of the NELP are able to work cooperatively and

collaboratively in a program while under severe time constraints as part-time EFL teachers.

a) <u>The concept of a shared culture</u> -the context and culture of the NELP are clearly of importance to the teachers. The *macro* view shows the Japanese educational context and the university in which the NELP is a specific program and what it provides for the teachers, and the *micro* view shows the workings of the NELP itself, highlighting the underlying dynamics of its organization, the two providing a characteristic dual culture the teachers can identify and utilize in their daily work.

b) <u>The concept of a shared theoretical perspective</u> - the NELP's aims and purpose, curriculum, hiring, and teaching perspective are transparent. This concept highlights the cognitive and socio-interactive perspective of teacher connection to the program and how interaction provides the intangible connections between its functions thereby contributing to the formation and maintenance of an organizational culture accessible and modifiable to the part-time teachers.

c) <u>The concept of the logs as an important shared cultural tool</u>   - the keeping, function and purpose of teacher class logs, and how they serve both the teachers and the program. Through their connections and contributions to the NELP organizational culture, logs can be seen working as a program affordance to provide both an anchoring function and a link with other teachers.

d) <u>The concept of interaction</u> - discussions provide contingencies for the collegial work of the teachers. The kinds of discussions teachers engage in and the specific functions of these discussion types are set and controlled by the teachers themselves. Such discussions provide the means by which teachers interact, and can be understood in terms of interactive learning theories. Thus implications for teacher learning and development through the contingencies set-up as outcomes of shared decision-making in both discussion and log keeping are vital aspects of the NELP organizational culture, offering part-time teachers a measure of on-the-job teacher development as well as a professional connection and identity and a speedy way in which to carry out their work.

1.9.   Conclusion

The pre-study, although not successful in itself, acted as a pilot exploratory study enabling the isolation of logs for observation, which in turn led to a deeper view of the dynamics of the NELP. This in turn enabled the discovery and isolation of two other major functions in the NELP, namely curriculum and discussions, and the "magic gel" that holds it all together: interaction. The results of the pre-study pointed to the need for further investigations into the nature and formation of the NELP culture, the log use, and the need for tapings and mappings of teacher conversations.

Notes

1. Turnover was initially high in the NELP during the early stages coinciding with the bubble economy years. Reasons for this are evident in the NELP's historical development and will be exemplified in chapter five. High turnover had leveled off by 1996 when teachers found full-time jobs more difficult to attain and teaching life in Japan seemed more competitive. In 1993/4 many of the major and more reputable English Language schools, the Stanton and Cambridge English Schools, for example, closed due to restructuring in their parent sponsor companies, releasing a flood of excellent teachers looking for steady employment in colleges. Further, on realizing they would probably remain part-time, many teachers in the NELP, who had also been working in these now defunct places, increased working hours, and the number of "core" teachers increased. The NELP must compete with other work stations but since colleges all have similar pay rates and academic calendars, it could be said that if time, location and financial concerns are non-competitive, there must be other reasons operant for teachers electing to work in the NELP. It is my intention to show there are, by way of explaining the meaning and significance of "I like it here, this is the only place I get to talk with the other teachers" (D. C. teacher quote) seeing in it a sense of professional identity and commitment.

2. a. Evidence for common expressions is surprisingly hard to gain outside personal experience and anecdotes from other teachers. It is hoped my 27 years teaching in Japan may give me some latitude and credential in descriptions and interpretations of what essentially have become another set of common knowledge, beliefs and assumptions built over many years of interaction and experience teaching within Japanese culture.

b. Teachers in Japan are civil servants, positions denied foreigners by law, thus there are no full-time foreign positions in Japanese public schools. ALTs (Assistant Language Teachers), on a Mombusho (Ministry of Education) sponsored program bringing foreigners to Japan to team-teach with Japanese teachers in government schools, teach under limited-time special status conditions, but are not considered full-time teachers. Wadden ed. (1993) and Wordell ed. (1988) present several articles outlining similar issues, as do most of the sources referenced in chapter four. The issues of English education in Japan, and general education (now in great change) make regular daily appearances in English Language newspapers, forums, and on T.V. documentaries, commentaries, and discussions.

c. The problem of interaction between Japanese and foreign staff is less severe in the colleges since teachers are not expected to team teach and may be hired full-time. However, the isolation in which most EFL teachers operate in the colleges, along with the rarity of full-time positions, is indicative of their actual, as well as perceived, low status.

3. Immigration and Ministry of Education statistics provided by web site (April 2002) give no information prior to 1994 for "professor" status. Figures indicate just 0.27% on such visas, 0.49% in education but 63.7% on spouse or permanent residence: a total of less than 1% on specific visas, but a pool more likely to be a large part of the total 64.2%. And in 2000 that number stood at 0.39% for professors, 0.49% for education and 55.5% for spouses and permanents - a total of 56.6% an unknown, but a likely high percentage involved in English teaching. More important is the effect the issue of visas has on teachers and their teaching environments, and comments on this can be found in chapter five.

4. Masters degrees began to proliferate in the 1990s, with universities abroad offering long distance programs not requiring the student to leave the country. 1993 - 1995 was the height of teachers in the NELP seeking further education, when 5 of the 13 teachers were studying for masters degrees in TESOL of some kind, and one in Japanese Language. Since then there has always been at least one teacher on the staff studying although teachers have come to accept that since part-time status is all that is available without publications and, increasingly, Japanese language proficiency (Wadden, 1993), and part-time positions can be attained without a masters, the time and effort of further qualifications is moot; a factor important in considering the professional development of part-time teachers. Of those who gained higher qualifications while working in the NELP only 2 remained at the end of this study in 1998, the others had gone on to full-time positions or had left the country for full-time teaching positions in other countries. The majority of teachers moving on from teaching in the NELP have positively appraised their time and experiences there as valuable and enjoyable experiences. (references from [confidential]teacher reports, and personal letters of thanks).

Chapter Two

Conceptual Frameworks and Discussion of
Study Aims and Objectives

> interpretations make sense of new experiences on the basis of
> ready-made conceptual schemes. There is always some view of
> things already in place.
>
> (Lawson & McCauley, 1990)

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to elucidate the characteristics and contingencies of the NELP that allow the teachers to work so cooperatively and efficiently in their time-constrained teaching environment, and to look at the implications this has for part-time teachers. Chapter one identified the central issues of the study as the staffroom, the logs, and the decision-making of a group of teachers, and the interaction that connects them. Making reference to relevant literature, this chapter will look at concepts helpful in coming to understand these issues, specifically the characteristics of teacher cultures, organizational culture, the concept of shared knowledge as a contingency of an organizational culture of teachers that allows for effective interactive decision-making, the concept and importance of affordances, and the concept of interaction itself. The aim is to show the theoretical underpinnings of the contingencies of the NELP culture, placing special emphasis on logs as a major affordance, the centrality of interactive decision-making and the importance and implications of a shared culture.

Fig. 1.p. 34 graphically presents the conceptual framework of the NELP study indicating the areas and flows of influence, and highlighting the complexity of those connections. This complexity makes the selection of any one particular perspective inadequate for conceptual interpretations. Also, as the conceptual frameworks touch on several important ideas and influences, each covering an extensive history and enormous body of dense literature in the

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black -- directional
red -- influential

Ethnographic Study of the NELP

a program of part-time native teachers of English in a Japanese Jr. College

Context

*Society

*Educational

Institute

Contextual Parameters

*Structures

*Systems

*Stakeholders

students, staff

nos. of teachers

official approval

hiring

affected by organizational

culture (curriculum)

teacher types
interviewing

NELP

administrators

coordinators

organizational culture

Teachers

Staff

requirements

amendments

curriculum

course requirements

logs

feedback

planning

feedback

planning

Teaching

discussions

The Flow of influences of the executive functions of the NELP as evidenced in the daily staffroom procedures.

Arrows indicating organizational flows of influence, information, maintainance , and development that

contribute to the NELP culture and teacher interactive decision-making.

Fig. 1

various possible fields of study surrounding the identified central issues, it has been necessary to be selective. However, enough will be covered to clearly show what from my readings has informed my interpretations, and to provide a framework to place the outcomes of the investigation of this study for possible further studies, investigations and interpretations.

The issue of where to start has been informed by the results found in chapter one; the point most visual to anyone visiting the NELP - the apparent characteristic work ethic of the teachers. Considerations then move from the most visible to the most invisible - the nature of the observed interaction. As observed and exemplified in the vignette, the teachers are seen working in a very cooperative and collaborative way within their staffroom. It is thus necessary first to look at the concept of teachers and their work in relationship to their school environment.

While much of the work in the literature pertaining to teachers at work is at the level of the teacher-student relationship, this study does not concern itself directly with student learning, or with teacher-student talk and interaction; thus while it is recognized that any teaching organization focusing the work of teachers must necessarily focus students, the theories of language learning will not feature largely in the theoretical underpinnings or conceptual frameworks of this study. The following outline negotiates the content of this review:

2.1.2. Overview of this chapter:

Section one: will look at teachers at work, and at issues of collegiality, highlighting the collegial view as being much amenable to the issues of teacher professionalism and teacher development. However, it will also be noted that this body of work pertains mainly to mainstream compulsory educational situations in native English teaching environments and can thus only provide a point of departure in understanding the work environment of part-time EFL teachers in a native English language program in Japan. It will also note that research on teachers at work fails to place enough emphasis on the relationship between

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the organizational aspects of teachers' work stations and the formation of any characteristic work ethic.

Section two: will provide an understanding of the NELP culture through the concept of organizational culture, making special reference to the perspective of Human Resources Development theory. As an alternative to the classical bureaucratic model of schools, this · theory highlights the importance of establishing a participatory organizational culture with decision-making as a central function, and indicates there are unseen connections of unity in any resulting cooperative organization.

At this point it will be noted that if an organization is to establish and achieve an identifiable work culture for its teachers it is necessary for it to promote collegiality, cooperation and collaboration. It will be suggested that a culture allowing a participatory function will be best able to provide the desired environment.

Section three: will search for aspects that allow for the formation of an organizational culture of teachers, attempting to find the "unseen connections" in the concept of shared knowledge. It will show that theories of scripts, speech acts and cohesion are not enough to interpret the connection seen between teachers in interactive decision-making, and will suggest an explanation may be found in seeing the interaction itself as a means of mediation between the organizational cultural environment and its members.

Section four: will look more deeply at the concept of "talk" and various other means of effective communication available to teachers in a coordinated program. The concept of the mediated social world seen through the concepts of affordances, contingency and intersubjectivity will be explored, and it will be suggested that these concepts may be operating in the NELP by way of various types of dialogs, especially decision-making, which results in helping the teachers create and maintain connections to the organizational culture. It will also suggest that this mediation creates a zone of learning open to teachers as a natural part of their daily work.

will turn to the issues of logs and decision-making, the identified executive functions now considered to be the affordances of the NELP, and review the available literature pertaining to these issues with emphasis on how these two aspects are fundamental, integrative and interactive in the NELP.

Throughout the review, the issue of teacher development in the light of the above sections, will appear. It will be clear that the present methods and theories available are not suitable for the teachers in the NELP and that a new perspective needs to be established. It will be suggested that the contingencies of the NELP provide an open zone of learning in the staffroom and therefore fertile ground for covert in-house teacher development; an issue that will be investigated in more depth as an outcome of the overall study in chapter eight.

A discussion of the research perspectives directly related to the data collection and analysis will appear in chapter three.

2.1.3. Focus of the study

Since this study did not start from a perspective or theory, it has not collected nor analyzed data as a means of attempting to offer proofs to substantiate, strengthen or dispute the claims of any particular perspective or theory. Rather, this study sets out instead to be descriptive and interpretive of a specific case (see case studies chapter 3) focusing on what van Lier (2000:82), referencing van Langenhove, says is :

> the search for meaning of particulars through detailed, interpretative explanations of persons, their mental and physical activities

The study is informed by observations, the voices of the teachers through interviews, tapings, and written records, and by the heuretics of the study (past experiences and knowledge of the NELP and the researcher) and as such, is ecologically based in a specific environment providing specific knowledge. However, to afford interpretations it is necessary to connect this specific knowledge if not to a perspective at least to some conceptual frames of reference. Tagiuri's (1968) model of the concept of organizational culture, based on a modification by Owens (1995: 79), and discussed within the perspective

of Human Resources Development (HRD) is most informative for interpretations of the macro-context (the main college and the structure of the NELP). Whereas Schein's (1985) model of levels of culture is most informative for discussions of the formation of the culture and its influence on the teachers themselves. The micro-context (discussed in the light of shared culture, teacher logs and interactive decision-making) will make reference in interpretations to the influence of the work being done in the areas of interaction and activity theory from a broadly sociocultural perspective, in which;

> the goal is ... to understand the relationship between human [mental]
> functioning, on one hand ... and cultural, historical and institutional
> setting on the other .... with the principle themes [being] ... human action
> and mediation ... and more specifically language based social interaction
> and the mediation qualities of human language.
>
> (Thorne, 2000: 239)

2.2 Section One: relationship between teachers and schools

However one wishes to define a teacher, as an artisan, a craftsman, a jack-of-all trades, a baby-sitter, or a professional, one thing is clear, teachers are workers —workers in the field of education. Schools operate in an identifiable physical environment which, in addition to teachers, employs a myriad of personnel in several different departments and sections. The success or otherwise of an educational organization is not usually seen in its profits and losses but rather by its participants, the extent of the relationships and patterns of work within itself, and more specifically in its relationship to its students and society at large; it is in society that students are evaluated and they in turn evaluate themselves and their education. Thus it is in society that a school seeks approval and gains and measures its true success, and it is to teachers that society looks for successfully educated students. It is of no trivial matter therefore to study the effect of the organization on the way teachers work in their workplaces, their staffrooms, and their schools.

Teachers are often thought of as independent autonomous people, living and working in fortified environments called classrooms seemingly divorced from the world at large (Hargreaves, A, 1994: 167). In such school environments teachers can be seen to be operating in their own little "bubble" connected tenuously by thin bridges, rather like the

compartments of what Lortie (1975) refers to as an eggcrate-like structure, creating a negative and lonely appraisal of teachers and their work and hinting at isolation and disconnection to the school. However, research shows that just as other organizations, institutions or working environments can be seen to have a life of their own, so to do schools (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968, Handy, 1986, Nais, 1993, Hargreaves A, 1994). Indeed, one need only walk into a school of any kind to sense its character and to feel a sense of cohesion to which an outsider does not belong. To fully understand a teaching organization then, it is necessary to look at its "life" – to ascertain its history, and the norms, beliefs and values that at its core constitute its prime motivating, controlling and defining factors.

Most studies on schools and students, and on learning and teachers today begin with an organizational or school environment setting cited simply by name, with research then focused at the "local" level of the teacher and the classroom. Even in cases in which the research has been set and collated from staffrooms (Hargreaves, A., and Woods, P. (ed.) 1993), little seems to have been done on teachers in their wider work environments. Most research in schools has also been in and about mainstream educational institutions, the primary and secondary schools in Britain, and the K12 schools in USA. Furthermore, most of the research pertaining to schools has as its agenda a need to understand present systems and circumstances with the view of implementing innovation, restructuring and change and in reviewing the effectiveness of school improvements (Hargreaves, D. 1980, 1985; Hargreaves, A. 1993, 1994; Little & McLaughlin, 1993, McLaughlin, 1993, Little, 1993, Corrie, 1995, and Craig, 1995).

Thus the focus has been on the effectiveness of the teacher as seen through their classroom work, often on specific issues such as curriculum implementation (Alexander, Rose & Woodhead, 1993), teacher response to institutionalized preparation time (Hargreaves, A. 1993b.), and investigations through teacher-talk on teacher perspectives of their work (Nais, 1993). Lortie (1984), presents work on teacher careers and work rewards with focus on means of gaining rewards under the constraints of the occupation, Woods, P. (1984), looks at how teachers use humour in the staffroom to diffuse the stresses of their occupation and

Hammersley (1984) looks at the social interaction of teachers in the staffroom, showing teacher topics of interest and concern.

However, in these cases the descriptions and interpretations of teacher work and the characteristics of its many stakeholders and their various influences, have not been seen widely and deeply as aspects of interaction with the environment, and the cultural influences of the environment have been placed as secondary concerns to issues of the teaching perspectives and values of the teachers as seen through their own views of their work with and for themselves and their students in their classrooms.

Hargreaves, A. (1994) states that teachers have not been given enough understanding, respect and voice by school institutions, government and society itself in the changes that have come upon them in the postmodern years, and sees the area of teacher's workplace as a vital one for the future of education (Hargreaves, A., and Woods, P. 1993). Hargreaves (1994) and Hammersley (1993) continue to work in the field of teachers in their workplace, continuing to focus the teachers' perspective by investigating the role of the teacher by ways of action research and teacher research; methods of investigation often used in teacher development programs in which teachers can be encouraged to become more engaged in their own learning and situations by studying themselves, students or others in their specific situations.

In USA, however, rather more work has been done since the 1980s on suggesting formulas of desirable characteristics for effective schools and for reform, as can be seen in the works of Schein (1985), and Kanter (1983) and Deal and Kennedy (1984), whose work shows support for the need for a strong organizational culture as a requisite of a good educational organization (Owens, 1995:306). Research by Purkey and Smith (1985) indicates that differences among schools do in fact have an effect on student achievement levels. Purkey and Smith list 13 essential characteristics of the good school (Owens 1995:307:312), numbers 1-8 pertaining to work conditions such as school site, management, national and local community, parental support, staffing, planning, timing and scheduling, and numbers 9 - 13 being concerned with collaborative planning and collegial relationships, a sense of

community, reducing any sense of alienation, shared clear goals, and an order of purposefulness and seriousness, these being of most interest to this study.

Again these aspects may be of vital importance to all schools, and thus to the NELP in some degree; however, as a program well embedded in a wider college culture (see chapter four), the NELP does not have direct influence from external aspects such as parental support, a sense of community connected to the wider community, or any influence from needing to reduce a sense of alienation in the community. The NELP does, however, have a sense of community within itself and a sense of place within the college, an indirect sense of pressure from the parents as regards their expectations of their children's graduation which comes from the college itself, and a sense of duty inherent in the host country's expectation of the EFL teacher helping to reduce any sense of alienation between Japanese and foreigner (see chapters one and five).

2.2.1. School cultures

Emphasis in studies on school cultures has been on cooperation, collegiality, and individuality; these aspects being seen as acting to establish the basis and opportunity for teacher interaction and development. Important to these concepts are the issues of individualism and individuality, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and restructuring. Much has been written on these subjects (Little, 1993, Corrie, 1995, Craig, 1995, and especially by Hargreaves, A. 1994). However, it is to be noted this work does not pertain directly to EFL programs in Japan, and therefore its applicability is by no means implied. Rather the points selected for commentary are to provide points of departure for understanding the work ethic of the NELP teachers.

2.2.2. Collegiality

Collegiality, meaning colleagues working together in a cooperative way in a collaborative setting, appears to have become the desired operating norm for schools from the 1990s. Articles describing collegiality in schools stress the sharing and camaraderie between staff, and the positive effects these have on the teachers, the pupils and the school in general.

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> Collaboration and collegiality are seen as promoting professional growth and internally generated school improvement [and are] widely viewed as ways of securing effective implementation of externally introduced change. Their contribution to the implementation of centralized curriculum reform is a key factor...
>
> (Hargreaves, A. 1994:186).

However, while clearly recognizing and acknowledging the strengths of collegiality, the benefits and value of it have also been contested by Hargreaves, A. (1994) on the grounds that three important aspects of teacher work may not be adequately catered for. They are:

1) personal care: described as the psychic rewards and the ethic of responsibility to one's own students, without which the ownership and control of one's class would be challenged.

2) individuality: the personal independence and self-realization of a teacher, without which there would be a 'negative surrender' to public opinion.

3) solitude: the right to withdraw into oneself, to take time out to delve into personal resources to reflect, and regroup, without which the teachers would find themselves in occupational isolation.

Hargreaves, A. (1994: 188-9)

Hargreaves concludes by saying that a system needs to be flexible and should avoid the pitfall of rewarding collegial norms to the exclusion of the above three aspects which encourage and foster tolerance and individual excellence.

Little (1993: 509-36) suggests that there is more to the meaning of collegiality than just sharing. Rather, collegiality has implications for the independence of teachers which is a matter of considerable importance in the organizational cultures of teachers since teachers jealously guard their own territory, their classroom, and do not take well to forfeiting it in favor of administrative requirements of an artificially and unnaturally applied collaboration. Earlier, Little (1982) pointed out that claims of collegiality and collaboration as indications of teacher empowerment, and of critical reflection and commitment to continuous improvement, may in fact only apply to certain versions of it, and that there may be no such thing as a "true" collegiality or collaboration – just different forms and

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degrees of it that serve different purposes. The versions that foster reflection and empowerment are likely to be the least common since they are the 'outcomes of a free, spontaneous collaborative working relationship that evolves from, and is sustained by, the teaching community itself'. Little (1982) discusses two characteristics of strong collegiality identified as:

1) telling stories: described as the giving and receiving of aid and assistance, and the sharing of ideas and materials. Little suggests this form of communication does not threaten teachers because these external factors do not challenge the teachers' control of the classroom or their conceptions of teaching and themselves.

2) Joint work: described as the interdependency between teachers requiring mutual adjustment at the practical level. Little suggests this moves beyond a simple commonalty, and thus has implications for teacher autonomy and empowerment'.

Little further suggests that critical feedback about teaching among teachers in schools that are considered to be collaborative is also not very common, and Hargreaves (1994:192) suggests that this is because collegiality is often contrived, that is, administratively regulated. He goes further to suggest that the peer coaching, considered so popular in helping the socialization and coaching of new teachers, is also a contrived form of collaboration and quotes Huberman's (1993) findings that peer coaching is only likely to be successful if the pairs have 'broadly compatible educational beliefs and similar approaches to their teaching' (Hargreaves, A. 1994:205).

These comments have considerable significance for characterizing the NELP, for as it will be shown in the following chapters, the NELP is an organizational culture that has formed through the collaboration of the teachers and is maintained mainly by their continued cooperation. It could thus be considered a truly collegial teaching environment indicating it is ripe for the existence of teacher empowerment and continued peer learning. However, Hargreaves comments (above) that a truly collegial organization provides not only care and individuality, but also solitude for the teachers for the purpose of reflection and refreshment, and since this is an aspect observations shows to be almost entirely absent in the NELP, it could be concluded the NELP is not an organizational culture able to provide

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a measure of teacher development. However, the results of the study on the teachers' log-keeping and interactive decision-making in the NELP may offer a challenge to the concept of solitude as being necessary for a collegial work perspective to provide a forum for teacher development, and that in-service teacher development is a possibility even for busy part-time teachers.

2.2.3. Outcomes of collegiality

Teachers are individual people, they are not of the same mold however much they may share the norms, assumptions and beliefs of the others around them. Thus they cannot be forced to adopt and adhere to "being collegial". Collegiality must form, emerge over time in a fertile environment and must do so from a dynamic interaction between the school environment and the workers over historical time. A school organization, thus, has a wider life and responsibility that is integral to its functions, and a full understanding of these functions is not possible without a deeper investigation of the wider aspects of the organization, even if the participants in that organization remain largely unconscious and unaware of it and its influences. Thus, while on the day-to-day level of operations, persons in an organization may remain unaware of or be little concerned with the influences of a macro-context, these influences, nevertheless, are inextricably involved in the decisions that inform the daily business and the formation of the work culture. Furthermore, these influences may not be as obvious and inherent, or as difficult to extrapolate, as the lack of research seems to be suggesting. The influence of a macro-context will be further investigated in section two.

In EFL most of the work in the area of workplace has been more directly related to descriptions of the national characteristics and motivation of the students in the host country to study English and how this affects teaching methods and job stability, (Wordell, 1988, Wadden, 1993, JALT, JACET Journals, as regards Japan) while teacher action research focuses mainly on the concerns of teaching EFL as a means to improve or allow for the teacher's own personal professional development, which in turn is thought to provide positive returns for the students. Such teacher research frequently appears as requirements

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for TESOL masters programs, and has been well documented by Nunan (1992), Hammersley (1993), Freeman and Richards, J. C. (eds). (1996), for teaching training programs in conjunction with the allied fields of teacher mentoring and apprenticeship as seen in the diary works of Bailey (1990), Bailey and Squires (1992), and in the collection of works on mentoring in Kerry et. al (1995). These works are consistent in their beliefs in the educational value of teachers observing, by way of diaries, videos, surveys and questionnaires their own teaching practices, and these aspects have come to form a basis for activities considered indispensable for teacher development. However, the NELP is not a program in which the teachers, who are all part-time, have the luxury of time nor the opportunity for specifically organized and applied teacher research programs and studies. Thus recommendations for teacher development activities or enrichment exercises are often impractical for implementation, and results from the studies of others can offer only extrapolated points of interest.

While much is written about cooperative, collaborative and collegial school cultures as being most desirable, in most of the examples above the school organizational environment and other non-teaching aspects of schools have been given little if any research, weight or importance, although the importance of the administrator, principal, coordinator or leader as a representative of the school has received some study (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986, Nias et. al 1989, aCampo, 1993)

One such study by Hargreaves, A (1993b) on the institutionalized preparation time for teachers in Canadian schools indicates the important influence of the administration on teachers and their work. Hargreaves outlined the benefits and the difficulties Canadian teachers found in being given institutionalized "free periods" for class preparation, during which their classes were taken by adjunct teachers in their absence, and reported that teachers appreciated free periods, but were uncomfortable with a possible loss of classroom empowerment or control, unless the adjunct teacher was a different subject specialist.

While this study shows the importance the administration has on teaching routines, norms, and beliefs, it contrasts directly with the teachers in the NELP, who share most of their

classes and have no preparation time scheduled into their day, but rather have unspecified "payment for preparation time" factored into their part-time teacher salaries. Since their "day" consists of contracted individual classes, the college does not consider it necessary to provide "free periods" for preparation and teachers are expected simply to be prepared. Without additional payment NELP teachers would likely reject any institutionalized free periods as forced and unpaid overtime. The NELP teachers also all share their class(es) with other teachers throughout the week, thus requiring them to find preparation time not only for themselves, but also to work together with a partner teacher and this indicates the organization of the NELP may be quite a different system to that of regular schools. Despite the lack of on-campus time teachers in the NELP allow themselves for preparation however, they have still managed to form an organization in which they, even as part-time teachers, can clearly be seen to be operating in a collegial manner. Thus a study of the cooperative and collaborative behavior of the NELP teachers is not enough to explain the collegiality of the NELP, and it is therefore necessary to view more deeply what underpins the characteristics of the NELP organization and the NELP teachers' class decision-making preparations.

2.3. Section Two: Organization of Schools

2.3.1. Background

Until around the mid-twentieth century western culture was dominated by modernist and structuralist thought stressing logic, order, and systems controlled by strict rules of procedure. Educational objectives also favored logical, orderly and systematic patterns and sought to have schools teach for objectives by implementing systematic instruction and standardized assessment (Owens,1995:9). Later in the post modernist and post structuralist era, awareness grew of the inequality and inequity of the dominant characteristics of schools and the issue of power, or lack of it open to students, teachers, and schools themselves, became a political issue challenging the existing order and the concept of controlled schooling for everyone. As the concept of objectivity began to erode with new thought on the means and ways of knowing, so too eroded the prevailing concept of the

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organization of schools, and educators began to question the content, purposes, methods and philosophy of teaching and learning. A great interest began to awaken to the organizational behavior of people in the workplace, and to the climate and culture of schools in which a collegial and cooperative teaching work ethic could be operant.

2.3.2. Perspectives for studying organizational culture

The structure of organizations and what this brings to bear on the workforce is of interest to those in many fields: to the behavioral sciences such as psychologists, looking at how individuals work and learn in their organizations, how they are motivated and how knowledge is transmitted, sociologists looking at the relationships within an organization, and at the relationships between groups and their environment, and engineers in the study of ergonomics, looking at how to physically improve work environments. However, a perusal of these fields has not yielded any framework on which to base the interpretations of the NELP, mainly because they are focused to the individual participant in relation to other members, rather than in the interaction of all the aspects of the organization.

Cognitive psychology working in the area of the cognitive effects of various work aspects on employees offers interesting research, for example, the studies of Crowe et. al. (1997), Dodd, et. al (1996), Lipshitz, et. al (1997), Magner, et. al (1996), Ross, W. et. al, (1996), Settoon, et. al (1996), and Wageman, et. al (1997), on issues such as interactive effects of variety, autonomy and feedback, uncertainty, interactive effects of participation, evaluation, the effects of interpersonal trust, leader-member exchange, and incentives, cooperation, and the effects of task and reward interdependence on group performance. However, in keeping with the research perspective of psychology, all these studies have occurred in simulated situations, whereas the NELP study visits the teachers in the natural environment and does not attempt to deliberately modify or manipulate any behaviors in order to generate statistics for the purpose of explaining outcomes. For this reason, such studies are interpretively incompatible with the NELP's ethnographically amassed data, and thus no attempt is made to seek interpretations from the findings of such studies.

The field of business management looks at the structure and functions of organizations for ways to manage personnel and work requirements and to deal with the areas of maintenance, improvement, innovation and change in their particular organizations. However, the focus tends to be on work performance in terms of profits and loss and on concerns of increasing staff productivity, whereas the NELP as a sub-section of a much wider school system has no power in this area, thus no effort has been made to consider the program in terms of its profitability in business management terms. Feminist view points (Johnson, Shakeshaft, Bell, Chases, among others in Owens, 1995: 315 -325) and others interested in the issues of gender, power and political structures (Gitlin, Siegel & Boru, 1993, and Hedge & Whitney, ed. 1996) along with minority and cross-cultural issues in the workplace (areas unexplored for this thesis), are of great interest in assessing the role and effect of the individual in any organization. However, again these fields do not apply to the specific issue of how the part-time teachers in the NELP establish and maintain their specific teaching culture, and thus no reference will be made to studies in any of these areas.

The underlying interest of all this study is to strive to understand how people work in organizations at the various social, linguist and cognitive levels and to thus find the best way to make an organization, or learning environment, an efficient, successful system and a "happy" place to be; to effect what Kizer (1987) refers to as a caring healthy workplace. This sentiment occurs in other manifestations in the works of Radford et. al (1997) on quantity and quality in universities, and of the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Education by Sallis, E. (1993). However, since these perspectives offer contrived directives to be implemented rather than outcomes to be investigated that have emerged and evolved as they have done in the NELP, no direct comparisons will be attempted in this study to any of these perspectives.

Organizations of school workplaces continues to command interest in the field of educational research in schools and teaching. However, as it was noted in section one, research and inquiry in schools (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986, Handy and Aitkens, 1986, Hargreaves, D. 1980, 1985, Hargreaves, A. 1993, 1994, Huberman, 1993, McLaghlin, 1993,

Little, 1993, Goodson and Cole, 1994, Jarzabkowski 1999) is mainly focused at the level of teacher acts within the organization focusing on aspects of individual teacher perception in, and response to, such concerns as school approval or encouragement (or not), to aspects such as teacher autonomy, individualism, collegial, cooperation and collaboration, and to the effect these have on the teacher-student interaction in the learning process. Although some work has been done on the relationship between the structure of a school and staff collaboration (Zeichner et. al, 1987, Hopkins, 1990, Cole, 1991, Corrie, 1995), and more recently on the importance of talk in learning (Alexander, 2001, Routman, 2002), studies of teacher mediation of their environment through interactive decision-making as a means of meeting their own needs as regards the organization and coordination of teaching practices has barely been touched upon.

2.3.3. The importance of decision-making

The importance of teacher's thought processes has long been recognized as important in teachers' work (Clark & Peterson, 1986), but more recently there has been an increasing interest in decision-making in organizational cultures and in how teachers prepare their work, and attention has turned to the issue of teacher planning and decision-making (Smith, 1996, Richards & Lockhart, 1994, Woods, D. 1996). Richards & Lockhart (ibid) define a decision as an 'option a teacher has selected from a range of options,' and identify three stages for individual decision-making:

1) planning decisions: before the act of teaching
2) interactive decisions: involving in-class decisions that may not have been planned for.
3) evaluative decisions: decisions about the effectiveness of a lesson and what the follow up lesson will be.

However, it is to be noted in this study and in most other research on decision-making (see section seven), the decision-making being referred to pertains to individual teacher decision-making involving the teacher, the students, and to a lesser extend the teaching environment. Less is known in the area of *how* the teaching environments themselves influence the teacher's ability to plan for classes, and how teachers conduct teacher-to-teacher interactive decision-making, that is, on how teachers work together when it is a

classroom requirement. The study of the NELP is one such study, and hence forth in this study reference to interactive decision-making refers not to teacher-student interactive decision-making and changes in classrooms, but to *teacher-to-teacher decision-making in the staffroom.*

In a study of decision-making in relation to the environment, the nature of the organization itself must be a partner area of interest and influence, for the organization itself carries great power and influence in what teachers can and cannot do in their planning and thus by extension, to what they will or will not do in their teaching. The works of Handy, (1986, 1995), and Owens (1995) offer a deeper investigation of the organization culture of schools, and are most useful in allowing for interpretations of the NELP, as in these studies the school itself is treated as a workplace in which shared decision-making has a primary place, and not just as a negatively charged influence of structure and administrative requirements imposed on teachers and their classwork.

I would like now to focus on the theoretical underpinnings that most helps to understand the organization culture of the NELP.

2.3.4. Human Resources Development (HRD)

In this perspective, educational organizations are characterized not by the order, rationality, and system inherent in classical thinking [bureaucratic, models] but by ambiguity and uncertainty in their fast-changing environments, unclear and conflicting goals, weak technology, fluid participation, and loose coupling of important activities and organizational units. Because of these characteristics, the core activity of educational organizations - that is, teaching - is not carried out under close surveillance of the administrative hierarchy, as classical thought would envision, but is coordinated and controlled more by the culture of the organization: its values, its traditions, and the norms of acceptable behavior established over time. However, non instructional activities of educational organizations - such as financial accounting, pupil accounting, and the transportation system - are commonly managed using bureaucratic perspectives and techniques. Thus, in HRD, schools and other systems

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are understood to be dual organizational systems.

<div align="right">(Owens, 1995:313)</div>

In his review on the influences of Human Resources Development in educational organizations Owens (1995) states HRD is based on the overlapping theories of various scholars. Of those outlined by Owens (1995:72-74) the following are of particular importance for the NELP.

1) McGregor (1960) who describes two overlaying theories for administrators of organizations; Theory X - that people are lazy and will avoid work if they can, and theory Y, that people seek responsibility and want to perform satisfying work, the consequences of which affect organizations of workers.

2) Maslow (1970) who suggests satisfied needs do not motivate people, whereas unsatisfied ones do, alluding to the need for workers to negotiate their own needs, rather than have them preempted by rules.

3) Herzberg (1966) who suggests that effective organizations must have maintenance factors (such as good working conditions and locations) in order to motivate other desirable factors such as work satisfaction being perceived in the achievements gained from the work itself, and from a sense of autonomy on the job.

Owens (1995:73-75) also places importance on the idea of seeing the administrator's philosophy of management as being important in any organization since it will directly influence the decision-making style exercised in that organization, and in stressing the need for harmony and consistency between the goal of the organization and the needs of the people in them. These considerations, he concludes, require that directive administrative styles to be replaced with participation styles.

The various studies cited by Owens (1995), indicate the concerns of HRD as being squarely focused on the workers and their interrelationship with the administration.

Owens concludes by saying HRD perspectives on organization provide a set of assumptions about administration that are a clear alternative to the classical bureaucratic perspective. In the classical perspective there is a desire to reduce ambiguity by increasing

<div align="center">51</div>

rules and close surveillance, by striving for greater logic and predictability through more planning, specification of objectives, and by implementing a higher degree of control. HRD, in contrast however, stresses that the best approach to management of organizations, especially educational organizations, is to access the inner motivations and abilities of the participants, and to recognize that

> disorder and illogic are often ordinary characteristics of effective
> organizations.   (Owens, 1995:188)

> The assumptions of HRD 'constitute a theory of decision-making, the
> centerpiece of which is participative method ... lately called (the)
> empowerment of others'   (Ibid,1995:189)

Owens (ibid) further refers to the work of Davis when he says participatory decision-making is characterized by a person's mental and emotional involvement in a group situation as this encourages the individual to contribute to that group's goals and to thus share in responsibility for them.

This considerably widens the concept of decision-making and its influence in organizations. Furthermore, genuine involvement in the decision-making motivates the participants own energy, creativity and initiative which results in a sense of "ownership" of the decision-making and thus promotes a greater acceptance in the individual for taking responsibility for the results. Accepting the goals and results of any decision-making in which a participant has fully taken part, stimulates the development of teamwork which Owens says is so characteristic of effective organizations. This in turn promotes better decisions and enhances the growth and development of the organization's participants. These ideas bear remarkable resemblance to the core concepts of much of today's EFL teaching and autonomous learning perspectives which stress the importance of the student's own participation in the process of learning and may indicate a reason for why the EFL trained teachers in the NELP choose to operate in a participatory organization with a resultant high involvement environment.

2.3.5. Application to the NELP

The dual organizational system of HRD is clearly operating in the NELP; the macro system (the college) acting much like the hard drive of a computer and the micro system (the NELP) like that of interactive software.

The interactive decision-making in the NELP (see chapter seven) shows a great similarity to the participatory decision-making discussed in HRD. Of further interest is that Owens states that while many present day educational organizations remain hierarchical in the macro-context they have ...

> developed collaborative cultures in the micro-contexts to such an extent it would be difficult now to revert to the autocratic classical model of bureaucratic control. This leaves the administrator of a collaborative educational organization not so much with the issue of whether or not others should be involved in decision-making, but rather how and to what extent the others will be involved.
> (Owens, 1995:190)

This mirrors the situation in the NELP where observations of staffroom behavior clearly show the teachers engaging in participatory decision-making, thus indicating the importance interactive decision-making has in an organization that revolves around the teachers themselves.

Owens goes on to say that knowledge of organizational behavior is slow to emerge for two reasons 1) the behavior of people in educational workplaces is neither simple nor self-evident, and 2) the basic assumptions about human nature and values about human beings that arise from these assumptions are continually changing and developing. Thus although the NELP study is anchored in a main body of broadly ethnographic study occurring over the years between 1993-8, it is further informed by observation over a long period of time from its beginnings in 1988 through into the present day, allowing time to elucidate the assumptions operating in the NELP over a considerable change and variety of teachers.

2.3.6. A framework for the NELP micro-culture

As seen in sections 2.2.1-3, school cultures which are cooperative, collaborative and collegial may be considered to be most desirable, but as Owens says above (1995: 190) most schools have a dual system in which both a macro-culture and a micro-culture operate. The above studies on school cultures have paid scant attention to the macro-culture, and have referred to the micro-culture mainly in terms of the collegiality of the teachers. The concept of culture needs to be more fully explored to discover what, more exactly, a school culture is and what, more precisely, it entails.

Any culture has basic assumptions about human nature, relationships and the nature of the relationship between humans and their environments, and it is these assumptions that give rise to the norms, beliefs and values of that culture and society (Owens, 1995). These assumptions are internalized in the population from birth, often remain unaware or taken for granted, and are often only considered when another, often operating under a different set of culture mores, calls them into question, or in any other way stereotypes or raises issues with the assumptions for which a group, culture or nation has become characterized.

The macro-cultural aspects such as nationalistic, societal, or state influences are the initial motivating and controlling factors influencing any school culture; schools operate under the guidance of their country's relevant ministries, laws and regulations. Thus before looking at the underlying behavioral patterns of any school system, it is first necessary to look at the culture in which that school exists, for it is the first step in understanding its organization, personality, and atmosphere; and all the more so when that school system is not a familiar one as in the situation of the native English teacher in the non-target language culture. The macro-culture of the NELP and its influence on the NELP will be looked at indepth in chapter four.

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2.3.7. Organizational culture

The NELP is a program, not a department, within a university. It is influenced by its location within the larger context but has a definite and observable context of its own. It has its own organizational culture, its own ...

> norms that inform people what is acceptable and what is not, dominant values accepted above others, basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members, "rules" of the game that must be observed if everyone is to get along, and a philosophy that guides the organization.   (Owens, 1995: 306)

Owens outlines the dominant aspects of an organizational culture as providing and modeling the assumptions and perceptions basic to what it means to be a teacher, what teaching methods and models are available and approved, what the students are like and thus what is possible and what is not. The organization plays a large role in defining for teachers their commitment to the task, it evokes their energies, a sense of loyalty, commitment and emotional bonds or stability -- or not. If positive, these give rise to the teachers' tacit agreement to follow these norms and accept the ideals of the organization as their own personal ones. Although Owens says there is no real conclusive evidence to show such organizations improve performance, he strongly suggests organizational culture is as powerful in creating effective educational organizations as it is in creating profit-making corporations.

To frame the reference being used for the discussion of the NELP's organizational culture, I now turn to Owens' (1995) modification of the work of Tagiuri (1968). who outlines how the social system of a school is formed by the total environment of that school in four important aspects, which in totality form its 'organizational climate'.

the ecology: the physical aspects of the school: the buildings, level of technology.
the milieu: the social aspects such as motivation, morale and satisfaction, and the
          characteristics of the employees and students.

the social system: such as administration, communication patterns and decision-making processes.

the climate: the characteristics of the organization, the "way we do things around here".

Owens (1995: 78-9) modified this categorization in two ways. First he replaced social system with organization as 'organization more clearly shows the administration's responsibility for establishing order', and secondly he replaced climate with culture. Both climate and culture (ibid: 81) are 'abstractions that deal with the fact that human behavior in an organization is not only elicited by interaction with the most proximate aspects, but by also by interaction with intangible forces in the organization's environment', however the concept of culture encompasses the behavioral norms, assumptions and beliefs of any organization' and thus this 'concept better helps to understand the organization than a concept of climate', which he says 'refers more to the perceptions of persons in the organization that reflect those norms, assumptions and beliefs'.

Furthermore, each of these four dimensions is not necessarily of equal potency in producing the character and quality of the organization. Owens states recent research is being concentrated on the primacy of culture, defined as the *shared norms, expectations, beliefs assumptions and attitudes that knit a community* (in this case a school) *together* (1995: 82).

Schein (1985, 2003) lists three different, but closely linked concepts to describe organizational culture:

1) a body of solutions to external and internal problems that is consistently successful for a group and is taught to new members as the norm.
2) norms that become the assumptions about the nature of reality, truth, time, space, human activity and relationships.
3) assumptions that over time come to be taken for granted and drop out of awareness, illustrating the power of culture as a set of unconscious, unexamined assumptions that are taken for granted.

Thus a culture develops over time acquiring the deep meanings and norms that hold an organization together, allowing for an interrelatedness between its qualities that reveal

implicit or explicit agreement amongst members and other participants on how to approach decisions and problems, and evoking an agreement and or acceptance of *'it's the way we do things around here'.'* (Owens, 1995:84). Consequently there is a

> pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learn(s) as it solve(s) its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way [to]perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems   (Schein, 2003: 2)

Schein's model (reproduced in Fig. 2 p. 58) looks at levels of culture, placing the artifacts such as buildings, tools, hard ware, and patterns of human behavior and speech as the most visible and audible and thus most open to studies through observation, interviews, and document analysis. Below the visible culture lie the values of the organization, sometimes written, although documents simply reflect the basic assumptions that are the essence of the culture, and at the third and deepest level, is the essence of the culture itself; the assumptions, norms and expectations that are usually taken for granted. These have to do with human activity and relationships of individuals those *'unseen assumptions that remain unconscious unless called to the surface by some process of inquiry'.* (Owens, 1995:82)

Schein contends the readily visible and more observable aspects of the culture are merely symbolic of it, the actual culture remaining invisible and the people of the culture unaware of them, thus, to make sense of the artifacts and behaviors observed in study, it is necessary to decipher their *meaning.*

Drawing on work of others, Owens also says at the heart of culture is the concept of a learned pattern of unconscious, or semi-conscious thought reflected and reinforced by behavior that shapes the experience of people and gives rise to simpler common-sense definitions of the rules of the game. Thus an organization's culture consists largely of what people believe about what works and what does not even if they themselves remain aware of why.

ARTIFACTS AND CREATIONS
    Technology
    Art
    Visible and audible behavior patters

Visible but often
not
decipherable

VALUES
    Testable in the physical environment
    Testable only by social consensus

Greater level
of
awareness

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS
    Relationship to environment
    Nature of reality, time, and space
    Nature of human nature
    Nature of human activity
    Nature of human relationship

Taken for granted,
Invisible,
Preconscious

Schein's Model of Levels of Culture.

Schein, Edgar H. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.   San Francisco:

Jossey Bass, 1985, p. 14 (Figure 1).

also in Owens, R. (1995:84) <u>Organization Behavior in Education</u>. 5th ed. Allyn and Bacon

Fig. 2
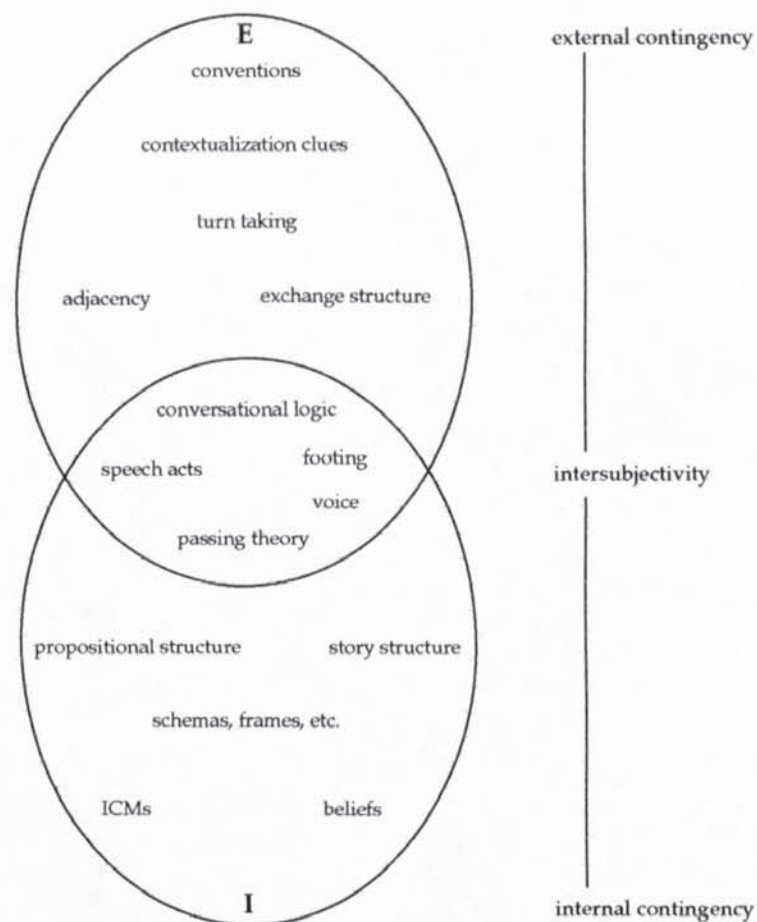
from: Van Lier, L. (1996: 179) <u>Interaction in the Language Curriculum</u>. Longman.

Fig. 4 : ref. P.74

A possible way of observing and deciphering the NELP's organizational culture can be approached from a description of the macro and micro perspectives using the four dimensions of Tagiuri's model of organization. Fig. 3 p. 60 graphically exemplifies the interacting layers of the macro and micro contexts of the NELP. The relationship between the macro (wider and yet core) context and the micro (immediate and practical) context is a complex and fluctuating one. Thus an organization or school can be seen from at least two view points: one, as the influence of the macro connecting and filtering through and down many levels to the micro, and two, as the micro visibly most important, but influenced upward from the base macro core – an inescapable dense kind of "black hole". Chapter four will look at the study at hand by way of figure one, while chapter five will study the NELP from the view of figure two. Chapter six and seven will investigate the contingencies of the micro-culture.

However, it is somehow unsatisfying to leave the culture in its "black hole" status and the connections between the organization culture's layers as "the unseen meaning between the lines in the rulebook that ensures unity". Clearly there are forces of interaction and connection working that are not apparent in these models. That is, the models do not give any explanation as to the dynamics of the interacting layers, as to *how* each of the layers can be, or is, directed and influential to each other. Nor does it give any indication as to how the lines of influence are achieved. The NELP study addresses this unseen area and explores it as the web that binds and enables the whole. This study will show the logs as evidence of "cultural tools", and the dynamics of an interactive decision-making reliant on a shared knowledge of the culture, as evidence of the teachers' unconscious connection to that culture. It will be further shown that the contingencies created to mediate this culture enable a culture of high involvement and that this has positive benefits for the working conditions of the teachers in the form of commitment and covert staffroom teacher development.

A first consideration in unraveling the unseen connections, the contingencies of the NELP, is to consider in what ways the teachers of the NELP can know about the culture, interact with, and in it, and share it with others. Section three will investigate the concepts of shared knowledge, affordances (the tools of the organizational culture), contingencies (the ways in

Two views of the macro-context's influence

on the school climate (NELP)

1. **Macro view**
   Cultural influence, out to in
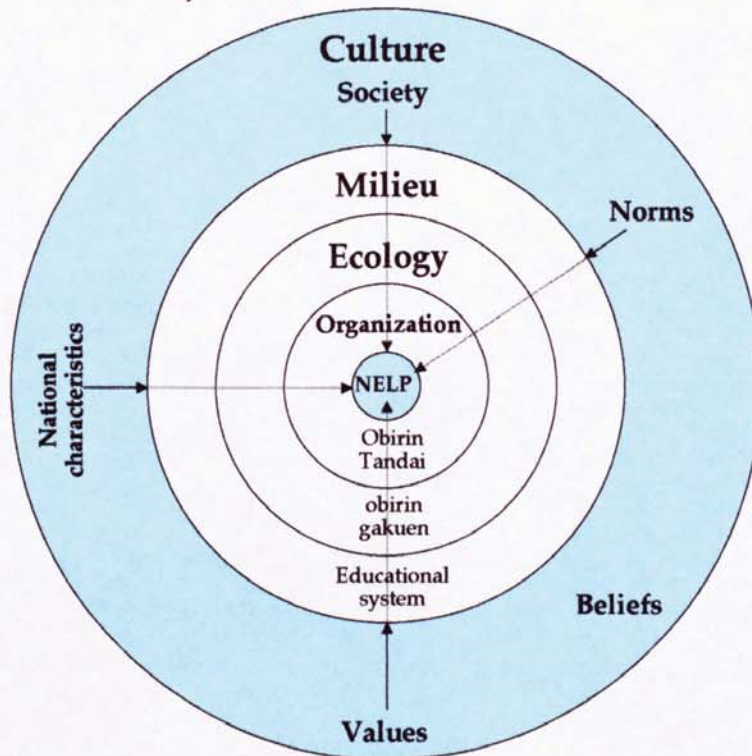
2. **Micro view**
   Cultural influence, in to out
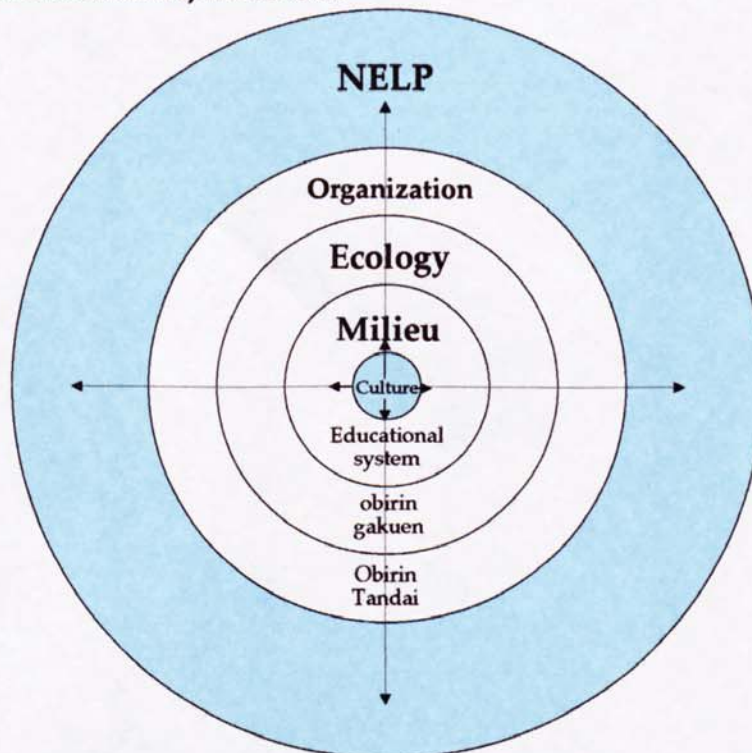
1. Showing the downward decending influence of culture
2. Showing the upward ascending influence of culture

Fig. 3

which speech connects to the culture) and intersubjectivity (a shared situation; participants together focus an activity or goal and pull each other in the same direction) as possible means open to teachers in allowing for the cooperation and coordination evident in the NELP.

2.4. Section Three: Shared Knowledge - ways of knowing

The concept of shared knowledge goes straight to the heart of human social organization, to the concept of knowledge itself and to ways of presenting knowledge stored in memory and to how this relates to discourse processing. The issue is central to understanding how humans live together. The concept of knowledge representation is the content of many disciplines such as religion, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, schema theory, cognitive script theory, social cognition, discourse comprehension, distributed cognition, cultural psychology, psycholinguistics, interaction theory, artificial intelligence, and probably other newly forming combinations as I write. Each field of study has its own methodologies for study and resultant perspectives and body of truths and beliefs. Although there seem to be many terms employed by many researchers there is a very large overlap in what these different terms are used to describe. Yule and Brown (1989) claim it should be recognized that often the different use of terminology and considerations of different types of knowledge does not necessarily represent sets of competing theories, and that the different terms are ...

> best considered as alternative metaphors for the description of how
> knowledge of the world is organized in human memory, and [also]
> how it is activated in the process of discourse understanding. (1989:238)

The focus of this section is less on showing the process of knowledge storage and memory retrieval and more on showing the various ways the teachers may be accessing and disseminating shared knowledge. The NELP is, as described above and to be exemplified through this study, an organizational culture. It exists within several cultures, and for the teachers in it, it is a temporary one; a culture they enter into for four and half to six or so hours a day just two or three days a week. It is akin to what Thorne (2000:229) calls a

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"temporarily shared social world". (to be discussed more accurately and in more detail in section four below). This section will look briefly at the complex aspects that help interpret how the teachers might negotiate their temporary world: frames, schema, script, narratives, in addition to non-verbal means of conveying meaning, and conclude that they do not offer enough to understand the degree in which teachers in the NELP are able to access their shared world for cooperation with their fellow teachers.

2.4.2. Frames, schema, and scripts

Central to the concept of communication is the concept of a shared understanding that allows the speaker to make reference to his world and for others to understand that world and interpret it. Understanding at this level is closely connected to human cognition. Although it is not the purpose of this study to investigate the NELP from the view of teacher cognition, it is not possible to consider interactive decision-making without also considering on what basis teachers create and understand their world and share it with others. That is, in order to share knowledge, teachers must have ways of representing it that can be understood by others. The following are brief outlines of some of the theories I have found useful in this field.

a) Minsky's (1986) frame-theory, although not primarily a linguistic investigation, is directed to ways of representing knowledge. He says that frames are 'perceptual experience structures' acquired in past experience.

> humans typically remember millions of frames each representing
> some stereo-typical situation (such as) meeting a certain kind of
> person, being in a certain type of room or attending a certain type of
> party .   (1986:244)

A frame is a type of skeleton called a terminal (or slot) used as a connection point to which can be attached other kinds of knowledge (fillers). The theory is of course much more complex in application. However, its central thesis is useful in that it suggests a person carries 'frames of reference' for words and situations (an idea resembling collocation, and

the association of words), and stereotyped situations at the behavioral level, and that people call on these frames to help process the discourse and actions of others in a variety of situations. This idea also seems to carry some relevance in suggesting ways in which teachers in the NELP, using 'teaching frames', may be able to initiate and respond to the organizational culture of teaching so easily and readily. Moreover, it may be that one person's frames may not correspond to those of others creating difficulties in referencing with others, this may also indicate a reason behind the conflict and negotiation of differences that are part of any decision-making process.

b) Another useful way of thinking about how teachers represent and disseminate their knowledge is in the concept of schemata. van Dijk (1981: 141) defines schemata as:

> higher-level complex (and even conventional or habitual) knowledge
> structures which function as ideational scaffolding [a support system]
> in the organization and interpretation of experience.

While Anderson et. at (1977:377) suggest that people's personal histories, interests and possibly gender, also contribute to the creation of these 'higher-level schemata which causes them to "see" messages in certain ways'. Yule & Brown (1989: 249) refer to the 1932 works of Bartlett to discuss how our memory for discourse may not be one of straight reproduction, but rather a constructive process using information from a present discourse, together with knowledge drawn from past experiences related to it and built into a mental representation. Past experience is not just an accumulation of past experiences, but is organized and made manageable by schema that remain active and developing. Yule and Brown (1989: 249), suggest the concept of 'active and developing past experiences' suggests an interactive function, and this is more appealing as a means of interpreting how NELP teachers may be referencing their experiences in decision-making, which has been observed in this study to be a very interactive activity

c) Scripts may be another way of understanding how teachers reference each other. Script theory is a variation of schema theory originating in artificial intelligence and is not a single 'precisely specifiable thing' (Edwards: 167). It deals with classic routines such as restaurant or bank-visiting scripts in usable components in which higher level principles are then

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used for reassembling in a variety of situations. Such predetermined sequences of actions of well-known situations like visiting a hospital or going to school are perhaps largely expressed at the verbal level but must also include non-verbal expressions as well, which script theory does not appear to account for. Nevertheless, each person carries a large number of such scripts and relies on them extensively to negotiate their way around the world and the people in it. Since scripts are more than just the required behaviors in a situation, they provide the words often set as the rituals of a culture, the standard things to say such as the words of the wedding ceremony, the announcing of the winner of a contest, or the appropriate responses to death, and as such, these scripts have an ecological, situational and contextual base. We develop competence of these scripts by belonging to a culture and frequently and colorfully refer to our common knowledge by using idioms, metaphors and jargon to cut corners in our communication and to establish or affirm our positions as insiders. We also often omit sections of common scripts for the same reason, or use them in unusual ways to highlight or stress a point.

However, domain knowledge of scripts, or cognitive context -- that is, what we say, write, understand, which also depends on what we know and how we organize what we know— may not be enough to clearly understand how communication in any one environment is operating. Foreign language teaching gives a clear demonstration of this difficulty. Knowledge of scripts forms a large part of cross-cultural studies, at both macro-levels (context and rituals) and micro-levels (the speech itself), and often features in second language learning textbooks as units of functions or notions such as 'at the bank', or 'in the restaurant'. The intent is to train, teach, expose, facilitate, or simply hope (according to the individual teacher's theoretical teaching perspective) the student will learn the right thing to say in the right situation, using linguistic contextual clues taught in language scripts. However, while it is expedient to know 'how things are done' in the target culture and how to effect the appropriate scripts in language terms through the means of standardized patterned and immediate responses to a given situation, the learning of scripts in this way is not flexible enough to explain and cover *all* the myriad's of variations possible in an actual conversation with, for example, a teller in a bank, or a policeman in an interrogation;

or the teachers in the NELP staffroom, and what does one say past the first few moments when the script is 'free talk'?

Thus the concept of scripts as an explanation for the ability of participants to reference each other's speech has several flaws; if each situation encountered is to be seen as new and came with a set different script the number would be beyond belief, also, if we spoke only in scripts we would be supposing every situation to be exactly the same. By supposing there is no change, we would find ourselves unable to deal with different, unusual, or new situations. Clearly no known number of learned scripts, even with spontaneous higher level mental reordering of past script experiences, will ever cover all the contingencies a speaker will encounter in any situation. The elements of what we say, then, even within a recognizable script situation, need to be freely *interactive* with the other participants also in the script, especially if one or other of the participants is less knowledgeable or must transfer new information; and clearly it is this more fluid situation that faces each and everyone of us everyday.

Furthermore, even if the potential for learning a large number of scripts were in the range of any individual, the performance of each would depend not only on what culture a person finds himself in, but also on his own assumptions and beliefs about that culture based on all other known scripts and schema. So, just as language learners in a situation in which they do not have access to known scripts in either their own or their target culture in which to transfer or infer from, cannot successfully participate in a language activity in the classroom in that script situation, persons in any culture, macro or micro, who do not have access to a script because it is not within their repertoire of known scripts are easily identified as outsiders by their lack of correctness in responses both verbal and behavioral, and by the resultant difficulties this poses for both themselves and for others. Given that the NELP teachers are working together cooperatively it may be correct to suppose they share many of the same scripts. However, given that they also negotiate new situations daily, it may be said that scripts alone are not providing them with the ability to adequately engage in spontaneous decision-making.

Given the social propensities of the human, and the difficulty and undesirability of producing original scripts for each situation, it is fair to suppose that in any organization workers will be likely to search for what Clark, H. (1985: 183) calls 'common ground' -that ground in which participants in interaction 'mutually know', believe and suppose: a shared knowledge. Edwards (1997: 114-115) lists cultural knowledge (things people in a community are supposed to know about the world), mutual knowledge (things individuals in interaction assume about each other) and pragmatic intersubjectivity (what 'talk' treats as shared, when and how, as essential to shared knowledge) and says that pragmatic intersubjectivity overides and subsumes the other two. The concept of 'grounding' is 'the collective process by which the participants try to reach this mutual belief … [thus] 'Grounding is a feature of communication-between-minds' (ibid: 115). Clearly, grounding of shared knowledge occurs in any organization or group of people engaging in any conversation or decision-making, but it still remains to discover *how* this is happening.

2.4.2. Narratives: storytelling

Although it is not possible here to consider all the aspects of storytelling in detail, it is of interest to look at storytelling as a means of affecting decision-making and transmitting information and organizational culture as many of the taped conversations of the teachers in the NELP captured teachers in story-telling sequences.

In any extended social interaction one should not be surprised to find people recalling and recounting events in their lives – telling stories – as this seems to be a central social human activity. As an organization of people-as-teachers however, one would expect to find teachers not just engaging in a degree of storytelling as a matter of social interaction, but also as a means of experience sharing to create social inclusion.

Edwards (1997: 265) suggests the analysis of narratives in human and social sciences should not ignore the interactional business that people might be doing in telling stories, and that therefore researchers of interaction should look at how specific story content,

produced on and for occasions of talk, may perform 'social action in-the-telling'. Bruner (1990:35) says narrative is more than just a kind of discourse, it is a 'mode of thought and action describing in terms that can be related to cognitive plans and representations – it is the means by which 'people organize their experience in, knowledge of, and transactions with the social world.' As such it covers such areas as persons, actions, thoughts, feelings, intentions, circumstances, influences, choices, relationships, outcomes, and essentially any topic that fits the expression of the speaker's intention in the discourse at hand.

Narratives are also instrumental in the discourse of social identity. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1993) in their investigations deal with the concept of authenticity with regards to membership (and therefore speakers' rights to talk as members), showing how members of a youth sub-culture tell fragments of life-stories to build authentic membership in terms of self-expression, or personal choice, indicating stories are intrinsic, detailed, interaction-oriented, and rhetorical.

The aspect of storytelling is important for the NELP, as stories, particularly storytelling of teaching experiences, can be frequently heard in the NELP for the purpose of establishing authenticity, transmitting information, for outlining difficulties and solutions and for corroborating or counter-acting the views of others. It has also been observed in the NELP that one teacher's storytelling sequence will be followed by another teacher's telling of a similar or dissimilar experience, based on the first story. Edwards (1997: 291) referencing the large volume of work in this area says this is part of what the conversation analylist Harvey Sacks calls second stories, a kind of matching version which perform a receipt of first stories and work as a means of indicating an understanding of them in terms of relevance – a kind of next turn. Second stories can be found in the NELP interactions operating as a means of expressing agreement or disagreement, persuading, "teaching" and of establishing social inclusion.

Thus the area of storytelling for relating of plans and presentations, for establishing membership in groups, for 'turn-taking' to embellish current interactional concerns, and as a means of receipts of first stories is of particular interest for interpreting the story-telling

sequences observed in the NELP and for what purpose the teachers use this in their interactive decision-making in the staffroom.

2.4.3. Conclusion to section on ways of knowing

The organizational culture of a work environment provides ready made schemata and scripts for its members to accept, improve or innovate. Thus perhaps those unable to accept the script or find they cannot affect changes to it maybe less likely to remain in the work culture, or may be more likely to be uncomfortable in it, misunderstanding situations and possibly finding themselves disliked by others; 'a knowledge of scripts is clearly fundamental to any sort of cultural competence' (Edwards,1997: 144).

Clearly shared knowledge of schemata and scripts and opportunities for storytelling are essential in the smooth running of an organization culture's discourse, and act as ways to afford its members accessible references to aid communication. As an organizational culture, the NELP provides schemata (in staffroom routines) and because of this, scripts (conversational pattern opportunities for the teachers) and chances for storytelling narratives, which help in the maintenance and evolution of the NELP culture as well as allowing for the smooth execution of the decision-making in the daily routines of the teachers; all of which clearly place the NELP as an organization of talkers. The chapters of this study will attempt to show just what teachers in the NELP do with and in the options open to them as regards talk in the staffroom. But what is actually happening in any act of talk, or discourse? How do the teachers conduct conversations and make sense of the outcomes?

2.5. Section Four: A Culture of Talk - the contingencies of a mediated shared culture

Talk is recognized as having a variety of functions other than to just transmit information, and along with writing is accepted as being constructed out of existing resources and repertoires that we all have, borrow and refashion for our own purposes. This makes talk a social, psychological phenomenon with a public and collective reality. Language, say

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Burman and Parker (1993), contains the most basic categories that we use to understand ourselves, therefore we should be concerned with:

> the ways language produces and constrains meaning, where meaning does not, or does not only, reside within the individual's head, and where social conditions [work environments] give rise to the forms of talk available.
>
> (1993:3)

The importance of "talk", specifically interactive talk, indicates more can be learned about the NELP from a study of its language than from just a study of its systems and an investigation into the characteristics of its culture. Before looking at the interaction between persons and their environment in the concepts of conversation, dialog and discourse, it is necessary to look at theories attempting to elucidate the connection between the environment in which talk takes place with the members of that environment through the concepts of affordances and shared intelligence or cognition, and the contingencies they create. Affordances are said to effect mediation between the environment and the members, and as such I wish to suggest interaction itself can be considered an affordance. In this way the affordances of the NELP can be identified in an effort to show how the teachers access and negotiate their environment, the ability to do so giving them a ready access to that environment.

2.5.1. Affordances - utilizing the tools of an environment

Schein's model of organizational culture (fig. 2 p.58) identifies the many aspects of any culture but places the artifacts, the tools, of the organization as being of vital importance due to their highly visible external nature and thus to the ease with which they can be studied. This section will look at the tools of an organization, variously called the executive functions or affordances, and to their importance in the organizational culture.

R. Pea (1993) in his work on distributed (shared) intelligence refers to an affordance as

> the perceived and actual properties of a thing that primarily determine just how the thing could be possibly used; a tool, then, literally carries intelligence within it, in that it represents some individual's or communities' decision that the means

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> offered by it be made a quasi-permanent form to be used by
> others.   (1993: 51)

Over time, selected tools come to embody the function others have imbued in them, and thus they themselves become major carriers of patterns of previous reasoning. In this way these tools contribute to patterns of distributed intelligence encoded in the activity in which they are used. According to Peas, these tools and the intelligence imbued in them can then be used by a new generation with little or no awareness of how much time or effort went into defining them, or to affecting any adaptations of them.

In this theory, organizations and teachers in them can be seen to deploy established effort-saving strategies in the form of affordances for cognitive economy and avoidance of error. Peas gives mathematical calculus as an example of an affordance, showing how the intelligence of this form has now been transferred to the user of this form, although a physical form such as the abacus may be thought of in the same way. In the NELP the keeping of logs, for example, can be seen as an affordance of the program, the logs embodying organizational cultural knowledge as well as immediate information pertinent to specific classwork, and teachers relying on them for the means to be able to make decisions on their work. In this way, log-use can be used to exemplify *how* the teachers are helped in achieving their decision-making in the constricted time frames of their work environment. Peas says the various affordances in our lives come into play in social or lone activities, and through guided participation in their use by more knowledgeable others; such situations exist also in the NELP and therefore indicate how knowledge may be transferred and accessed across teachers.

Van Lier (2000) is more explicit in suggesting an affordance is not the property of either the actor or the object, but rather it is the relationship between the two. Thus there is a reciprocal relationship between an organism and a particular feature of its environment, where this particular feature (or affordance) allows for action, but does not cause or trigger this action.

Since affordances are determined by what an organism elects for it to do or be useful for, an object may be an affordance in one environment and not in another, or an affordance in a variety of environments. Van Lier (2000) gives the example of a leaf in the forest offering different affordances to different organisms – the same leaf affording food for an insect or a herbal medicine for a shaman, and thus illustrating an affordance is not a particular property in any object, but the relationship between the object and whoever uses it. The unit of analysis of an affordance, therefore, is not the perceived object, but the activity itself.

Lantolf (2000:7), referencing the works of Leontiev and Zinchenko, says this allows for the appropriate unit of study to be seen *as tool-mediated goal directed action*, as such units encompass the functions of human mental ability defined by Vygotsky (see below) as memory, problem solving, attention, intention, planning, orientation, and evaluation. A tool could be a physical artifact, or something symbolic, such as an utterance produced during a conversation with others or the self (Lantolf, 200: 7), and this leads to the overall theoretical framework known as activity theory. I will return to activity theory later in this review when looking more closely at the conceptual frameworks for informing interpretations of the teacher decision-making discussions, but here is yet another support for seeing both the logs and the teachers interactive decision-making as affordances of the NELP culture, as they are both functions that can be considered tools and they both used by the teachers to mediate the work environment – each carrying the 'intelligence and history' of the organization.

The concept of affordance then is of particular importance in the study of the organizational culture of the NELP. The pre-study in chapter one identified two very important areas that appear to be guiding or at least most often occupying teacher time and efforts in the staffroom; the teacher logs, and the interactive decision-making. Chapter six and seven will show the culture of the NELP encoded in these functions and illustrate how the teachers use these "tools" in their daily work in the staffroom based on shared knowledge of curriculum and practical teaching concerns. Thus, in the concept of affordances, there is further strength to seeing a relationship of interaction with the

environment as acting not only for speedy responses in the work environment, but also as a powerful tool in maintaining and distributing the NELP culture.

2.5.2. Contingency, intertextuality, intersubjectivity and the shared social world

Looking at the issue of interaction at a closer more local level and in considering ways to interpret what is going on in the interaction itself, it is of value to look at the concepts of contingency and intersubjectivity (Van Lier, 1996), two concepts that have arisen out of the sociocultural perspective of learning which stresses that all action is a mediation between environment and organism. The concepts of contingency and intersubjectively are ways of understanding those 'unseen meanings that create unity' noted in organizations by Owens (1995) that open the culture for its members to access its values, norms, beliefs, knowledge.

Van Lier did not apply his concept of contingency to teacher-to-teacher interactive decision-making, but rather to second language learners, nevertheless, his ideas are useful in explaining how the various aspects of the NELP are "held together". He says contingency is [about the] 'ways in which utterances are tied to the world (including other utterances), and at the same time project into the unknown' (1996:54)

More specifically it is a term to express how elements in an activity event

> interplay between apprehension, comprehension and rehearsal
> [allowing for] the elements in the action to be changed, deleted,
> or repeated depending on [the] actions and reactions of each of
> the participants; in other words all actions are contingent
> [on this interplay].   (van Lier 1996: 57: 195)

This idea bears a resemblance to what Halliday, working with texts (both written and spoken), called intertextuality (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 47) where the relationship between the non-verbal and verbal aspects of a text is seen as being a dialectical one in that the text creates the context and the context creates the text, and meaning arises from the friction between the two. This intertextuality includes not only experiential features, but types of logical sequencing that are recognized as valid, and even interpersonal features such as

whether a question is intended to be answered or not, or is being used as a step in the development of an argument. There are also likely to be coded expressions that are carried from one text to another that may become formulaic. Halliday says this is why it is difficult for an outsider to join an on-going discourse unless the intertextual assumptions are made explicit, perhaps as functions of the group solidarity. Relating these ideas to schools, Halliday (1976: 49) says at a deeper level the entire ...

> learning experience is linked by a pervading intertextuality that
> embodies the theory and practice of education as institutionalized
> in our culture. There is the sense that the classroom is one long text,
> that carries over from one year to the next.

Halliday further says these aspects are missed by just concentrating on the mechanics of classroom interaction. Again staffrooms are not addressed specifically, but parallels seem evident, and the concept worth mentioning.

It seems clear that intertexuality functions much like contingency – the aspects of the whole each depending on the other, each creating the other, although the concept of contingency seems to embody more the idea of a dynamic interaction; the intertextuality creating meaning through the resultant friction of the parts, and the contingency (in which one utterance of a human interaction depends on another) creating what Rommetveit (1974) calls an area of *intersubjectivity* – a shared definition of situation in which which learning (perhaps also the negotiation of meaning) can take place (van Lier, 1996: 161). The implications for accessing this area of intersubjectivity as a shared definition of situation are important for the NELP in understanding how teachers make speedy decisions under severe time constraints. That is, by accessing the shared definition of situation in decision-making activity events, the teachers are not required to explain all and every point in order to affect an acceptable outcome.

2.5.3 The shared world   - ellipsis and prolepsis

Thorne (2000: 229), writing from a sociocultural perspective on the role and characteristics of context, refers to intersubjectivity as a 'temporary shared social world – an area

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exploring the subtle relationships between communication settings, tacit presuppositions and what is said'. Although related to learning, specifically language learning, it has potential in explaining what is happening when the teachers "access their partners" in decision-making.

Intersubjective states are created, not inherited or presumed (Thorne, 2000) so the exact properties, and a step by step of does and don'ts cannot be inferred. Thorne quotes Goodwin (2000:229) as saying:

> [agents are] drawn together toward a common focus, activity, process or goal and the dialogue exchange of ellipsis and indexicals, universal to both face-to-face and written exchanges, makes possible participation frameworks which build socially distributed perceptions that are situated, contextual, dependent and intensely local.

This idea has similarity to Vygotsky's concept of ZPD (a non-physical zone of proximal development) in which 'people working jointly are able to co-construct contexts in which expertise emerges as a feature of the group' (Lantolf, 2000:17), and to the scaffolding of ideas Bruner outlined in van Lier (1996:194) in which persons in such an environment are assisted by others in mediating it. I have reproduced van Lier's contingencies flow chart (1996: 173) (fig. 4 p. 58) where, overlaid by Schein's model of organizational culture (fig. 2 p. 58) it can be seen that conversation logic and speech acts, which fall in the area of intersubjectivity, mediate between the internal contingencies of the seen macro-level (the unseen values and norms), and the external production of language at the micro-level (the highly visible affordances, including language); production of conversation itself indicating the importance of the process of establishing an holistic view and hinting towards a means of interpreting the conversation of the teachers in the NELP.

Van Lier (1996) and Thorne (2000) both referencing the work of Rommetveit (1974) say in understanding interactive talk, it is essential to grasp how particular social and pragmatic uses of ellipsis (the dropping of the understood either in sentences or discourse in order to create economy or reduce redundancy) extend in the notion of prolepsis (talk in which an

unspoken reference is made in anticipated understanding). Prolepsis involves ellipsis, but is different because it brings with it the establishment of social inclusion. The hearer is 'invited to step into an enlarged common space, and shared background knowledge is thereby created, rather then assumed' (van Lier, 1996: 161).

In this shared created social world, what is said triggers presumptions and anticipatory comprehension. Thus what is made known transcends what is said to reach a shared comprehension which any outsider, for example, may not necessarily be able to follow (despite hearing the words) by virtue of not being a member of this shared world. Van Lier says (1996:161) the idea is that prolepsis, by the very nature of its minimal clues, suggests and encourages intimacy, where explicitness, spelling out every detail, maintains or increases distance or condescension; to offer a very simple example, if a teacher says to a partner teacher:

>
> "ah, graded tests (indicating papers on a desk) – yours"
>
> "OK"

Ellipsis occurs in the dropping of redundant sentence elements, that is .... here are the .... the papers are for you. However the understanding of what graded tests and that "yours" means the teacher will give tests back to the students in the next class, which covers information and actions as to who will do what, why and how, is a matter of prolepsis working to bring the exchange into the common world of their shared class where the partner teacher can easily understand: 'my partner has graded the students' test papers and I am going to give them back to the students in the next class and go over them together with the students (because we both know that it was the agreed upon task for my partner to grade the papers and record the scores in the log, and for me to return them because this is the (non-regulated, but understood) agreed upon procedure in the NELP when returning tests). If the partner teachers do not meet, the test papers may appear inside the log book, or in the class materials tray, with a similar message appearing in the log: "give back tests". This example, actually taken from the taped and transcribed conversations of the teachers, is high in both ellipsis and prolepsis, and not only indicates a shared understanding between the teachers as to their class work, but that this is based in part on the practices of the organizational culture in allowing teachers to speak on the assumption their partners will accurately be able to infer and act upon from what is not

said. It further indicates how both ellipsis and prolepsis contribute to the way in which the teachers in the NELP manage their decision-making in the extremely short time constraints of the program by relying on the shared mediated culture of the NELP: they do not need to explain themselves.

The works of van Lier, Bruner, Rommetveit, and Vygotsky concerning human learning activity, although perhaps not directly applicable, nevertheless provide models that help give a more concrete form to those *"unseen meanings between the lines of the rulebook that ensure unity"* mentioned by Owens as existing in organizational cultures and which my own thinking, observations and reflections of the workings of the teachers in the NELP have been investigating: teachers create areas of intersubjectivity by way of prolepsis in the process of decision-making and arrive at outcomes which are contingent on that shared understanding and knowledge of the environment in conjunction with the needs of the decision-making and the linguistic means available to them. In doing this, teachers place themselves in an area (a non-physical place) of intersubjectivity of their own creation, where they are open to negotiation, to "learning", and thus personal development or learning as the case may be. For example in the above case, the entering of the shared world may, if the teacher desires it, put the teacher who is to give the test papers back into an area of intersubjectivity, where on his own, or in conjunction with others in the staffroom he may consider or seek ways and means of "going over the test material" - an action that would require or set up the possibility of teacher reflection, action and learning.

2.5.4. Vygotsky and the ZPD - implications for the NELP

The creation of opportunities for reflection, even in a busy staffroom, bring to fore the concept of learning. Learning theory is too large a field to peruse for this study; but I wish to make reference to a particularly valuable theoretical view point that arose in the early 20th century that has had a marked effect on the way in which learning occurs in classrooms transforming them from places of formality to places in which persons can be found interacting with others; the works of Vygotsky. At the time, the philosophy of Rousseau, who saw man as an holistic being and not just as a 'disembodied intellect or as a

skilled performer (Clark, J. 1987:49) had begun to influence educational philosophy, as had the works of cognitive psychology ...

> The study of how people perceive, learn, remember and think
> about information.   (Sternberg, 1996:2)

Vygotsky, whose approach to explaining how humans become learning beings, emphasized the role of the environment in (children's) intellectual development, and posited that development and learning proceeds largely from the "outside in", through what he termed *internalization* – the absorption of knowledge from the context (as compared to Piaget, another influential educationalist of the time, who saw learning proceeding from the "inside out" with development and learning occurring in stages).

From Vygotsky's view point came the formation of the concept of the ZPD - the *zone of proximal development*:

> ... the range of ability between a (child's) observable level of ability
> (performance) and the (child's) latent capacity (competence), which
> is not directly obvious.   (Sternberg, 1996: 441)

The ZPD (Fig. 5 p. 78) is the distance between actual development and potential development, and it is in this area that learners may need assistance. In more practical terms ZPD refers to that time, space, condition, between a learner's competence and a learner's performance, in which teachers can provide challenging but attainable activities. It is also in this area that scaffolding, van Lier (1996:195), in which activities are scaffolded (quite like the scaffolding on a new building under construction that is removed piece by piece as the building is completed) offer a useful means for encouraging development within the ZPD. Through the ideas of internalization and the ZPD, Vygotsky arrived at the concept of learning as being a mediated activity. Lantolf, (2000) states that the mediated mind is the fundamental concept of the sociocultural theory based on the idea that...

Zone of proximal development
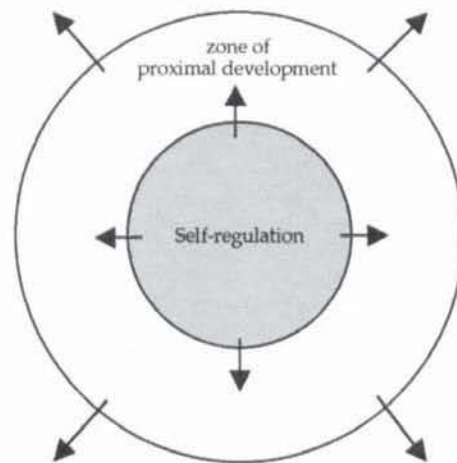
Multiple zones of proximal development
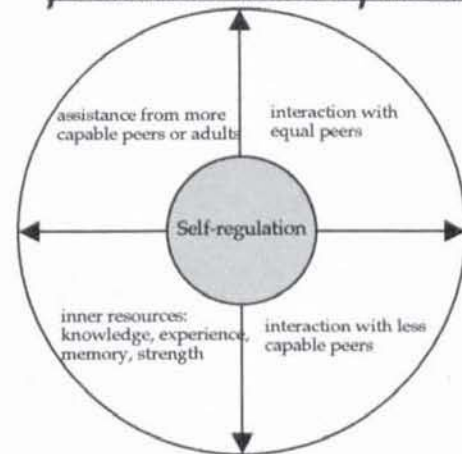
Fig. 5

Types of Interaction

from: Van Lier, L. (1996: 179) Interaction in the Language Curriculum, Longman.

Fig. 6

> just as humans do not act directly on the physical world but rely,
> instead, on tools and labor activities, which allows us to change the world,
> and with it, circumstances under which we live in the world, we also use
> symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate our relationships with
> others and with ourselves and thus change ... and regulate these
> relationships ... Each generation reworks its cultural inheritance to meet the
> needs of its communities and individuals ...   (Lantolf, 2000:1.2)

Thus with the influence of Vygotsky, the concept of culture and interaction understood now as a means of mediation firmly entered the matrix of learning, teaching, and ways of communicating.

When overlaying the decision-making process itself with the concept of the ZPD it can be seen that when engaging in decision-making the teachers are entering a zone of shared culture where they are able to access all the contingencies of the culture to effect their work decisions. As this area is recognized as an area of learning, it can be surmised that the teachers are entering a zone of learning which is synonymous to the organizational culture, meaning in fact that the teachers are able to avail themselves of learning when they are in this zone; the NELP then, by its culture and affordances, is able to offer the teachers a covert in-service place of individual teacher development, a place inherent in its systems, contingent on its affordances and realized in effective, speedy decision-making and self-regulation. The decision-making and the logs allow for both learning and expressions of that learning. Each individual teacher accesses this zone as he or she wishes, in as much or as little as he or she wishes, echoing Stenhouse's belief (1975) that students will learn what they need to learn (from what is provided for them) in whatever way and whatever time frame they themselves choose too.

Furthermore, in the NELP the area of scaffolding, mentioned above, is referred to as "setting-up the activity" (the stages of an activity for the students with degrees of support and "backup"), which observations and tapings show consume considerable time and effort in the teachers' decision-making, and as the example above shows, is an area, a time that allows for the creation of a ZPD; a zone in which teachers can assist each other in continued learning while in the process of deciding their class activities. Thus they enter a

zone of learning in the course of their work. This does not have to be an agreed upon event with a timeframe or other prescriptions, or even one the teachers are aware of – it is the result of the interactive contingencies, which are a natural function of the NELP.

Vygotsky's theories have had an enormous effect on shedding light on how people learn giving powerful endorsement for the progressivist approaches to language learning. However, since the NELP study focuses teachers in the staffroom, I will now focus on what his theories may have to say as to how the teachers negotiate meaning in decision-making, placing special emphasis on the meaning and role of affordances, the cultural artifacts of the NELP.

2.5.5. Theory of Activity and Social Practice

With the influence of Vygotskyian ideas, it became possible to see the integration of artifacts into human activity as a functional system that is foremostly language, and not brain produced and which lead the way into seeing that it was necessary to understand these functional systems by studying their formation (history) and activity, rather than their structure (Langolf, 2000: 8). These ideas were developed into the theory of activity by Leontiev in 1978 (2000:8) in which activity is seen to be something either motivated by a biological need (such as the need to eat), or a culturally constructed need (such as the need to read). Motives are only realized in specific actions that are goal-directed (thus intentional and meaningful) and carried out in particular conditions of time and place and through mediated means. Thus an activity has three levels: the levels of motivation, action and conditions.

An activity can only be directly observed at level three (Lantolf, ibid) and the motives and goals cannot be determined only by concrete means since they may be repeated in different conditions with different goals. However, it seems that through knowing the history, and observing the conditions in which an action occurs, the functional systems can be inferred and interpreted. Thus the decision-making in the NELP can be seen as a goal-directed functional system with a motive of not only the need to decide on a course of action for the

class, but to mediate the initiation and outcome with another. Therefore, teachers can be seen to be utilizing both the cultural artifacts of the NELP, namely the language and the affordances of curriculum and class logs, but also the shared understanding of the functional system.

According to Thorne (2000:224-5), 'practice theory seeks to unify under a common theoretical umbrella the way human activity reproduces systems and how systems may change as a result of human activity'. In second language learning (acquisition) this theory is applied to attempts to

> capture the interplay between macro social structures and moment-to-moment practices. So where language classrooms are the context, practice theory would also take into account the additional factors of the historical qualities of the college, the institutionally defined subject-positions of the students and instructors and how these subject positions are inhabited (and their resources and constraints) by real people in concrete situations, issues of epistemology, and normative interactional and cultural patterns.   (ibid: 224)

This is a view not unlike that of HRD (section 2). Thorne (2000: 225) quotes Hall as saying '(the) primary interest of [practice theory] is the explication of the interactive processes by which individuals within groups, and groups within communities, [re]create and respond to both their sociohistorical and locally situated interactive conditions, and the consequences –linguistic, social and cognitive – of their doing so'. He further suggests the works of social-semiotic systems such as those by Halliday and Hasan (1976), utilizing cohesive systems and ties as being formative in understanding this view.

Although the above theorists have not specifically applied any of their work or understanding to the area of teacher-to-teacher interactive decision-making, their theories are useful in providing bases of interpretation for the study of the NELP organizational culture, particularly in providing the theoretical underpinnings for the analysis of the taped teacher decision-making sequences, and of the sentence structure analysis applied to the language found in the logs.

Of prime importance in this study is to see how the part-time teachers work together in teaching partnerships in severe time constraints in a temporary way, (in that the NELP is but one of the working environments they are in). Thus far, suggestions indicate a shared organization culture with mediated cultural artifacts (affordances) historically developed and connected by contingencies enabling them to access with speed into a culture formed by themselves and thus complicit with their norms, beliefs and assumptions. The affordances of the NELP, seen as the curriculum and the log-keeping, are both defining and powerful tools of the NELP offering a basis for a shared world and information for mediating it. The principal means for mediation is in teacher talk, specifically in this study, in teacher interactive decision-making. Thus decision-making talk becomes itself a tool of mediation, acting not just as a contingency of the program, but also as an affordance. In selecting means for studying the participatory interactive decision-making, it is necessary to look at the work already residing in the literature on the characteristics of conversation types and at available means of understanding interactive talk.

2.5.6. Interactive discourse - dialogs and conversations

Although references can be found to similar work on discourse (Halliday and Hasan for example, and the works in Lantolf), this section will be based mainly on my understandings of van Lier's work (1996) in this area. Van Lier's work forms the basis of his own AAA (awareness, autonomony, authenticity) curriculum model thus his comments on conversation and dialog patterns have been formed from field work in teacher-student, and student-student classroom interactions, with reference to dialog in these situations. A one-to-one application of his work to interactive teacher-to-teacher decision-making of NELP teachers who have been observed at work in their staffroom is not evident. Nevertheless, the possibilities for interpretations of a similar kind to the transcribed dialogs of these teachers is alluring given his focus on the concept of interaction.

The means and methods of studying discourse assume a knowledge of the application of the discourse factors of speech acts and cohesion, but a deeper look at other salient factors

such as the message, or purpose of the talk sees the main purpose of talk to be a form of interaction; a mediation of minds (and all the individual scripts, schema and narratives an individual may have) within an environment both immediate and long ranging, external and internal. However, the type of dialog or conversation teachers will select for their needs, and the degree of ellipsis and prolepsis they will employ will be contingent on the purpose and the function of the interaction and the degree of shared knowledge the teachers have with each other and their teaching environment.

Van Lier (1996: 178) says that in educational situations (for which I substitute 'in the teachers' staffroom') talk is not a matter of simply choosing a "style" or "a way of interacting" such as a single mode of discourse (either conversational or rhetorical) and imposing it on oneself and others.

> Rather it is a continuous studying and monitoring of the whole array of ways of speaking and interacting and a finding of the effective and enabling ways to speak to the right person, at the right time, for the right reasons and in the right way ...

... where "right" will be the norms and values of the organizational culture or situation of the context one is immediately in. Van Lier identifies four primary modes of discourse available [in education], and I have reproduced his concentric model diagram of the four major types of (pedagogical) interaction (Fig. 6 p. 78) to more easily see the aspects in operation in any interaction in talk and that may be operant in the NELP.

1) transmission; where the transfer of information is focused, from one person who knows to others who do not, in a one-way monologue. Perhaps in the staffroom this might be information from a coordinator to all the teachers on a course, or it might be from one teacher on a course to the others in direct immediate authority simply as "the one who knows the new information".

2) IRF questioning; where all the questions are asked by a participant who already knows the answer, the answers acting as guides to help understand or evaluate. Van Lier, working in teacher-student dialogs explains the IRF, initially attributed to Sinclair and Coulthard in

1975 (Coulthard, 1992) as initiation, response, feedback dialog. For the teachers this is more likely to be plan, implement, feedback, or initiation, response, comment/action, rather than evaluation, although it may be an opener form used to more covertly persuade or "teach" a teacher in a Socrates style interaction, that may then extend to a more transfomational style (see 4.)

3) transaction: information exchange by means of a two-way process, where the contents are jointly determined by all the relevant participants. Transaction is a common form in group discussions, business negotiations and information exchange tasks. However, as van Lier says (ibid), even where cooperative classroom interaction is of this type, where talk tends to be contingent, without power struggles, and at times conversational, it will still have some external structure which members are not free to transform. Thus one would expect the same of the teacher's staffroom decision-making, where limitations come with the structure of the task, with the time constraints of syllabus, timetable and the school day.

4) transformation: is jointly managed talk that has the potential to change situations, role relationships, educational purposes and procedures. The agenda is shaped by all the participants, their contributions being self-determined or produced in response to the requests of others.

'It is at the level of transformation interaction that it is appropriate to speak of a true co-construction of meaning and events' (Van Lier 1996:180). The direction in conversational types moves from transmission to transformation, which van Lier states (ibid) is generally desirable for the teaching/learning context, although he does clearly say this is not a clear-cut or neat category system and that hybrid interaction styles are possible, such as storytelling and playing games, and might even be more powerful in effect.

For talk in a teacher's staffroom such as the NELP, transformation style, the apex of a non-contingent (number one of the list above) to fully contingent (number four of the list above) cline, may not always be the most appropriate or desirable conversational movement, but rather just one of the options. However, the possibility of encouraging the transformation interaction style (thought to best provide a way into an intersubjective zone of learning) at suitable times might indicate a window for setting-up covert teacher development.

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Thus the importance and value of a shared organizational culture for teachers, especially for part-time teachers, becomes apparent. For if non-contingent discourse is occurring (discourse not focused in the experiential world of all the participants), the setting up of expectancies is difficult to do as each is "going his own way", and as a result the interaction becomes unpredictable and unmanageable. However, as interaction moves towards transformation, expectancies are created and explored; this moving outward pull will open up and enrich the discourse. According to van Lier (1996:183)

> In the contingent interaction, the predictability of the three pattern exchange [IRF] will be loosened, ellipsis might be replaced by prolepsis, [and] authoritarianism yields to authority creating the potential for joint exploration

A look at the concentric model (Fig. 6. P. 78) shows the transformation style on the outer rim moving in to the transmission style showing a centripetal movement (moving from outside in – the "pull-in"). However it could be seen as moving in a centrifugal motion, from the center out (the "pull outwards"). Van Lier (1996: 183) references Bakhtin (1981) in considering the struggle between the centripetal forces pulling towards homogeneity, unification, habits, and prescriptiveness, and centrifugal forces, pulling outwards towards diversity, creativity, variety, to be the energizing principle of all linguistic life creating a highly contingent environment of interaction (van Lier, 2000:259), and one is reminded of Tagiuri's elements of culture which I illustrated earlier in a concentric model of organizational cultures from macro to micro (Fig. 3 p. 60), where a centrifugal or centripetal motion can now be seen operating. This motion is contingent on the focus of any given moment or aspect, indicating quite clearly that cultures of organizations are not static but in constant flux constantly influencing teachers in negotiating their work environments. The significance of this for the teachers of the NELP will be addressed in chapter eight under implications of the study.

2.5.7. Conclusion of section four

Van Lier's descriptions of conversations are related to classroom learning, but there may be truth in them for understanding the range of interactive conversations available to the NELP teachers as well. The teacher is afforded a choice of dialogue types, but as each type gives a more or less chance of entering the area of intersubjectivity, the ZPD zone of learning, and as each type allows for more or less scaffolding to help with the negotiation of meaning, some conversational forms are to be preferred over others; and particularly for specific tasks. This perspective and this detail, helps in interpreting the type, purpose and effectiveness of the decision-making discussion types in the NELP. Furthermore, the concept of an "energizing interaction" between the four dimensions of interaction (the transmission, transaction, questioning and transformation conversational styles), helps to add strength to the use of affordances in the NELP. These affordances are what give the part-time teachers a sense of empowerment and connection to the program, and, with the contingencies they create, enable the smooth running of the program.

2.6. Section Five: Logs - executive function of the NELP

The pivotal point in the study of the NELP was the logs kept by the teachers after each and every class. They were easily selected as the primary affordance in the NELP on the basis of their visibility and their constant use. They act, as it will be seen, not just as recording devices, but as repositories of NELP culture and thus as a means of interaction in the teacher decision-making process. As such they are instrumental in forming the culture of the NELP and of allowing the teachers a sense of professional connection and commitment to the program. Chapter six will fully investigate the logs as an affordance of the NELP, this section will offer some conceptual frames for the use of logs in the NELP.

2.6.1. Definitions and Descriptions

The dictionary has no definition of a log as it is used in the NELP but defines a log book in reference to the daily records of a ship's journey, the content being a report, a list of events

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or happenings of a given day. Although recently the use of the word log is perhaps more widely connected to the "log-on" of a website on the internet, it refers to the records found in use in hospitals, offices, schools, the military and in private planning within an organization. The physical form for a log book is various; it may be a file, notebook or these days a computer accessed coded file, even a cellular phone record, or the 'high tech.' equipment predicted by the logs of the Star Ship Enterprise, now jettisoned into our fast-paced changing world as the electronic pocket diary replete with visual images of the participants.

Logs in organizations are personal and to some extent confidential but, paradoxically, they aim to inform and to report either to a specific reader, known or unknown, to a group or to the entire organization. The reports are usually comprised of events, written, or in notation form, on formatted paper, or constructed freely. They may or may not be extenuated with comments, opinions and recommendations, and they may require an answer or an action.

Logs do have at least one point in common in addition to their aim to record, inform and report: they are all institutional. A log is not a personal private record, rather it is a record kept in organizations which requires recorded reports pertaining to the institution and its organizational work. They might be described as "work diaries". However, an important point that distinguishes logs from diaries, which are personal accounts, the content of which is personally controlled and strictly private, is that logs are largely public within the institution they are concerned with, but they are not open to the public outside of it. This particular privacy code operating on the classified nature of the information contained in logs in the institutions and organizations and their personnel, may be the reason why so few studies on logs and their characteristics and uses can be found in any of the social science or business literature.

To date no study has been found that deals with records in the same way that logs are used in the NELP where the logs are vital for the running of shared teaching classes and are in some cases the only form of communication the teachers have with a partner-teacher as regards the content of their classes. They are reports that also contain comments, plans,

suggestions, and are thus reports that will evoke a reaction and continuing action from the teachers.

Hundleby & Breet (1988), wrote of 'methodological notebooks', and Jarvis, J. (1992) studied "learning diaries", which were later changed to 'learning records' to accommodate the less private aspect of the record. However, since all of the records in these studies have been contrived learning activities, they all have a stated purpose quite different from the logs of the NELP. Porter, et. al (1990) reported on a study in which the word 'log' appeared in the title but in the text the record was referred to as a journal. More recently Ora Kwo (in Freeman and Richards, (eds.) 1996), outlined a study involving a 'teaching practice log file' which bares some resemblance to the logs of the NELP in that it is formatted to elicit specific information, but it differs markedly from the NELP's logs in that it requires more of a diary-like free flowing prose, and that the records function as an individual teaching tool, and as a means of evaluation of trainee teachers.

2.6.2.   On uses / comparisons with diaries

Perhaps the use of 'log' or 'logging' that comes closest in type to the NELP logs is found in Miles and Huberman's (1994) discussions of qualitative data research where they suggest a log, or journal 'of what you are running up against' be kept throughout longitudinal research as 'this tactic will help your learning and be useful when you write up your study' (1994: 14). They suggest such a log should contain a clear enough description of procedures for others to be able to 'understand them, reconstruct them and subject them to scrutiny' (1994:281).

More recently Woods, D (1996), researching teacher beliefs and decision-making, in which teachers engaged in sharing the process of their class planning, and in-class decision-making changes, made use of a 'log' in a similar way to Miles and Huberman's research journal/log, which served as a means to aid the teacher's interpretations of what was happening in their action research. Although large extracts are quoted throughout the book,

no specific description or exemplification of the recorded content on any one of these logs was given so it cannot be said as to how much they may resemble the logs in the NELP. It can be known from the study however, that since the study was to investigate teacher beliefs and assumptions in the decision-making process and that this was done with individual teachers, working cooperatively but not collaboratively in that they did not share classes and did not have to thus make decisions together with another teacher, the content is likely to be as dissimilar as it might be similar. However, since the point of this study is not a comparative use of logs to elucidate the purpose and value of logs, but an investigation of how teachers use logs in interactive teacher-to-teacher decision-making, I will not pursue the content of logs in this study further.

Diaries are commonly thought of as private entries in special notebooks containing retrospective comments on events that are laced with introspective opinions and feeling, and possible projections of hopes, wishes and plans for the future. However, since Bailey's diary studies (1990), demonstrating how introspection on ones' own learning habits could offer valuable insights into aspects of learning that are in fact unobservable, but of very real concern to learners, learner-diaries have become a popular means of training teachers and of student development and evaluation. Learner diaries are records set up with the explicit aim of having learners investigate their learning habits. The overall topic and focus of the diary is set, as is the specific and clearly pre-understood purpose and timeframe. In such records the learner, or teacher, would reflect on methods, approaches and opinions for later discussion with a tutor or for the basis of an assignment. Learner-diaries have also gained increasing popularity as a classroom observation tool. When they were first introduced in this way, they were seen as "mentalistic" studies, and as part of a very direct challenge, exemplified by Breen, 1985, (in Allwright, 1988), to the primacy of the idea that observation alone could adequately investigate classroom language learning. More recently, diary studies have mushroomed from accounts of language learners to accounts by teachers of their classroom teaching and have featured in many of the studies cited under the section on collegiality and teacher's work.

The biggest recent innovation seems to have been in the extending of individual diary accounts into the sharing of diary accounts with other trainee teachers in a cooperative setting leading to the modification of teaching practices (Bailey et. al. 1992), this being done with the express purpose of encouraging collaborative teacher development by engaging trainee teachers in learning activities in a shared, social and communal way. It is now believed that such activities are successful in promoting teacher cooperation, collaboration and reflective learning, and I will return to look at the value of the NELP logs in this light in chapter six.

Since the NELP logs are naturally occurring examples of speech and writing, it is necessary to find a framework that will allow an analysis of this kind of data and suggest an appropriate baseline for interpretation. However, the area of cognitive linguistics, which is concerned with what people write as representations of their cognitive functions, is not so helpful in that it is concerned with the study of language features such as prototypes, categorization, and metaphor representation of areas of decontextualized language at or below the sentence level, whereas the NELP study is in a specific context and the level of interest is in the way in which teachers effect communication, specifically decision-making. The logs are functional records, thus the social semiotic functional systemic grammar of Halliday provides the best approach.

2.6.3.   Means of understanding content

For Halliday (1976), language is a system of meaning; when people use language they do so to express a meaning. The grammar becomes a study of how meanings are built up through the use of words and other linguistic forms such as tone and emphasis. Since text in a naturally occurring situation uses actual language, not contrived, it is necessary to remember that it was produced within and for a communicative event, so it is always helpful to know the context in any analysis of the language. Halliday's idea consists of a set of systems, each of which give the writer a choice of ways to express meaning. Of particular interest for understanding how the logs transmit information is Halliday's message

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oriented structure which works on the concept of the theme and rheme, the expressing of the given and the new information within a sentence structure. Chapter six takes natural occurring data from the logs kept by the teachers in the NELP and views them from the point of how information is transmitted, in addition to looking at what kind of information is transmitted, for what purpose and in what manner.

2.7. Section six: Decision-making - executive function of the NELP

Although it is clear that the organizational culture of the teachers, the setting provided for them, is of vital importance and interest, as is the actual record keeping of the teachers, it is also clear that much more is operating that is not so external, but rather more internal, involving more of the intuitive life of the teachers, and that this has a complex interdependency with the working environment and teachers beliefs, assumptions and knowledge. Although it is not an aim of this study to look at the mental lives of the teachers, or to understand the decision-making functions at a purely cognitive level, it is important to look at the more recent work done in the field of teacher cognition. The work most clearly focusing problem-solving (thus learning) for teachers is decision-making which encompasses teachers' planning involving their preactive and postactive thoughts, their interactive thoughts and decisions, and their theories and beliefs (Clark & Peterson, 1986). It is generally agreed that teachers' personal theories and beliefs serve as a basis for classroom practice and curriculum decision-making (Ross, E. et. al. 1992).

Studies in the area of teacher decision-making need to look at the reciprocal interaction between teachers and their environment, rather than just from teacher to students or from the environment per se. Teaching and learning should also be treated as continuous interactive processes, rather than reducing them to a few isolated factors, and such studies should consider the classroom as a context within a context. Furthermore, the unobservable processes such as thoughts, attitudes and perceptions should also be considered as important data sources, (Hamilton, 1983 in Ross, E. et. al 1992). The theoretical underpinnings of this work go back to Dewy. As far back as 1904 he was saying that

'teachers must be students of both subject matter and "mind activity" if they are to foster student growth. Thus a healthy teaching profession is one in which teachers have learned to apply the habit of critical thought to their work' (Ross, et. al. 1992). Furthermore Ross suggests teachers gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to continue learning about teaching and curriculum through personal professional experiences and to achieve this he proposed the notion of the classroom as laboratory.

However, in the study of the NELP, the focus is on teacher-to-teacher reciprocal decision-making, including the influence of the environment, and these aspects will be studied in the context of the staffroom rather than the classroom, for this is where the teachers' cyclic processes of preactive and postactive thoughts are given public and observable expression by way of staffroom conversations, unit planning sessions, and log entries. Furthermore, the staffroom will be considered as a complex organizational culture, rather than a sterile laboratory.

The area of teacher cognition is extensive. Clark & Peterson (1986: 255-296) give a very dense and extensive perusal of the field and conclude by stating teachers do reflect on their teaching, their planning and their classroom decisions and they do have theories and belief systems that influence their perceptions, plans and actions. The more recent study by Woods, D. (1996) corroborates this view. Clark & Peterson, however, lament the fact that most studies done in the field thus far have been on discrete and isolated aspects of teachers' thoughts and actions rather than on the whole process of teaching in the context of the teaching environment and they call for studies that will look at the issues as they develop over time and in studies that will illuminate what kinds of interventions might help these processes along. They suggest that longitudinal studies on teachers' thought processes are very much needed. Of great interest to the study of the teachers' thought processes in the NELP, given its experienced population of teachers, is Clark and Peterson's statement that:

> the maturing professional teacher is one who has taken some steps
> toward making explicit his or her implicit theories and beliefs about

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learners, curriculum, subject matter and the teacher's role ....
experienced teachers reflect on and analyze the apparent effects of
their own teaching and apply the results of these reflections to their
future plans and actions, that is, they become researchers on their
own teaching experiences ...

(1986: 292)

This case study will attempt to show that in the busy world of the NELP, this reflection and
action happens naturally in the course of staffroom interaction, and can be seen in the logs
and the decision-making functions.

2.7.1.   The act of decision-making

Although the above comments are insightful, they do little to illustrate exactly what
teachers are doing when they plan and decide course, class and students' work. The work
of Richards, J. and Lockhart, (1994) and Freeman (1996) on teacher reflection and learning
in EFL/ESL situations, especially as aids to teacher development, offer some interesting
points, Richards and Lockhart (1994:80) comment on teacher decisions as:

a) planning decisions: where they have found some teachers use *macro-plans* to guide their
work, keeping these plans as aims and goals in the day-to-day planning, while others work
more from *micro-plans* planning on a daily basis without making regular reference to their
course goals or objectives. Richards & Lockhart reference the work of Brindley (1994:80) to
show teachers tend to state objectives in terms of what teachers would do and what the
language content was, rather than what the learners would do.

b) planning objectives: covering four categories:

   i. instructional goals - the teacher's role vis a vis the students, which calls into
     consideration the teacher's own theories of second language learning,
     conscious or otherwise, or the institution's perspective on teaching
   ii. descriptions of course and language content - the topics to be covered and
     the language and practice activities to be carried out.
   iii. quality of learning content - objectives in terms of how much work and
     what materials will be needed or are to be covered.

iv. learning materials - objectives as regards movement in the textbook, and of
specific activities to cover in either the textbook or from other materials.

Richards & Lockhart (1994) finding corroboration in the works of Freeman (1996) comment
that it has been found teachers are more likely to plan their lessons as sequences of activities,
teaching routines, or the needs of a specific student or group, rather than to think in terms
of objectives, and some teachers visualize a particular class or group of students.

c) Richards & Lockhart (1994), and Woods, D. (1996) who have extensively studied teacher
planning in EFL/ESL, have found that teachers do reflect on their beliefs and assumptions
about teaching and learning in their planning, highlighting how some teachers plan lessons
with room for spontaneity, shunning a plan that restricts both the teacher and the student
from making choices and responding to needs and interests, while others follow strict
plans faithfully, not wishing to loose sight of the book or course requirements. These points
would suggest teachers' plans indicate whether they are following a classical,
reconstructionist or progressivist view (see chapter five) which in the NELP staffroom often
acts to indicate to others their teaching perspective and approaches, in fact contributing to
the shared knowledge pool of the organizational culture and helping other teachers to
sucessfully negotiate decision-making efficiently.

d) Obviously what teachers do in terms of their next classes will be determined in large
part by what happened in the classroom. However, the focus of the NELP study is not on
individual teacher cognition of this process but rather on what actions are taken by the two
teachers in a team situation dependent on what either teacher records or reports overall as
having happened in the earlier class. The process of how teachers determine what actions
they need to take re: their classrooms and what topics they need to discuss re: class
planning is obviously of importance to the individual teachers and at a very real level must
be operating influences on the interactive decision-making. However, as this focus is
beyond the reach of this study, the analysis of the decision-making features will not focus
the topics the teachers make decisions about, but rather how they make those decisions
interactively. Chapters four and five will provide a base for understanding the types of

topics the teachers are concerned with as they are considered in this study to be a facet of the organizational culture.

8. Conclusion

This concludes the overview of the literature that has been most informative and influential in coming to understand the dimensions of this study. It represents just a fraction of possible roads and byways and opportunities for study as the NELP is a case rich with possibilities for study. I have selected to focus on interactive decision-making through logs and "talk" with the aim of showing teacher connectedness to the program and how this in turn provides for the possibility of teacher development controlled according to each teacher's personal needs or desires.

Research Perspectives - data collection and analysis

Words, especially organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader – another researcher, a policy maker, a practitioner – than pages of summarized numbers.   (Miles & Huberman, 1994 : 1)

3.1. Introduction

Chapter one outlined how this study came to be focused on investigating teachers' class logs and interactive decision-making in the natural setting. Chapter two shows it is a study of dynamic complexity covering many dimensions: organizational culture, teacher records, teacher interactive decision-making, the web that connects them, and the contingencies that mediate them. The NELP is a system that operates as a whole; it seems logical, therefore, at least initially to study it as a whole. It is also a study of teachers –people in a very selective, specific and clearly identifiable case, whose actions are seen through identifiable affordances, such as curriculum, logs and interaction. Indications, therefore, are for a research paradigm that will allow for the elucidation, interpretation and understanding of the whole as seen through and by the identified areas. This chapter will identify the choices open for such a study, and inform the reader of the selection, the reasons for the selection, and the methodology of the selected research perspective. This will be followed by a discussion of the data collection and analysis.

3.1.1. Ways of knowing

There are two major paradigms for investigating a research inquiry; the rational, logical, positivist approach characterized by objective techniques for testing detached from the people being studied, with mathematical proofs as the highest goal of investigation, and the naturalist approach in which persons and their behaviors are to be observed in their situations of context and culture and where patterns and strands of interest are to be understood through the medium of experience, intuition, common sense and interpretation. These approaches are driven by a fundamentally different world view – the

former from a rationalistic view point and the latter from a naturalistic, holistic view point. They are often presented as exclusive, with adherents of either fiercely defending their positions in an array of often complex defenses and justifications of positions. Lawson & McCauley (1990:31), however, suggest a "marriage" between the two, Miles and Huberman (1994:401) propose a 'linking' of methods, and Owens (1995:257) suggests 'complementary methods of investigation available for use in the knowledge-production process essential to informing'. Recognizing, then, that just as our increasingly complex world has led to an increase in interdisciplinary studies requiring various view points and perspectives, there needs to be various research approaches to extract information and resultant explanations and interpretations to go with it.

The deductive approach is a controlled search in controlled time and often simulated conditions for cause-effect relationships with the goal of general applicability, while the naturalistic approaches look to elucidate and understand issues that are not direct causal relationships and need to be understood on their own terms; a large body of such studies offered to indicate trends and theories of observed phenomena over time in identified situations of context. The argument over the value of either of these approaches is most often about the truth, validity, usefulness, and generality of the results, judged mainly on the ability to reproduce those same results in repeated situations. Such a requirement for truthfulness, however, automatically excludes any study regarding the complex issues of human shared cognitive and social behavior, since replicability is an impossibility in naturalistic interactive human endeavors.

Arguments over the truth of the results also often revolve around the methods of research and the influence of the researcher. The deductive approach seeks to control all aspects of a study and to diminish the role of the researcher to zero, whereas the naturalistic approach recognizes the role of the researcher and either seeks to explain the researcher's role, or to embrace it as part of the study itself. Initially the naturalistic approach suffered a sense of inferiority to the rationalistic approach, which had an advantage by setting the terms of judgment on its own parameters, and by extending those terms, however inappropriate, to fields of study beyond their realm of inquiry such as to holistic humanistic, study issues. It

must be recognized, however, that the nature of the inquiry is different, and thus different systems of evaluation should be applied. The rationalistic approach is concerned with quantifiable data, informing on discrete points that can be counted, whereas the naturalistic approaches concern themselves with qualitative data informing on uncountable aspects of human condition, thoughts and actions.

Naturalistic approaches now recognize that even in a scientific experiment the research must at some point make arbitrary decisions, (for example, what informs the choice of whether an experiment should extend over 10 days or 15?), and that there is a measure of observation and interpretation involved in all studies. Thus they have begun to develop along their own lines of inquiry, moving away from any negative comparisons. I tend to think of the approaches as being complementary; both start with some form of observation (noticing) and both end with some form of interpretation (drawing conclusions), one isolates parts, studies them under controlled conditions which can be fully disclosed and replicated and searches for casual relationships and rational explanations, while the other continues observations of wholes searching for connections and interpretations of the observed in explanations of the more common sense, practical variety of "telling about". As will be shown in a more detailed study below, this perspective relies not only on the researcher, the researched and the context in which it occurs, but also on the reader of the collated and expounded findings for the fullness of its meaning and significance.

3.1.2. To sum up

There are many ways of knowing, from common sense within one's cultural background, to observation, to experimentation; the choice of perspective depends on what the researcher wants to know about his subject matter, or research situation. Ultimately it is not that one perspective is better", more truthful or more "valuable" than another, it is a matter of appropriateness; and I have concluded that a naturalistic perspective would be most appropriate for the NELP studies, necessarily accepting the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of this "way of knowing".

3.2. Methods of study available

There is no one method available for the study of complex, dynamic situations encompassing the social and mental aspects of human culture, and the NELP is a fluid, complex, dynamic and ever-changing culture: this is its nature. Clearly, an investigation of the NELP needs to be a study that can capture its dynamics and allow for a meaningful interpretation and understanding within the overall context to emerge.

In the recent past, such a study would be reduced to smaller parts, and hypotheses formulated and subjected to the rigors of scientific testing, any other method being brandished as anecdotal, unable to satisfy the deductive laws and logic of positivism and thus dismissed as unreliable and invalid for any generalizations or interest to the wider community of scientists. Fortunately, the recent rejection of the strangle hold the scientific reductionist approach has had on the way in which we investigate, view and interpret our world has opened up a number of viable possibilities for researchers to attempt an holistic understanding of a complex research area.

Perhaps the steady movement of social sciences away from the cause-effect, linear and objective studies of discrete identifiable items in static environments has been motivated by the need for detailed explanations of events in or over time rather than for a documentation of the sequence of events, or the cause-effects of manipulated and controlled events. In other words, the social scientist needs to discover, describe and explain what people actually do in everyday life and how they do it rather than what they might do under contrived circumstances, and this requires a more inductive (drawing out, intuitive) long term approach. I will now will consider some of the available approaches for such a study, indicating their suitability or not for the study of the NELP and its contingencies.

3.2.1. Cognitive and Anthropological Approaches

In chapter two no specific theoretical perspective was offered for the study of the NELP, thus no specific research methodology follows. However, the social sciences offer a number

of possible research perspectives such as the field of cognitive psychology, anthropology and educational theories of practice, and a selection of research methodologies. Firstly, cognitive psychology does not provide a strong or appropriate base from which to form a research strategy for the NELP study as its inquiries are based on the perspective of learning transfer theory and an experimental methodology in which 'experimental tasks call for problem-solving to be a central on-going activity' (Lare, 1988: 6).

Although a wide view of problem-solving could in fact have the members of the NELP in constant problem-solving situations, an investigation of all these individual studies would still not illuminate the central issues of the NELP nor offer much in the way of a meaningful understanding of the workings of the organization and the teachers in it as a whole, as the pre-study outlined in chapter one clearly showed. Though psychologists have also recently "begun to doubt the ecological validity of experimental findings' (ibid, 1988:7), and to ask instead what thinking is really like in the context of a person's life rather than at any one specified point of time in it, the NELP culture exists external to the thinking of any particular teacher, therefore psychological studies are less likely to surrender the contingencies of that culture.

An anthropological perspective is also inappropriate for the NELP study. Although its many branches have a long tradition of looking at people's lives in context, like cognitive psychology it shares an assumption about culture and cognition which sees an individual as being born into a society that has a set of macro-structures, which while possible for its members to process, are constant over time. Thus research is based on the belief that all individuals of that culture will have quite predictable shared norms and a consensus of values and customs that are static, a direct contrast to the NELP which has a culture of constantly changing active members. The idea that on-going activities consist of problem-solving and information processing results in a functional theory that,

> treats socialization as passive, and culture simply as a pool of information transmitted from one generation to another [therefore] neither cognitive psychology nor anthropology appears to be theoretically equipped to elaborate a theory of active social actors, located in time and space, reflexively and recursively acting upon the world in which they live and which they fashion at the same time. (Lare, 1988: 8)

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To over-come the static and passive view, Lare suggests (ibid:8) the answer lies in a need for everyday thought studies -- a 'cognition in situation' and for a qualitative approach to research 'activities in everyday situations'.

3.2.2   The Ethnographic Approach

Although anthropology may be ill equipped to elaborate a theory of social interaction, it has given such research its first, and still perhaps most well known methodological approach to the understanding of complex situations and everyday situations in context: ethnography - the 'field experiment', in which

> the ethnographer [researcher] participat(ing)es, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions -- in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.   (Hammersley & Atkinson (1995:1)

It is, therefore, the researcher's task to collect, analyze, explain and display this interaction. Many views exist as to the appropriate ways to do this, the most practical being perhaps expounded by Erikson (1966), Miles & Huberman (1994), Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), and more specifically in the ESL environment, Allwright & Bailey (1991), Nunan (1992), Freeman (1996), van Lier (1988) and Selinger & Shohamy (1989). In the recently more popular constructivist approach, description and explanation is taken a step further to a process of deconstruction and reconstruction of recorded events from which an understanding of the processes can be gleaned. This can be achieved based on an understanding that :

> reality is socially constructed and (that) any investigation of it involves the elucidation of the ways in which meaning is construed by those involved in the research. The findings of such research are 'created' interactively rather than discovered from a privileged perspective.
>   (Richards, K. 1996)

This perspective is in keeping with the theoretical underpinnings selected as most illuminating for the interpretations for the workings of the NELP: the sociocultural

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perspective which as we saw in chapter two strongly favors seeing man as forming his beliefs, social behaviors, and learning in mediation with his environment. Thus any study of the NELP as a group of people needs necessarily to involve a study of their interaction in and with their environment.

3.2.3 Reflexivity

The constructivist view allows for the data collection, analysis and display of any study to be seen as a movement from a sterile representation of the data to a rich exposition of it. Although the findings of any qualitative research may be represented in part by the graphs, matrices and charts mentioned by Miles and Huberman (1994), the main form of exposition will still be done with words and this allows for such techniques as storytelling, (Connelly & Clandinin, 1986, 1990 in Craig 1995), narratives and the creative written expression of the researcher, who, for this part of the research, becomes the writer. Hammersley & Atkinson (1993: 239) also stress the importance of writing ethnography saying

> given the reflexivity [influence of the researcher's own beliefs and position] of social inquiry, it is vital to recognize that ethnographers construct the accounts of the social world to be found in ethnographic texts, rather than those accounts simply mirroring them... Equally, one must recognize the significance of how those texts are read by social scientists, students and others.

The researcher, then, must share the goal of understanding the world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live in it. Thus researchers should be concerned with understanding the entire view point by exemplifying the participants' own understanding of the situation, and for relating this to the audience of the research in such a way that the dynamics of the situation are captured for easy, clear understanding of this relationship.

The main issue at this point is the one of reflexivity: the implication that 'researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer on them' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1993:16), and that this will bias the data. The concern of the scientific community has always been with eliminating the effects of the researcher on the data. In quantitative studies, the means for doing this are usually

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achieved by a strict control of the research context and the acceptability of only objectively observed and quantified selected items. In qualitative research it has been the systemization and consistency of research procedures and an effort to neutralize the effect of the researcher by recording from as many view points as possible.

3.2.4. Reliability and Validity

The issue of bias in the data is seen through the data's reliability and validity. In empirical studies these can be substantiated by the rules of experimentation and by the independent corroboration of similar results. This is not possible in the research on human organizations and cognition in context since the context can never again be realized and reproduced in the exact same way. However, this does not excuse qualitative research from the need to demonstrate its truthfulness. Thus issues of reliability and validity need to take a new and more meaningful perspective.

Miles & Huberman, (1994:277) reference the works of Guba and Lincoln (1989) as suggesting trustworthiness and authenticity are important criteria, with trustworthiness acting in much the same way as internal and external validity and reliability, and authenticity providing a 'truth value'. How these work in any research, however, remains unclear, especially since it still remains possible to question the concepts themselves. Edge (Richards, K. 1996,) and Edge & Richards (1998) point out that validity and reliability are two qualities 'assigned or withheld' by someone, usually the researcher or the audience, and therefore they too are not free from the influence of human factors. They suggest it would be more worthwhile to establish a link between the research and the responses to it making a cycle of research and response rather than a linear process. Accepting that "critical distancing" from the data is an illusion it would, therefore, be more constructive to embrace the role and position of the researcher in the act of reconstructing the data.

In answer to the criticism that such a view point would put too much control on the researcher, Edge (ibid) suggests that some of this control could be transferred to the reader. That is, the researcher can share the findings with the reader and allow him or her to

interact with these findings and derive knowledge and opinions in an individual way that is meaningful for himself. This is a perspective that fits well with the underpinnings of the socio-cultural perspective that has been so informative in searching for conceptual frameworks for the NELP, especially given the researcher has a position in the NELP itself.

However, in order to avoid a total lack of responsibility, it becomes necessary for the researcher/writer to give the reader a wide spectrum of data representations from which to form his or her opinions and position. Such representations would include, in addition to graphics, such things as pictures, photos, drawings, video and perhaps into the future possibly digital computer representations. This opens up the possibility for findings to be transmitted though strong storylines, narratives, fictions, and even poetry (Richards, K. 1996); any dynamic form of writing that will capture the essence of the research and one in which the researcher's own voice will be heard.

This perspective is very much one of the times – where the individual, the informal, the immediate, and the personal, speak increasingly loudly in the interdependent connections with the groups and formal institutions of our lives. However, in the research context this does place heavy responsibility on the writing ability and "talent" of the researcher to transmit the research findings. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) address this matter by stressing the importance of the connection between the writer and the reader in much the same way Zamel (1987) does in his interactive process-writing perspective, stating that the writer must focus the reader in an appropriate genre using the 'scholarly texts and the language, concepts, images, and metaphors of predecessors' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1993:241) that will best convey the message. The writing of ethnographers, they claim, is shaped by what they have read, thus successful ethnography calls for a habit of wide reading.

Nevertheless, this again calls into question the authenticity of the researcher, who is a largely unknown person to the reader, and to the researcher's ability to provide enough data for the reader to "judge" for himself the degree of success of the researcher's writing skills in light of their own knowledge, norms and assumptions. However, having provided

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the reader with a wide spectrum of data and interpretation, there will come a point where the researcher and reader enter a relationship which is reliant on the perceived honesty of the researcher, and the trust of the reader in the writer as the one who was there and who experienced and studied the situation.

The ethnographic research method is based on observation, its tools being recording (both written and audio) and documenting of the findings. It relies on longitudinal observation, mapping and extracting patterns for interpretations of meanings and significance. The study of the NELP is broadly ethnographic in its research methodology in that much is reliant on the documentation of observed events over time. However, it has a more highly focused study of some of its aspects, indicating a closer, more rational approach to data collection and analysis. The following two perspectives give a clearer understanding of some aspects of the NELP study.

3.2.5. Ethnographic Microanalysis and Interactional Sociolinguistics

Ethnographic microanalysis (also called microethnography of social interaction, and ethnomethodology in American sociology) is both a method and a point of view. It is concerned ...

> with the immediate ecology and micropolitics of social relations between persons engaged in situations of face-to-face interaction ... the microanalyist looks very closely and repeatedly at what people do in real time as they interact. From this approach to analysis comes a particular perspective on how people use language and other forms of communication in doing the work of daily life.
> (Erikson 1996:283)

This perspective, originally developed collaboratively by anthropologists, linguistics and psychiatrists, places emphasis on taking account of the organization of verbal and nonverbal behavior as it occurs simultaneously during interaction. The method of study involves slow-motion video taping for looking at and studying the 'local frames' the participants construct in their interaction; this framing shapes the language use, which can

then be studied by way of speech acts (discourse analysis), and speech events and systems constraints (conversation analysis).

Ethnography of communication, and interactional sociolinguistics are further approaches developed by linguistic anthropologists in the 1960s and 70s, in which emphasis is placed on the variation within and across speech communities or networks in culturally stylized ways of speaking, which requires long-term observation and a moment-to-moment conduct of speech. While this work focused on interaction in terms of strategy and ritual – emphasizing the importance of situation – and relied on participant observation, reviews of still photographs and of descriptive accounts of interaction found in literature were also used (Erikson, 1996: 285).

The work of conversation analysis emphasizes the emergence aspects of interaction over institutionalized aspects and leads to a very close analysis of recorded and transcribed data of informal verbal interactions, to the almost total exclusion of nonverbal behavior in the interaction by means of transcription conventions indicating systems constraints, and including tonality and pauses.

Another aspect for microanalytic studies is that of 'continental discourse' (the patterns of habitual practice in everyday life). Referencing the works of works of Habermas and Foucault, Erickson (1996:286) says this work is primarily conceptual and literary rather than empirical and places emphasis on seeing 'relations of power asymmetry in the wider society played out in microcosm at the level of face-to-face interaction'.

Erikson further states that while these perspectives are similar, the main difference is that microethnography incorporates the added use of audiovisual recordings of interaction to enable a more precise look at behavioral details, but stresses that 'the crucial issue is not what a stream of work is called, but what the work does' (1996:287).

It would seem that the NELP study would benefit from an application of a microanalytic approach. However, although observation and tape recordings of staffroom interaction

took place over several semesters, and teacher reflexivity in the form of comments and interviews helped to strengthen the validity of the resultant data, no audiovisual recordings were made. Also, although the study is about the teachers' interactive decision-making, the teachers themselves were not systematically involved as informants in the study in any research position. It is regrettable no audiovisual recordings exist as they could have given an invaluable nonverbal contribution to the interactive decision-making in the NELP. However, that there is no teacher reflexivity (see below) on the decision-making is less regrettable as such involvement may have created an awareness that detracted from the natural occurrence of the activities under study. However, without video recordings and teacher informants, the study is not purely microethnographic.

3.2.6. Case Studies

Although the term case study is usually applied to long-term naturalistic studies at the individual level of inquiry, it is an approach which can be used in both behavioral sciences, looking at individuals or groups, and physical sciences, studying the movements of a particular volcano for example. It can be in any specified time frame, and will use a multivaried battery of information gathering and testing techniques appropriate to the research perspective of the inquirer. The NELP is a specific case – a coordinated EFL program in a junior college – in which its entire dynamics are of interest and as such it might best be thought of and investigated under a case study perspective utilizing the methodology and techniques that go with naturalistic qualitative data collection. Thus declarative knowledge (knowing the what about concepts and schema), procedural knowledge (knowing the how about production and production systems and the process of conceptual dependency), integrative knowledge (giving models for representing declarative and non-declarative knowledge which connect the act and the actors), can be given free rein to fully inform on all its various aspects. An ethnographic case study will further make use of not only linguistic relativity, the speech of the people in the study based on their experiences of it, but also on heuristic knowledge, that is, the researcher's ways of knowing using reasoning and past experiences rather than formulations or solutions that are given in theories (Sternberg, 1996: 392).

i. The characteristic features of a case study

More specifically, a case study of an organization engages in an intensive study of a single organization, and draws only general conclusions about behavior. It is characteristically small, has little validity for causal inferences, and has little control over the variables or people in it; thus it will not profess to being representative of all cases and people. Although it will be high in specific individual ecological and somewhat undeniable on its own grounds, it will not necessarily be representative to similar or other ecological systems; rather it will be informative and of local interest. The weakness of a case study is its inapplicability to other settings and persons, but it gives rich detailed information regarding individuals, including history, and current contexts, which may not be available via other means, and it may lead to specialized applications for groups or specific individuals (Sternberg, R. 1996: 17).

As a naturalistic line of inquiry an ethnographic case study can enhance credibility by prolonged data gathering on site, allowing for the thickening of description and the deepening of insight into the situation under study. It can attempt to triangulate (to provide various views as a means of verification) by the use of multiple data-gathering techniques such as interviews, document analysis, self-reports, questionnaires, observations, and taping, that can provide potential for cross-checking data in what Miles and Huberman (1994: 282) call a 'multi-approach'. The corroboration of independently collected data by others may be sought, or peer checks and opinions may be made by other members and recorded in a research diary, and there will also be a systematic filing of data for easy accessibility. These lines of inquiry should enable a thick description synthesizing, integrating and relating observations in such a way as to 'take the reader there' (Owens, 1995: 268).

In accordance with the above descriptions, the NELP can be considered a "case", and can therefore be investigated according to the methodologies open to case studies. Firstly, the NELP has few members, on average 13 at any time, and cannot offer opportunities for studies aiming for widely applicable generalizations. Although the activities of the

members are contained within the frame of an academic university year and the teaching schedules of the program and thus one would expect to find behavior patterns related to its macro-culture, there can be no direct control over the interactive decision-making of its members. Of particular interest in this case, is the daily working activities of its members, the variety of their interaction, the effects of this interaction on the members and their program and its role in the organizational culture as a whole.

Data collection in this study was in accordance with ethnographic perspectives; long-term observation and diary recording, tape recordings, interviewing of case members and the study of the organization's records. Analysis involved categorizing and patterning of data, much of which resulted in flow charts and other graphic displays. However, the major 'technique' for the presentation of findings was written presentation. To present the patterns and evidence found in the observations illustrating the interactive decision-making in the NELP, a vignette form was selected. A vignette is 'a focused description of a series of events taken to be representative, typical or emblematic (of) the case (written in a) storylike structure' (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 81) to highlight and exemplfiy findings. Chapter five contains a thick description of the NELP in vignette form, based on the observations and diary accounts taken throughout the study and triangulated with tape recordings of staffroom talk. Charts are another oft used presentation form appearing throughout this study. The chart on page 111 outlines the direction of the NELP study indicating the deepening of the research as it moves from the macro to the micro aspects of the NELP and from the most visible to the most invisible aspects. This movement brings a greater focus on the data collection and analysis and a move from a primary focus on observation to a study of recorded and transcribed samples of the teachers' interactive decision-making. Thus the NELP study is a case study utilizing many of the recording and presentation techniques of qualitative naturalistic studies.

ii. to sum up

From the various perspectives open to the study of the NELP, the case study approach best fits the nature of the inquiry and the limitations of the research field both in terms of the

program itself and the researcher, who is an active member of the program. The overall approach to the NELP then is one of investigation for the purpose of interpreting what is to be found there in terms of the current theories of interaction and organizational culture. More specific studies on the function of the logs and the decision-making affordances followed with a more directed analysis of the data along the lines of ethnographic microanalysis. This approach is fitting in that the study of the NELP itself will show it to be a dual system organizational culture with a macro and a micro culture.

3.3. Data Collection

The data collection continued over several years and falls into four distinct but related areas all of which are further informed by diary entries and observation notes.

1. Documents of the NELP - which allow for the illumination of the macro-culture. These documents include the college brochures, regulations, student guide and prospective, and the NELP organizational materials. Most of the college material is public. However, insider privilege provided access to materials pertaining to the NELP which are not public, although available to members of the college.

2) Class logs - a total of more than 16, 000 entries have been read by the researcher, who is a log-keeper herself. Analysis focused on the entries from the years 1992-3 corresponding to the teacher interviews, with spot checks continuing over the years of the study, and on entries from 1995-7, corresponding with when the main bulk of the tape recordings were taken. Samples were selected to exemplify the observation and transcription findings, and to highlight the systems of communication in the NELP.

3) Teacher interviews - which include the formal initial log interviews of all 13 teachers in the NELP in the years 1993 - 4, and less formal up-dates of various new teachers since then These provide reflexivity and valuable insights into the workings of the NELP.

4) Tape recordings of the daily interactions of the teachers in the NELP - which provide both the mappings for a general analysis of the place and function of the decision-making sessions within the frame of the teachers' daily work in the staffroom, and the numerous

Outline and Direction of the Study

Introduction → **conceptual frameworks** (areas of investigation) → **Research perspectives** (data collection) → **Theoretical perspectives** (data analysis)

Cultural Context Japan/College → epistemological heuristic ← descriptive historical informative

Macro NELP organization culture → epistemological heuristic observation ← descriptive historical interpretive identifying categories

Micro (NELP functions identified) → **Micro** NELP functions exemplified → Teachers Interviews Teacher Records tapes Observations ← data patterning/mapping text analysis tape analysis interpretive explanation

MACRO collation implication reccommendation for further investigation

Fig. 7

examples of the various types of decision-making sequences, both open and secluded, for an analysis of their decision-making dynamics.

3.3.1. Reliability and validity of the Data: consistency and honesty

i. introduction

As discussed above, it is in the collating and interpreting of the collected data that issues of reliability and validity, or more correctly perhaps for a case study, the consistency, honesty and authenticity of the collection process, occur. This is especially so when the researcher is a member of the case being studied. As the researcher, I believe the successful study is the one that is reasoned, "explicit in its biases". Miles & Huberman (1994) say that above all, a good piece of research is one that persuades even the most skeptical reader of its integrity and value and as such I will provide an honest appraisal of what I understand and interpret to be the functionings of the NELP. That I am the founder and head of the program creates a very specific position to the data and no doubt provides a bias subject to valid criticism; however, it does not seem that a criticism of too much insider knowledge is a sufficient reason for discarding what can be known through this study given the data I will present to the reader to substantiate my claims and interpretations. The influence of my position will be more fully explored below and in chapter five. The following sections of this chapter will outline how the data for this study was collected, collated and interpreted.

ii. the log data

The log data itself is not subject to calls for reliability or validity or to issues of truthfulness or authenticity: logs are naturally occurring text data part of the teachers' their daily work. Teachers were not asked to keep logs for the specific purpose of any study, and since they are used for their own purposes, any unreliability in keeping logs is a natural occurrence and an issue itself for interpretation. Similarly, since the teachers write logs as part of their daily teaching practice for their own practical use and for partner teachers reliant on them, it cannot be thought that they may contain falsehoods. The researcher has not discarded any of the logs and has made no attempt to rate them as more or less satisfactory since the

success or otherwise of any log entry relates only to the teachers and their class and thus only the teachers themselves could rate the entries as such. Furthermore, the study focuses more on how the logs are written and the perceived value of them within the NELP culture. Nevertheless, to give a reflexivity to the study, the teachers were asked to comment on the logs themselves in open-ended recorded interviews. Sample copies of logs can be found in the appendix under chapter six p. 291. The sampling has been both random, for an overall view, and specific for exemplifying specific identified points of discussion.

iii. taped interviews

All 13 of the EFL teachers in the NELP at the time of this study were interviewed by tape in open interviews with the coverall question of, 'What do you think and feel about keeping logs?' The list of prepared questions was rarely needed as in the course of the interview most teachers covered the proposed questions in their own time and way without prompting. It was thought important to permit this natural unfolding as it would allow the teachers to weigh personally the issues they found to be pertinent and important as regards the keeping of logs a view corroborated in the works of Nais (1993) and Cole (1991). Teachers talked freely and other questions were formed on the basis of their own development arising from the interview.

The interviews provide many interesting perspectives. An initial study of these interviews focused on how the teachers viewed them, but further studies have taken a deeper look into the workings of the logs in interaction with the NELP, especially under the functions of decision-making and communication between teachers, in an effort to better understand how keeping logs has helped create the NELP organizational culture and how they act as affordances enabling the teachers to mediate their work environment.

Nine of the open-ended interviews were collected in the same basic way by tape recorder in a one-to-one relationship in a quiet place after school. The interviewees were all given the same basic introduction and degree of guidance, thus providing a high degree of consistency in the data collection. The remaining four interviews were collected by recording over the phone, two from USA. These teachers were also given the same basic

introduction and free rein to continue for as long as they wanted. It may be argued that the phone interviews were less threatening since they lacked a face-to-face dimension and perhaps yielded less since the kinetics could not be observed. However, the phone interviews were some of the longest and most positive, thus the lack of a face-to-face dimension cannot be said to have either constrained their freedom to speak freely, or prompted them to give negative reports by the absence of the presence of the interviewer. Similarly, the shortest and most negative or tentative were given in face-to-face encounters indicating the interviewees did not show any signs of being intimidated or constrained by the presence of the researcher, who is also a fellow teacher and the head of the program.

For many of the teachers, the interview was a reflective activity in itself, and there are clear evidences of teachers modifying their views as they went along or at points within the interview. For this reason, the interviews are bound in time. Since any follow up survey or questionnaire could not be expected to provide corroborating data to the original statements none were not attempted. It is believed, however, that the interviews as they stand provide a rich knowledge base of information about the NELP.

iv.   tape recordings

Tape recordings of the teachers engaging in talk in the staffroom were taken at various times throughout the study. Initially the tape recording was set up whenever a teacher combination actually sat down to discuss their planning but as the study progressed, the teachers agreed to more taping and the tape was left running throughout the day. The tapes are largely naturalistic data and cannot be challenged on their honesty; however, the taping was not altogether consistent or reliable in that some of the tapes are hard to hear, and that taping occurred whenever the researcher had time to tape rather than consistently everyday. Since no statistical generalizations were sought, it was thought to be less important for the tapes to be recorded in a pre-determined plan. To counter inconsistencies, a large number of tapes were recorded to provide enough suitable examples of NELP staffroom interactive decision-making and to allow for interpretations of the results and the emergence of the characteristics and importance of the staffroom interaction.

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There are four teacher-to-teacher individual tape recordings; two of about 20 - 30 minutes, one covering three tapes of 30 minutes duration, and one 45 minute tape that arose spontaneously in the staffroom which was provided by the teachers, at their own convenience, for the purpose of capturing examples of the "secluded decision-making" sequences that observations had identified and that were difficult to get on whole-staffroom tapings (see chapter seven).

In addition to these tapes, there are a total of twenty tapes of varying lengths of staffroom recordings, some accompanied by observation, and others capturing just certain periods of time, such as lunchtimes. The tapes that were left running throughout the day were mapped to give overall patterns of conversations and interactions which were then used to corroborate and add triangulation to the vignette study which had relied on observation and diary accounts. However, since teachers spend most of their day in the classroom, there are large sections of the whole-day tapings that record little or nothing since the teachers were away in the classrooms. Overall, all the tape recordings were difficult to obtain; the staffroom is not large and the constant overlapping conversations made it hard to disentangle conversations even when they were accompanied by observations. The constant crossing of conversations and the free entering and leaving of conversations so characteristic in the NELP also made mapping and transcribing difficult. Thus a number of tapes were made in an effort to establish a pool of clear enough examples for transcription.

v. field notes, observations

Teacher permission, via discussions and verbal agreement, was given for discreet staffroom observation. A research diary was also kept for the period of time in which these daily observations were carried out, although at times there was overlap between the two in that diary entry comments also appear on the observation notes. It is to be noted that the Japanese college year for a part-time teacher is only two 15 week semesters, reduced by holidays and special activities; only a 26 week period of on-campus teaching in the year. Data could be collected only in these timeframes. Since it also became necessary to postpone observation during very busy times of the semester, and natural turn-over of staff meant there were always teachers coming and going, it was necessary to have a

longitudinal approach to data collection and to avoid focusing on any particular teacher or teacher combination.

vi. organizational documents

In addition to the observations, logs, interviews and recordings, this study has had, through insider privilege, access to a large volume of in-house NELP materials such as orientation materials for the teachers, teachers syllabus and course schedules, materials, end of year reports, student evaluations, and materials pertaining to debriefing meetings. This material has provided insight and specifics for the study of the NELP at the macro and micro culture levels. As with the logs, this information itself is not subject to issues of honesty and authenticity, since it too is real-time information working independently of this study. At no time has any of this material been manufactured or in any way manipulated for the purpose of this study.

3.3.2. Data Analysis

i. Logs

The logs were viewed for content, patterns of organization, and means and methods of recording. Since the logs are hand-written texts an indepth text analysis to provide statistical generalizations was not attempted, and is likely to remain an unattractive study until such time as computers can scan and read from a handwritten data base. However, what appears to be the typical sentence structures and characteristics of the log records have been isolated to illustrate how teachers are able to communicate important information about their classes to their partners when the length of the log entries and the little time spent on them (see chapter one pre-study) would seem to indicate a lack of depth in the reports.

Each log used for direct quotes has been coded with the initials of the pseudonym of the teacher, the class to which the log is referring and the year. For example: EFGH L2, 1993, T.7 refers to the class division (the EFGH class block), the level of the class (level two), the year, and T.7 refers to teacher number seven in the interviews. It was an unfortunate

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oversight that the date of the log itself was not filed, thus retrieval, while indeed possible, would be time consuming. Chapter six will show how the teachers' native application and manipulation of Halliday's theme/rheme sentence structure, along with the prevalence of note form, sets up an intertextuality that works in the same manner as the concept of intersubjectivity, allowing the teachers to access the organizational culture of the NELP to assist in the keeping of brief, but informative logs.

ii. Taped and transcribed interviews

The taped interviews provided more than nine hours of transcribed interviews which contain many invaluable comments and insights not only on logs but also on the workings of the NELP.

The tape interview data was focused on what teachers said about:

a. the content and formatting of logs.
b. the ways of recording and communicating.
c. the ways of managing the decision-making process, especially for the partner teachers who do not meet in the week.
d. identifying teacher's opinions as to the value and role of the logs in the NELP, and
e. any awareness of teacher development, and teachers' opinions of the part logs play in this.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, with only some of the redundancy and repetitions of naturalistic speech removed. The interviews were backed with a teacher profile and a record of the particularities and salient features of the interview itself, including the conditions of the interview, teacher attitude, tone of voice, degree of cooperation and willingness to speak. The transcribed interview data was processed on the Concordance Generating Program Version, 1.76 Beta Dc. 1993 (Thomson) for a collocation study with the initial aim of searching for the commonly held aspects amongst the teachers as regards their views of the logs. However, this study was not pursued after the thesis focus moved from a study of declarative knowledge about the NELP (what was said in the interviews about what logs are) to that of procedural knowledge (to an emphasis on how

teachers actually use logs in the NELP) and to how interaction between the teachers, the logs and the NELP program works as a contingency of the NELP culture.

As the study progressed and moved to the importance of interactive decision-making in the NELP, the interviews were studied again for comments and illumination on the aspect of a shared world; all comments indicating the possibility of contingencies and the accessing of the shared world by prolepsis were highlighted and a file of 'important issues and quotes' was formed.

iii. Tape recordings and transcriptions

This was a more ad hoc collecting of data. The teachers were not keen to be taped in the staffroom, probably due less to a feeling of an invasion of privacy as to a feeling of interference in their freedom, especially during busy times. As a consequence, tapes were recorded as the opportunity arose. Later the all day tapings were mapped, but only half were transcribed. Initially I was not sure what I was looking for, so I taped and transcribed everything, but as the study moved towards interactive decision-making and eventually to the issue of interaction, to how the decision-making was achieved between partner teachers and to the importance of decision-making in the culture of the NELP, I extrapolated specific examples of decision-making and discussions that exemplified these aspects.

Each transcription was filed by the date, year, the initials of the teachers in the pseudonyms assigned to them for the purpose of the study and with a code to indicate the nature of the decision-making sequence. For example:

> J/L. LDM(+)'95 trns = Jean and Liz. Long decision-making sequence positive example, 1995 by transcription of tape recording
>
> Dec. 8th 1998 TDM R&M = a transitory decision-making sequence from a whole day recording transcript, highlighting Raul and Marie taped on Dec. 8th 1998.

The transcription conventions, based on those of van Lier (1996) appear in the glossary. There is perhaps a lack of detailed coding of the intonation and other salient features of the talk, nevertheless, the transcribed sequences still function to show the teachers' reliance of

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ellipsis and prolepsis of the shared culture in the making of speedy decisions and are fully exemplified in extensive descriptions and comments of each sequence.

The sheer volume of data amassed meant many of the transcriptions were not used in the study, even though they contain valuable examples of decision-making. Those selected for inclusion were chosen either as representative of a particular situation or for shortness of length; most decision-making sessions being too long in transcript to appear in full in this paper. The difficulty in selecting representative sections for the purpose of highlighting specific points is one of particular pertinence especially when the point requiring exemplification is the interaction itself that occurs throughout the length of a very long decision-making sequence and within the frame of the teachers' on-going work. This difficulty will be discussed in more detail in chapter seven in conjunction with the analysis of the decision-making sequences. Throughout this paper I have referred to excerpts as sequences, or sessions, although similar research by Little (2002) refers to excerpts as 'fragments' and this will be taken up for discussion in chapter seven.

The examples of interaction are dispersed throughout an entire sequence, some which last as much as 45 minutes. As a result, for the purpose of this study, I have focused most of the analysis of the decision-making on short, overt sequences leaving longer sequences with more complex dynamics for future studies. The reasons for this will be exemplified in greater detail in chapter seven.

In addition to the above tapings, a 35 minute purpose-driven discussion held on the logs and their function by the teachers with the view of changing the format of the log sheets was also taped and transcribed in full. It provided many interesting comments and insights into the teachers' views of logs and decision-making, but more specifically provided many useful and informative comments on the teachers' views on the possibility of teacher development. The results of this study appear largely in chapters six and eight.

iv. Diary and observation notes

The field notes and the diary are less objective. They were both taken by the same researcher — the author of this study. The field notes were taken whenever possible, sometimes on scraps of paper in passing and sometimes more formally, based entirely on the immediate situation and the availability of time and materials to record. They were later recorded, some in special diary books with insets for longer comments while notes for 1997-8 were typed directly into the computer. Of the thousands of words recorded, the most useful were the notes that directly accompanied the tape recordings, where they helped to weave a richer text than just observation or tapings alone. Interestingly however, it was found that the transitory decision-making sequences (see chapter seven) were often more readily observed than they were heard on the tapes, thus the observations provided some of the more valuable examples of interactive decision-making in the NELP. The decision-making recorded from observations was coded in the same manner as the tape transcripts.

For example: H/R/T. LDM(+)'96 ob.= Hillary, Raul and Tom, positive long
                 decision-making sequence, 1996, by observation.

The observations, the main focus of this ethnographic case study provided the material that enabled the thickening of description of all the NELP aspects and provided the dta for the writing of the vignette in chapter five.

v. Categorizing of the data

The observation and diary recordings enabled the vignette, the log study informed the understanding of the means by which the teachers communicate and record classwork, and the tape recordings provided the examples of verbal interaction. Analysis of the tape recordings consisted of the searching for categories, patterns and connections in the daily routines of the teachers, and to the history of the NELP, and for ways to describe, represent and interpret the way the teachers work in the NELP. While categorizing and patterning both of the log sheets, log content and the way in which the teachers used logs enabled the charts and networks of log-use and movement found in chapter six, it was the mappings of the whole day tapings that allowed for the emergence of the types of decision-making patterns the teachers engage in, the frequency of which they appear, their place and

function in the NELP and their specific characteristics, functions and value within the NELP organizational culture.

The idea of mappings emerged partly as a result of readings in the field of qualitative research methods and techniques (Miles and Huberman, 1993, Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, and Hammersley (ed), 1993), from the EFL writing techniques of brainstorming, and mind-patterning (Cranmer, 1985), and partly through the influence of the work of Fauconnier (1997) whose work in the mappings of thought and language I initially sought to utilize. The noisy highly interactive NELP however, had made it extremely difficult to attempt such similar mappings and whole day interaction and mapping then became an outlining, a mapping chronologically as it were, in what Strauss (1987: 29) calls an open coding. Color-coding of which teachers were interacting when, where, with whom and for how long began to provide initial categories and after several mappings I found I had been able to transcribe a certain type of interaction verbatum; a short, transitory decision-making type, to further outline the interaction in a longer, open and highly interactive decision-making style, and to merely note the occurrence of longer closed sessions. Then in a thickening of the analysis in a process Strauss (1987: 22) calls 'theoretical memos' I cross-checked this categorizing with the corresponding observation records of teachers' interaction and with the salient factors in the diaries. There I found corroboration and elaboration for the decision-making making categories I had identified in the tape mappings. These categories were further considered in conjunction with the NELP as a whole allowing for the emergence of the concept of an organizational culture for the NELP based on and characterized by its interactive decision-making functions. These connections further allowed for the forming of a theory of shared knowledge – an intersubjectivity – and finally to a means of elucidating the way in which the NELP's part-time teachers work and to how they may be creating chances for their own further development. The content of chapter seven elucidates the interactive decision-making of the NELP teachers.

vi. The teachers and the researcher

Over the years of this study there have been many observations, tapings and discussions held with many different teachers. The teachers who participated in the interviews were

offered the opportunity to review the transcriptions, but to date no teacher has asked to see them and none of these teachers are still with us. The information gained from the interviews was the basis for the Master's dissertation and some of the teachers have read the script: no teacher has approached me to have removed any part of any transcript. In 1999 when two new teachers arrived on staff, one expressing a wish not to be taped and the other expressing nervousness and hesitation at having the staffroom conversations taped, I stopped the taping and closed the study. Due to the extent of the interaction in the staffroom, it is not possible to tape the staffroom conversations unless all teachers agree; even just one teacher abstaining means no taping is possible. Fortunately, this timing coincided with a re-arrangement of the staffroom layout to accommodate more file space and a new computer and thus with physical environmental changes made for a natural end to this study.

The lack of reflexivity on the part of the teachers is perhaps a weakness of this study; however as will be seen from the transcribed sequences the focus remains on the process of decision-making in a somewhat impersonal way and not at all on the individual cognition of any teacher as regards their status or standing as teachers. Thus it is of less importance, perhaps, to have teachers "sign-off" on the analysis of decision-making sequences. Furthermore, as it has already been mentioned I wished to capture the natural occurrence of decision-making and not the reflected awareness of the teachers, in an effort to discover HOW the process of sharing classes works for the part-time teachers who all have limited time for extra-teacher activities in their working day. The more impersonal aspect in the data collection was also desired as the NELP staff is always in flux and teachers do leave at anytime between semesters and years making any reliance on particular teachers for the data a risky choice.

Since the NELP's formation in 1988 there have been 55 teachers on staff to date. During the years of this study there was a relatively steady group of 13 teachers with an average of 3.5 years of service, two teachers with 10 years, one with 8, several with three and the others with just one year of service. Interviews, logs examples, and observations exist for all of them, and tape recordings for most of them. Some of the tape recordings do, however,

feature other teachers or combinations of a teacher with a full research profile and a newer teacher with less available collected data. At this time of writing there is only one of the teachers of the 1995-8 period still on staff, myself. Given this rate of turn-over it was felt necessary to discover the aspects of the NELP that allow it to function as an organizational culture and then to seek explanations of how teachers operate in the culture, rather than to focus on the professional individual lives or personality traits of any specific teacher. Thus, while the study may lack reflexivity from specific teachers, discussions with present teachers indicate the findings resonate even to teachers who did not participate in the study, and continuing informal observations continue to verify the findings of this study.

The researcher of this study is also a full member of the NELP and her presence in the data is felt in many ways; sometimes just observing, sometimes as participant, observing or involved to some degree, and sometimes so involved that field note-taking ceased and notes were recorded retrospectively or not at all depending on the matter at hand. This eclectic approach to data collection does not necessarily disqualify it as invalid or brandish it as unreliable although initially it affected my performance as head when I attempted to exclude myself from any of the recordings. As I gained experience in the research I realized I was an intergral part of the NELP along with the other teachers and to refuse to be part of the interaction had large and most often negative repercussions. I thus relaxed into the NELP culture as part of it and I too feature in some of the tapings. Throughout the study I will make clear where this occurs and will comment on the effect if it in anyway affects the data. Teacher comments, student evaluations and teacher reports over the years contain 'references' to the researcher's honesty, reliability and trustworthiness, and in the worst case at least the data being recorded from this one perspective means that it is reliable and consistent in its possible biases.

It is in this position of insider that 'members competence' (Woods, D. 1996) comes into play. Each member of an organization occupies a time and space within it – a hundred places will provide a hundred perspectives, this is a physical, social and psychological reality. However, each of those perspectives is equally 'true' for the member concerned. When a researcher is so involved in observations he looses sight of his outsider status he may be

considered to have 'gone native' (Peshkin in Ball:42), but in my case I am already 'native', an insider with a long standing experience of the organization's functions, history and culture, thus I reject the claim of having 'gone native' and instead claim to have a full 'members' competence': an historical, factual and intuitive understanding of the NELP. This is not to imply there are never any staff discrepancies or disagreements and that I do not recognize others may have different view points. On the contrary I am well aware of the possibility of other interpretations of many of the NELP interactions, especially those regarding the macro-culture, and teaching perspectives.

The interactions as regards decision-making however, are not as subject to such wide interpretations since they illustrate more factual events aimed at more clearly identified outcomes. Nevertheless, clearly the data is indeed biased through the one viewpoint, but as a researcher with members' competence, I have been in a unique position to record and interpret data from a deep and longitudinal perspective.

3.4. Conclusion

Nothing in this study is hypothesized, quantitatively or comparatively observable; the study does not seek for generalizations or proofs. Rather, it provides qualitative descriptions and explanations of the NELP where one person's perspective can be of value even if only as a point of departure from someone else's. The researcher then has a story to tell, and despite her position in the research itself she does not stand to benefit in anyway by 'rating the data' to fit any preconceived idea, since the study has not set out to describe the good or successful aspects of the NELP, but rather to describe what the teachers do in it that makes it an organizational culture. The researcher's position is noted in each chapter as she thinks it may in anyway bias the data, or if it is felt necessary to explain how she as researcher knew the things she did. The results stand as descriptive and interpretive. The value of the researcher's story then is in whether or not it will 'ring true' in some measure for the readers or for others in like organizations or areas of study for which it could perhaps offer insights of benefit or interest.

Chapter Four

The Macro - Culture

Background and Setting
- the case study in context

> contexts drive the way we understand the meaning of events
>
> Miles & Huberman (1994: 162)

> what anything means to us depends on how we've connected it
> to all the other things we know ... a thing that has just one
> meaning has scarcely any meaning at all.
>
> Minsky (1986: 64)

4.1. Introduction

The NELP is a case study, identified in chapter two as having a macro and a micro culture. A case study is ;

> embedded in (the) sociopolitical, cultural, and educational context
> in which it is located, (thus) an appreciation and understanding of
> the findings is impossible without the indepth knowledge of context
>
> (Bailey & Nunan, 1996:361)

This chapter will look at the macro-context of the NELP; the junior college and institution in which it is embedded, and the educational systems and institutions of Japan. The history and culture of the Japanese and their norms, beliefs, systems, values and national characteristics provide not only the structure and form of the NELP, but also many of the topics of conversation in the NELP as the macro-culture directly influences the experiences, motivation, expectations, behavioral patterns and English language aspirations and abilities of the students, who are the primary stakeholders of the NELP, and whose needs and expectations impact curriculum concerns and inevitably affect teacher decision-making in a very real and direct way.

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4.1.1. Present perspective

Japan is an ancient society with its own long tradition of education and a very successful move into Western education (Reischauer, 1977, Duke, 1986, White, 1987, 1994, Vogel, 1979, Shield, 1995). Although it is now clearly facing a crisis in its educational institutions and its educational perspective (Woronoff, 1996, Cutts, 1997) as evidenced by the volume of articles and discussions on this topic appearing on a daily basis in the media, [1] many of these concerns have to do with issues of a national and sociological perspective and only indirectly impact the NELP.

Of more relevance to the NELP is the country's changing demographics. 18 year olds (college entrance age) have gone into decline making colleges more competitive for new entrants, and forcing others to close, or lower entrance standards, impacting on the NELP teachers by way of reduced classes available and a need to adapt materials and courses. [2] However, the situation in which Japan presently finds itself it is not of immediate relevance to the understanding of the context of the NELP between its formation in 1988 and the main study years of 1995 to 1999 since changes had yet to be felt. This present chapter then, will be confined to placing the NELP in the context of its specific junior college institution, and to discussing Japan's educational system and society's expectations of it as it functioned at the time of the study.

4.1..2. Directions

The chapter will proceed in three sections:
1) the relevant characteristics of the education system, highlighting the influences these have on the characteristics of the students, and thus on the curriculum and work choices open to the NELP teachers, indicating the topics of conversation, discussion and decision-making that feature in the NELP in addition to, or in connection with, EFL teaching decisions.
2) an analysis of the structure and systems of the junior college.
3) a description of the structure and systems of the NELP

4.2. Section One: Educational Characteristics in Japan

Historically, Japan has structured its society along class lines, all members having an assigned, but valued, role. In more recent history, all members of this traditional structure have worked together towards an identifiable national aim, the education system functioning mainly to train its population to maintain that national aim, and to select its members for their various assigned roles within society (Reischauer, 1977, Cutts, 1997). Despite current changes occurring in the Japanese educational system the norms, beliefs and assumptions for education are still firmly intact, thus still inform on the background culture of the NELP's main stakeholders – the students. The following discussion aims to give the reader a background into the motivation, learning styles and expectations of the students.

4.2.1. Cultural norms, beliefs and values in Japanese Education

In Japanese society concepts such as hard work and respect are considered to be desirable and to act as socially cohesive forces (White, 1987, Shields, 1995). Very particular to motivating and maintaining these traits are the concepts of:

gambaru: " give it all you've got", and then a bit more
gamman : whatever the odds, never give up, grit your teeth and bare it
wa: group harmony, inclusiveness; do not be a nail that sticks up

Shields (1995) also identifies *kumi* as another underlying characteristic installed in students and expected of them throughout their lives. *Kumi* means group, whereas *wa* refers to the concept of group cohesiveness. I have selected to use *wa* rather than *kumi*, because the concept is common to any group to which any given person may belong, and, more specifically, because it equates more exactly to the inclusiveness of the ultimate group – Japanese – which is an issue affecting the motivation of the students in language learning and thus effecting the curriculum, methodology and content of teacher discussions in the NELP.

4..3. Historical development and its effects on the NELP

Education in present day Japan is maintained by a government ministry taking central control of all education. It ensures that the brightest in a very prescribed system are propelled to the top and then back into government and positions of authority and power, and that the system is at least seen to be egalitarian and fair in its selection processes by implementing a strict national curriculum and standardized national examinations for school entrances (Cutts, 1997).

Since the aim of education is to have a well and similarly educated main base, with a small elite crust, schools focus on turning out an overall basic, but highly literate and numerate population, one does not expect there to be a high level of diversity among the main bulk of the student population in any college, who, also being a monolingual group, have a strongly formed, if unconscious or automatic, sense of national identity and a strong belief in the equality of the abilities of all students.

4.3.1. Effect on learning styles

Pre-Meiji reformation society (1868), was classified along very distinct class lines: the ruling class, followed by the *shi no ko sho-*, (Dore & Sako, 1998:44); the samurai, the farmer, the artisan and the merchant, in descending order of status, each engaged in domain specific education according to these vocations. The common factor for all groups remained language literacy and a place in the local clan's "wa". Education involved an interdependency among the classes, each class the "master" of specific information. Thus one can readily see the extension of this system into the present concept of "kumi" and "wa" in today's students and how the influence of this sense of place and interdependency conflicts with the needs of a language learner required to take charge of his own learning. An understanding of the difficulties inherent in this contrast is vital for the consideration of a curriculum and language teaching methodology based on the progressivist perspective

found in the NELP (see chapter five) as the students are likely to be less autonomous in their learning, desiring a more prescriptive and demonstrative approach.

Education in pre-Meiji times was offered according to the time constraints of each social class. Classes were usually held at home, or on the temple grounds, and lessons were taken by the local priest or a local well-known, respected elder (Shields, 1995). There was no system of professional teachers or special places for learning, but since the prevailing moral system of the time was Confucian involving a great respect of ancestors, family and elders, the "sensei" (teacher) who taught all subjects to a range of ages and often worked with his students individually, was very highly regarded.

In many cases children were apprenticed in the *uchi-deshi* (home student/mentor) system to an expert in their field where they were expected to revere their teacher, to work hard mastering their lessons over many years regardless of individual talent, and to be patient in expecting results (White, 1987). The timeframe for learning was long-term, and the goal was mastery of one's pursuit, allowing for a slow paced, holistic mentor system of learning. This contrasts markedly with the mass education, lockstep system presently in place in which students are obliged to move through the educational curriculum at a fast and highly controlled pace. The consequences of this apparent clash of learning perspectives finds expression in the EFL classes where the students can often be found unwilling to work at speed and expect somehow to learn simply by being present, and yet also expect that there should be exact points of knowledge they may commit to memory that will allow them to "know" and to "show" their proficiency in English.

4.3.2. The effects of the coming of western learning

The change of learning style which began on exposure to western learning sent a frenzy of catch-up measures into action. In 1871 the Ministry of Education (Mombusho) was formed with the express aim of implementing a highly centralized and uniform school system, and by 1907 education was made compulsory until the end of primary school (6th grade).

Translation of foreign texts became a major focus of the advanced level curriculum so the government set about to develop an education system that encouraged students to become adept at rote learning large amounts of information for immediate regurgitation. It was no longer a consideration to deal with the whole person in context of his station in life (Wordell, 1988).

The training of rote memorization for regurgitation of facts is still the main focus of education today, where school curriculums specifically emphasize preparation to pass school and national tests, mainly of the multiple choice, discrete item type, and maintain a focus on knowledge acquisition as an educational ideal. This characteristic influences the NELP and its teachers as the learning expectations of students, parents and college, and the prior learning experiences of the students heavily favor test based instruction and evaluation, a perspective rarely in favor with EFL teachers and thus requiring a careful presentation of curriculum and providing a recurring topic of discussion and decision-making for NELP teachers.

The pre-modern situation and background is also much responsible for the continuing attitudes many Japanese professors have of EFL teachers – EFL teachers being considered as practical instructors dealing in trivial content from simplistic "communication" textbooks, whereas the Japanese professor is seen to be a literary person dealing in academic and linguist knowledge transfer (Hansen, 1988). This same attitude can be seen to some degree in some of the students, who often resist EFL textbooks as being useless and "boring", (3) despite their lack of ability to demonstrate any competence in the content of the work. This attitude, rooted in the students' culture requires the NELP teachers to be mindful of the students' background as regards understanding towards EFL lessons, texts and teachers.

In the 1930s the government placed military teachers in schools. Although this is no longer so, the militaristic atmosphere of schools has survived into the modern era at the middle and secondary school levels in the form of uniforms, strict adherence to given rules and mores within the schools, often to the detriment of, or at least indifference to, individual characteristics of students, and it can still be seen in the rigid *sampei-kohai* (senior-junior)

system found particularly in school sports clubs. The strict uniformity of schools throughout the country has given rise to a strong lockstep pattern in education institutions today and a general dependency in the students to 1) being told or led in teacher-fronted classrooms, and 2) to developing a passive perspective towards learning where compliance in the classroom is more highly rewarded than curiosity. These issues are clearly important to EFL teachers who require active participation from students.

4.3.3. Post-war education

After World War II, Japan's educational system was modeled on the American system with an elementary, middle, high school (the basic K-12 education system), and two year junior colleges, or four year universities as tertiary educational choices with education compulsory until the end of middle school. Education entered yet another tighter degree of mass focus and standardized schooling, and by 1994 almost 100% of the population completed middle school, 95% high school and 47.9% some form of university education of which 9 tenths are graduated although few continue with post graduate degrees (less than 3%, Dore & Sako, 1998). A further 16.3% of the population go on to specialty schools called semmongakko for the learning of trades such as carpentry or hair dressing (Dore & Sako, 1998 1: 28). (see Fig. 8 p. 132).

4.4. The College Student of today

The tertiary college student is typically 18 to 22 years of age and since there is little in the way of formal continuing adult education (most exists in the form of cultural clubs), the student population is quite uniform age-wise from the beginning to the end of the education process; a point very influential for NELP teachers who find themselves with large monolingual highly homogenous classes of students. With few exceptions students proceed through the system lockstep to the end where the expectation on graduating is to immediately enter the workforce and to thus continue in a lockstep pattern along the

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The Post War Educational System

Labour force
Employed: 11.6%
Unemployed: 4.8%

Graduate schools
3.0%

6.3.4 AGE
SYSTEM

22

4   20

16.2%

9/10th graduation rate

Labour force
Employed: 15.0%
Unemployed: 0.9%

Special training schools
12.1%

Universities
43.4%

Junior Colleges
4.5%

Special training schools
4.2%

Labour force
Employed: 1.4%
Unemployed: 0.9%

18

Colleges of technology
0.7%

3

High schools general courses
71.6%

High schools vocational courses
24.9%

Special training schools
1.2%

15

3

Middle school (3 years)

12

Compulsory education

Primary school (6 years)

6

6

Progression route in the Japanese Education System 1994.

<u>adapted from</u> Dore&Sako (1998) p.28.

<u>original source</u> Monbu-Tokei, 1995. (Summary of statistics on education),

Monbusho (Ministry of Education), Tokyo.

Fig. 8

conveyor belt of life. This has led to what Hansen (1988) refers to as an 'order of ages', in which the Japanese have developed a strong sense of where one should be in life, based on age. (4) This facet of macro-culture impacts the NELP micro-culture providing cause for considerable discussion in the NELP staffroom and one much affecting the teachers and their decision-making as regards the standards for evaluating and passing of students.

4.4.1. Private education

Although theoretically everyone has a chance to go on to a public (state) run university, practically not all of the eligible can. Private universities have sprung up to cater to this need and since the Second World War the number of private universities has risen from 3 to 384 (Cutts, 1997:66). The existence of such a large number of relatively young tertiary colleges (college and university are used interchangeably in Japan) has led to a system of ranking universities, and to the ranking of students for likely entry into these universities. As the "better" universities are highly competitive, this ranking has set in motion a cruel and vicious examination selection system, reinforced by companies readily identifying students by the ranks of their universities; an important point for the NELP teachers since ranking has a very real affect on what level of student they will be teaching and thus motivation and expectations. The specific college to which the NELP belongs will be highlighted in section three.

4.4.2. Cram schools: juku

To help the ambitious, struggling, or merely earnest students, a huge and very profitable extracurricular schooling system known as *juku*, which prepares students expressly for school entrance examinations and provides students with tests and statistical projections for success called *hensachi* has formed and mushroomed into an added necessity in the education system as a whole. It is rare today to find a student who has not spent some time at a Juku. Since the aim of these schools is to see all students through the system to a college of any sort and for the students and parents to be rewarded for this effort by the off spring

being able to gain suitable and secure jobs on entering society, the students' and parents expectations for an assured graduation are strengthened and the internal motivation of the students to do well at college is weakened; basically once a student has entered college, that student will graduate.

4.4.3.. Conditions of schools:

Public schools are generally very cheaply constructed standard design buildings. This bareness may be a reflection of old Meiji attitudes reflecting a belief that education is something to be gained from hard work in a simple environment, and large classes from the belief in mass rote memorization. Still, is it a matter of some surprise that the Japanese, who so value their education, clearly do not allot much of the budget to it: according to Dore and Sako (1998:1) it receives just 17% of the budget for public expenditure which itself is just 30% of the GNP, an amount that came to 4.6% of the GNP in 1994.

I cannot reference how the students may feel about their learning environments outside of anecdotal stories and experiences. However, the hard working conditions of the Japanese primary and secondary school teachers, their tireless never-ending responsibility to their students, even out of school hours, may shed some light as to why college students place considerable reliance and expect considerable indulgence from their university professors: they have spent their entire educational up-bringing in conditions in which teachers have had great power, and yet have given unwavering almost relentless service to them and their families. Despite being depersonalized in the learning process in the classroom, the students are accustomed to teachers taking a personal interest in them and their social problems, no matter how trivial, outside the classroom and thus continue to expect to be indulged for non-school related matters at university (White, 1994, Wordell, 1993). This again has a marked effect on the curriculum choice and standards for the NELP, making its preferred autonomous learning strategies, which require responsibility from the students, particularly challenging and requiring considerable counseling skills on the parts of teachers: topics that again consume much of the teachers' staffroom conversations.

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Throughout their education, students are both experientially and overtly exposed to and learn the values and intricacies of the hierarchy and situational responses of their native social systems which result in communication styles highly dependent on fluctuating situational, linguistic, kinetic and politeness relationships. Thus, while students may be trained to believe everyone is the same and equal, they are still obliged to operate in a hierarchical system that greatly reduces their sense of empowerment. These national characteristics result in the oft talked and written about "passivity" and "non-responsiveness" of the Japanese student (Wordell, 1988, Hansen, 1988, Wadden, 1993), and present a particular challenge to the NELP in expectations of language classroom participation and behavior from students.

4.4.4. Employment expectations

Companies hire "freshmen" in a "hiring season", and all graduates begin work at the same time the following year in large and formal ceremonies, with nationally fixed and publicly transparent working conditions, again emphasizing the reality of the "order of ages" for the students.

Companies tend to hire according to college connections making the name of the university perhaps the biggest single attraction to any prospective student. Thus "good" universities lead to "good jobs" a system that has been kept in place largely by the selection demands of "Corporate Japan" (5) and its rewards of lifetime employment and security (Cutts, 1997). Depending on the university then, students may have weak external motivation, especially in English.

However, all job-seekers must take a standard examination in Japanese language, mathematics and (test-based) *English* — even to become an elevator operator — thus there is an element of instrumental motivation in many of the students to do well in English and a wish amongst the students for English that will help them pass such tests rather than for English that will help them communicate. Recently, due to the on-going economic down-

turn there is a trend for companies to bring their hiring seasons forward and for students in the graduating years to be frequently absent from classes attending orientations and job interviews; a matter of considerable difficulty for EFL teachers who take practical courses and require their students' presence for continuous in-course assessment and evaluation; again topics necessitating frequent discussions and decisions for the NELP teachers.

4.4.5. Conclusion to section one

Macro-culture influences mean most students going on to college will have little if any integrative or external motivation, little intrinsic motivation and only a vague instrumental motivation to learn English. Furthermore, influences such as the compulsory school emphasis on rote learning and student expectations as to appropriate classroom behavior and relationships between student and teacher influence student opinions and interests in participating in typical EFL classrooms activities. EFL teachers will find themselves locked into an interdependency with the macro-culture in the structures of their colleges, the demands of the Ministry and the expectations of their students and will find ample discussion in the effects of these aspects on the characteristics of Japanese students, the subjects taught at college, the manner in which they are taught and the expected end results. Specifically, the EFL teacher is faced with constant decisions on what can reasonably be attempted as regards classwork, student homework, evaluation, and projected outcomes of teaching courses and these, as staffroom tapings and observations show, do indeed form the larger issues of discussion in the NELP staffroom.

4.5. Section Two: Junior Colleges

Junior colleges, or short universities (Tanki Daigaku), are two year tertiary institutions often affiliated to a university of the same name. According to statistics quoted in the national Yomiuri Newspaper (Jun. 28. 2002), there are 462 private junior colleges in Japan. They typically offer the same general courses as universities, but only award an associate degree.

They cater mainly to a female clientele and are often thought of as "finishing schools" for well-bred young ladies, although they began as a means to allow more students into tertiary education without students having to spend a full four years out of the workforce and were thus also originally attended by less "elite track" young men aiming for lower level white collar jobs; a trend again becoming prevalent with the current economic downturn continuing and the belief that all students essentially need a college education of some sort.

Traditionally graduates of junior colleges corner jobs such as translators, tour guides, junior bank clerks, general office duties, and airline stewardess although in recent years there is much competition from university graduates. Over the years, student characteristics have remained fairly constant, most leaving for a few years of employment after graduation before leaving to get married. Recently however, there has been a growing number of students who use the college transfer system to enter their affiliated university after graduation by way of the recommendation examination system where junior college students can proceed by examination at the end of their second year directly to the junior (3rd) year of university.

Since the subjects taught at junior colleges are much the same as the general subjects offered in the first two years of university without the leisurely four year framework, students' schedules are usually very crowded making the general atmosphere of the college rather like that of a busy liberal high school. Further to the image of a high school or a *senmongakko* (special vocational school) are the generally smaller EFL classes (30 - 38 compared to classes of 48 - 70 in the universities) and the larger number of very practical classes on offer.

Although an increasingly large number of students are now coming to junior colleges as second choices, having failed entry to university, most still choose a junior college for the long established reason of being able to enter the workforce two years earlier than their university counterparts. However, competition for jobs is now very intense and many junior college students can be found entering specialty schools after graduation to increase

their "qualifications" and job chances, or looking for educational opportunities overseas. National demographic trends are dismal, but the junior college of this study still corners a workable portion of the yearly tertiary new entrance population to survive, and although its graduate student employment rate is now reduced from near 98% to around 56% (insider privilege) it is still a strong and well respected institution.

4.6. History and cultural environment of the NELP's parent body

The junior college to which to the NELP belongs is part of a *gakuen*, a privately owned Christian school encompassing several school levels. This gakuen, located in the western suburbs of Tokyo, was founded in 1946 and has a kindergarten, middle school, high school, a junior college, university and graduate school.

The junior college, one of the first sections to open, is one of the oldest junior colleges in Japan (6). The gakuen at present has a high ranking middle and high school and a middle ranking junior college and university. The gakuen is well-known for its lack of walls between the various school sections as well as for its high level of English language teaching in all of them.

As a product of the post war educational system it is relatively new with the buildings being well preserved on a constantly changing but clean, tidy campus. The junior college and high school remain a base, both these institutions being more specifically Christian than the other schools and departments and thus following the original mission statement of the founder to provide excellent education ever mindful of a Christian duty to society. The school motto is 'work towards your dreams', its insignia is a cross encircled by a crown of thorns, and the junior college in particular aims to provide a 'home-like school environment with an international, global reach' (school promotional brochure, 1998).

The school is private, and fees are competitive with other private colleges. In addition to its many and varied programs, the gakuen has a large and active international program

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offering credited homestays of varying lengths to many locations around the world and a number of volunteer programs around South East Asia. A small but growing number of students come from South East Asia, especially in the graduate school, and a fluctuating number of students come from USA every year to the School of International Studies Reconnaissance Program on credited undergraduate studies in English medium or bilingual courses. The high school and middle schools have exchange students through Rotary and other organizations, thus it is a common sight to see not only foreign teachers on campus, but also foreign students, a point that makes the position of the foreign teacher at this gakuen less of an anomaly and more of an accepted aspect of the whole school.

4.6.1. Organization

The gakuen started as a family business. It has a hierarchy of decision-making departments with various divisions dealing with the lower running of the schools (Fig. 9 p. 140) although each school retains a measure of autonomy over its own budget, daily and yearly operations, and over its projections for future maintenance and development. All schools are headed by an elected president, endorsed by the common consent of senior administration and the Board of Trustees. Each school maintains its own administration office, with senior, junior, full-time and part-time positions. The gakuen, with a total student population of less than 10,000 over all its schools, is relatively small. It has a total staff of 826 (including part-time teachers and administration staff) of which 56 are non-Japanese (mostly part-time).

Many native speaker language teachers can be found in all the school divisions from the kindergarten to the graduate school. The only foreign staff members hired expressly for administrative positions are the senior position in the Center for International Studies and the Headmaster of the High School. Nearly all positions for foreigners are primarily teaching positions, and any administrative functions are considered part of their teaching requirements. However, the teachers running programs of native part-time teachers are all full-time staff with professorial positions who tend to accept their unpaid work in this area as a task that "goes with the territory". (7)

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Obirin Educational Institution
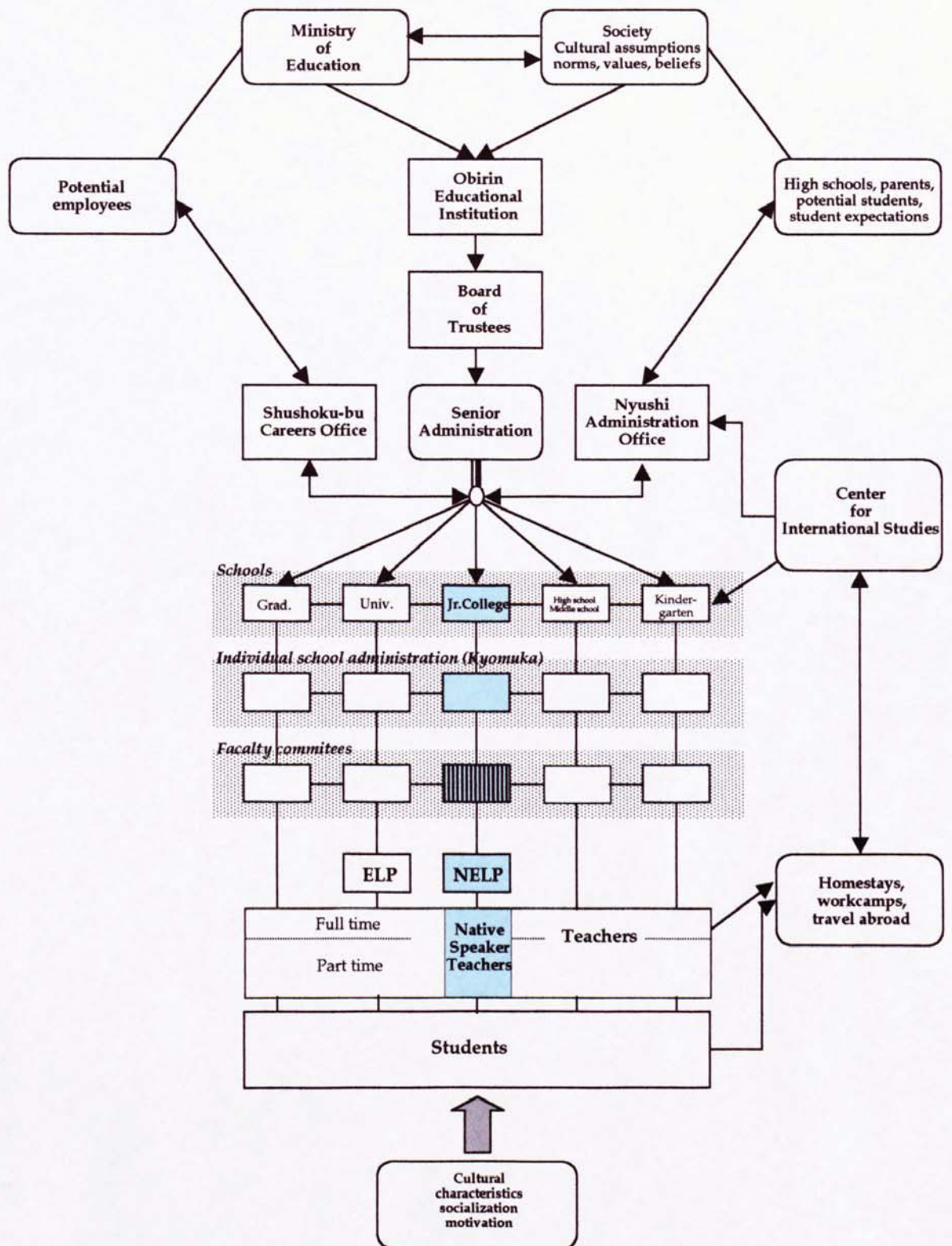
Fig. 9   Administrative and Governing Bodies
Position of the NELP

Foreign teaching staff in all schools have, over the years, shown themselves to be willing participants in this arrangement and have remained largely teachers to the core, focusing the students as the primary and immediate stakeholders to whom they hold the greatest sense of responsibility. I believe it is this focus on teaching, coupled with the sheer motivation and energy of the native English teachers to connect and be influential in the students' learning, that has enabled these teachers to be so successful in integrating into the overall school, and in soliciting and maintaining the school's support for their program innovations.

Native language speaker teachers are well paid and well treated. Most however are part-time and will always remain so, thus creating a particular working environment. However, the gakuen is able to command considerable loyalty from its native language teachers, and in part this is because it allows and encourages its full-time foreign teaching staff, representing the part-timers, to be vocal in school development projects. This institution is outstanding among colleges in Japan in its willingness to more fully integrate its foreign staff into its entire organizational culture, especially at the staffing and curriculum levels.

4.6.2. College English language classes

Generally, the native English language classes in Japanese universities are additional ones aimed mainly at introducing the student to the native accent and to cultural experiences through basic English study (Wordell 1993). Very few classes are content based, most falling into the description of ESL, the native English teacher being hired to take a certain number of "Koma" (classes) for which he or she is paid a fixed monthly salary usually over a 13 month year. Most Japanese colleges are not usually much interested in what their part-time native English teachers do and allow them to select their own text, offer no coordination in any way, and do not monitor their work. This gakuen, however, has taken all the practical English classes and coordinated them into programs in which teachers team teach some classes and all teachers have a stake in the running and success of the

program thus allowing the teachers to develop a vested interest in the success of the programs.

4.6.3. The Junior College English Department: the ecology

The junior college is housed in sections of three multistoried buildings and is staffed by its own administration and body of professors and teaching staff under a president and department heads. It was at the time of the study, fully autonomous and handled its own finances, with senior administration advice.

Students are selected by first satisfying the national levels and then passing through either the recommendation system or the open entrance examination system. Students selected by the recommendation system constitute only 30% of the intake although this percentage has reversed in the years following the study cited here. The students are generally well behaved serious young women from stable families with stable incomes, although again there has been a change in this characteristic since the close of this study in 1998-9 under the conditions mentioned in section one. The students are much influenced by their high school experiences, and not necessarily negatively as most come from "good" high schools. Many wish to have an overseas study experience, to perhaps transfer to a university, or at least to gain a lower level clerical job on graduation, and all wish to "make friends" and have a "good college experience". At the time of this study the average TOEFL score of the students was 430. All students in the English department find themselves in the Native English Language Program, the NELP.

4.7. Section three: The NELP – the Native English Language Program

4.7.1. Organization and structure

The NELP is a program coordinating the native speaker teacher classes and is run by the teachers themselves under the coordination of one full-time teacher. It is important to note that it is a program not a department although it does have its own budget, raised through

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the full-time teacher's budget privileges. The program is generally well supported by the junior college president and department heads and tacitly by the Japanese teachers who in reality have little to do with the practical running of it. Although cooperation with the general affairs administrative office has been hard won, it too fully recognizes the existence and function of the NELP, particularly the extracurricular activities the NELP holds such as speech contests, Christmas carol singing, song performances, video-viewings, and a self-access library

The NELP staffroom is on the 4th floor of the main block, but it also operates a "mini-library" featuring mainly class readers and self-access activities, and maintains a small store room on the 3rd floor. Students are placed in the NELP class levels by a written test, oral interviews and by a classroom activities session organized by the NELP teachers and structured into the students' orientation activities at the beginning of the academic year. The majority of the classes are held in rooms with standard school equipment. Over the years the NELP has acquired various other pieces of portable equipment, including musical instruments and other audio functions, such as DVD and digital cameras. As the NELP is a program and not a department, it does not have an organizational structure separate from the English department, but it has over time developed its own unique organizational culture, modifying some of the mainstream structures; the characteristics and consequences of which are to be the subject of the rest of this dissertation.

4.7.2. Influence of the macro-culture

The influence of the macro-culture on the NELP and its teachers can most overtly be seen in three areas:

1) the teachers sense of identity; they come to an established mainstream educational institution with a specific ecology and milieu. They have a well established, clear and valued place in the hierarchy of the institution which is a place with a history, with national standing and respect, and recognition sanctioned by the Ministry of Education. Teachers

on full-time status have the same privileges and perks as the Japanese university staff thus they have the same opportunities and support for research, presentation, publication and for professional career moves in their fields. It is less clear that part-timers will identify to the same degree but belonging to a recognized program within this institution and being assured of employment and bonuses are benefits that help them to form a sense of loyalty and commitment to the institution. The extent of this identification for part-timers and how it is achieved will become a focus of the following chapter.

2) the physical and structural systems of the institution: and thus what is realistically possible within these limits greatly affects the NELP teachers. That is, the teachers are directly affected in their teaching by the systems and structures of the institution, such as by the subjects, type and number of the classes, teaching hours offered, and by the physical conditions of the buildings and the extent and standard of the equipment with which they have to work.

3) the characteristics of the students coming to the institution: which have a direct effect on the NELP as student expectations, motivation and capabilities directly influence the choice of curriculum and teaching practice that can be implemented.

4.8. Conclusion

A brief look at the structure of the NELP, shows it to be an organization much influenced by its environment. In fact its very existence is reliant on the cultural environment of the junior college and the parent institute which has indulged its formation and supported its continuation. In the following chapter the characteristics of the organizational culture of the NELP will be looked at in detail, with emphasis placed on the formation of the contingencies of the NELP culture which give it its distinctive culture; namely the curriculum, the logs and the interactive decision-making.

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4.9. Notes:

1. English language, and education problems feature daily in the news. All four English language papers in Japan also carry weekly spreads on education, carrying English language teaching hints, articles and reports of teachers' experiences and advice.

2. I have personal experience and insider knowledge of the changes mentioned here, they having been the topics of considerable discussion in the Japanese faculty meetings to which I attend. For example: the home economics department closed in 2000, and English department numbers decreased from an annual intake of 350 a year to 250, obviously affecting the number of classes, especially elective classes, available to the EFL part-time teachers, although these changes do not pertain to the period of this study.

3. This has been a frequent comment on the NELP student evaluation forms over more than 10 years for every textbook ever used; source is from analysis of NELP in-house materials.

4. This age strata can be seen most poignantly in the employment office where jobs are advertised under age groupings and persons outside the age range are not permitted to apply, including teaching jobs.

5. A term that came into common usage from the 1970s when Japan's rise to economic supremacy was much written about.

6. After years of politicking, the junior college became a department of the university in April 2002 -- the effects of this move have yet to be seen. Although curriculum autonomy is in tact, some effects are already noticeable in the loss of financial autonomy.

7. The Ministry of Education prohibits payment to professors for administrative work although much of the administration, and all external examination preparation, is in fact done by the professors in their many committees.

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The Micro-Culture of the NELP

the organizational culture and the
importance of curriculum

> a language curriculum is a function of the inter-relationships that hold
> between subject-specific concerns and other broader factors embracing
> socio-political and philosophical matters, educational value systems,
> theory and practice in curriculum design, teacher experiential wisdom
> and learner motivation.   Clark J. L. (1987 : xii)

5.1. Introduction

As seen in chapter four, the NELP clearly fits into a wider macro-educational institution

and educational perspective that acts to provide its teachers with an immediate, identifiable

focus for professional identity, namely, the position of Native Speaker English Instructor of

English in the Junior College, an official university position. However, it is at the micro

level, at the level of curriculum and staffroom interaction within the NELP, that the

teachers give their greatest commitment to the program and it is at this level its own

characteristic culture and easily recognizable staffroom atmosphere is most apparent. This

chapter will look at the micro-culture of the NELP indicating the importance of the

curriculum as a base to its staffroom culture which provides a framework of operations for

the shared knowledge and interaction in the organizational culture of the NELP.

This chapter will proceed historically rather than in a strategic way, stressing that the

program evolved over time in a somewhat ad hoc, longitudinal way based on a vaguely

defined original need to coordinate the teachers in an effort to bring greater stability in the

employment of the teachers and consistency and standards in the classes being offered the

students. The chapter will briefly look at the underlying motivations for the formation of

the NELP leading to the beginnings of a coordination of the teachers and curriculum,

which leads to the identification of two executive functions—namely, the logs and the

decision-making practices which formed to implement the curriculum and coordination. How the interactive functions of logs and decision-making work will be looked at in more detail in chapters six and seven, while this chapter will focus on the coordinating power of the curriculum and the importance and effect of the curriculum on the major contingency of the culture: shared knowledge.

5.2. The influence of the historical background

The NELP curriculum has always worked both as an anchor for the teachers' individual teaching practices and as a base for standards within the program. However, it has also worked to provide a means whereby the teachers can act as repository keepers and innovators of the NELP itself, and thus contribute to the continual forming and maintaining of the NELP as an organizational culture. The following descriptions are based on insider knowledge and personal involvement in the formation of the NELP, from NELP literature, curriculum specifications and course outlines, from observations and past institutional reports and from the voices of the teachers in the taped interviews and in conversations with the researcher. This chapter stresses the underlying practicality of the concerns that initially motivated the formation of the program and still drive its everyday functions and purposes. It will conclude with a detailed vignette of a day in the life of the NELP to illustrate the workings of the NELP in more depth and to illustrate the atmosphere, structure and directions of the staffroom interactions.

5.3. The influence of the initiator

The formation of the NELP began as an idea to bring a meaningful program of English language learning to college students in classes taught by part-time teachers, whose work was initially uncoordinated, who rarely met and who worked mostly in isolation on their own closed agendas; I being one of those original teachers. The idea of coordination was, initially, much influenced by my own personal beliefs, knowledge, assumptions and expectations of how people should work together, supported by a small group of teachers I

had contact with. The concrete establishment of the idea into a program followed more slowly in conjunction with teacher and college wishes, but since no procedural plans for change initially existed it is important to note my part in its formation in order to express honestly and openly the influences and significance of my involvement both as an initiator and a member. In this way, a degree of reflexivity, a weighing of the impact and effect of the dual role as participant and researcher in this study can be achieved and thus allow the readers to interpret for themselves the status, usefulness or limitations of my interpretations.

> Only by being aware of his own "mind-set" and "bracketing" his own
> values can the researcher begin to search out and understand the world
> of others.   (Hutchinson, 1988:130)

Goetz (1988: 292) also notes that it is 'perverse for a tradition of subjective research to cloak itself in objectivity', further saying ...

> my preference always is to use "I" in the writing of qualitative
> research; that is the 'researcher-as-instrument' position. To write
> the researcher out of the report is to deny the dependency of the data
> on the researcher's presence

Although it is important to note my presence in reporting throughout the study, it is particularly so in this chapter as the NELP is an organization I was instrumental in setting in motion. Thus, I will often refer to myself in the first person, allowing the readers to see and evaluate for themselves the influences I have had and the degree of honesty, or if you will, the degree of bias, with which I have reported them. I also appear in the vignette and later in the decision-making sequences as the "Head" and the teacher named "Marie", although I appear only once in the log discussions in chapter six as MW.

5.4   Formation of the NELP

The NELP evolved in bursts over the formative years of 1988 to 1992 from a process of attempting to give a sense of organization and mission to the teachers in the belief that this would result in improving the students' access to ways of developing their English abilities,

whilst also benefiting teachers. Prior to this time, the junior college operated its native English language classes much as is still done in other universities throughout Japan, that is, as individual, isolated classes taught by part-time teachers whose only required qualification is a minimum of a bachelor degree in any subject from any, but preferably a well-known, "native" university.

The NELP began its road to becoming an identifiable organizational culture when I was hired on tenure track and given the added task of "looking after the native teachers". To me this meant at least meeting the teachers, and some form of coordination. I proceeded into the task of establishing a meaningful English program with an unquestioned expectation of support for new innovations, which was in large part accommodated. The position of "head" did not emerge, however, until a few years into the program until which time I was known simply as the "full-timer", which is a direct translation of the term used by the Japanese even for and of themselves when referring to contracted and tenured staff.

Since the subjects I was hired to teach were essentially those of the part-time foreign teachers I aligned myself with them, and I still do to this day where I mainly work in the NELP on many of the same courses, often sharing classes with other teachers and being referred to by my first name. My executive "power" is mainly as liaison to ensure the college's requirements of the native teachers are understood and kept, in seeing to the needs of the foreign teachers, especially as regards the protection of their classes, and in taking responsibility for administrative functions. I work as one of the course coordinators and as overall NELP coordinator, and I run the extra-curricular activities that combine the macro and micro cultures. I am largely responsible for hiring and for the teachers' within the college, but I do not fire alone.

At that time back in 1987, I believed the lack of coordination and empowerment of the teachers was responsible for their uneven performance and commitment and set-out to first bring the teachers together. As I began my full-time career I found I had inherited a room and a few teachers, but no program, no curriculum, and no coordination of work loads or assessment requirements. The college had, however, "more or less" accepted my

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initial essential consideration for change as the need for a suitable and satisfied workforce to be achieved by implementing:

1. a structural and systematic organic base
2. a suitable and workable curriculum base

I began by restructuring in the areas of:

a. <u>ecology</u>: <u>place, staffroom and equipment</u>

The "waiting room" for the foreign teachers was modified by removing the lounge furniture and replacing it with attractive but functional furniture and equipment that better suited a staffroom; desks, bookshelves, copy-machine, access to teaching materials, and added fixtures such as calendars, schedules and noticeboards which all made for a "professional" environment conducive to communication and to the discussion needed to implement and maintain a shared teaching situation.

b. <u>milieu</u>: <u>staffing and staffing conditions</u>

The classes, scattered over the week, had prevented both the teachers from seeing much of each other, and the students from seeing the foreign teachers as integral to the college, so I arranged for structural changes in class times to allow teachers to come in longer and more visible teaching blocks. This better suited their part-time teacher status as it allowed for a concentrated time at this college and for a better coordination of any other work stations they were obliged to maintain in order to satisfy the minimum visa remuneration and tax requirements of the Japanese government. However, since the oral classes met twice a week and most teachers could not at that time come on both days the new time tabling obliged most teachers to share a class. This resulted in the forming of teaching partnerships to maximize the amount and variety of teaching the students received, to instituting a log book system to help with coordination, and eventually providing teachers with the opportunities to meet with each other and to engage in the interactive decision-making that

is now so characteristic of the NELP. I also recommended the streamlining of salaries and bonus', which may have influenced the change that occurred the following year; changes which helped lessen the teachers uncertainty about their jobs and as a consequence freed them to talk about teaching rather than the concerns of employment, pay and visas, topics which had previously dominated their conversations in the few times that any of them had been able to meet.

c. <u>curriculum</u>: a coordination of aims and purpose for the classes.

Having come through the typical route of many long-term teachers in Japan (outlined in chapter one), I sought in this chance to establish a program under the influence of such current ideas as learner-centered curriculums (Nunan 1988), curriculum re-newal (Clark, 1987), and with influences from the project methodology of Prabhu (1987) and the EFL/ESL learning perspectives. Aiming to foster inquiry, activity, discussion and reflection in learning as a base perspective for students, I hoped to encourage a focused, cooperative autonomy (this would later be expressed as a collegial focus and empowerment) for the teachers and to encourage it in the students in the form of "learning how to learn" strategies.

Nevertheless, I was reluctant to force anything on the teachers, so initially I merely sought from them an informal but understood and agreed upon teaching focus suitable as a base for all teachers and an overall curriculum perspective including a working measure of coordination and agreement on a teaching perspective. This eventually resulted in a syllabus, timetable schedules, and both a standardization of evaluation and a place to record all of this; all measures which encouraged a degree of transparency and accountability. These initial, rather informal changes rapidly became the focus of on-going ever evolving staffroom conversations and eventually a major topic of staff consideration. Thus the staffroom became a workplace of "talk-in-action" where teachers were making daily decisions interactively as a necessity of the program.

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d. organization: administration and feedback

I set-up a system of class logs for recording the activities and progress of each class, as well as program systems to take over tasks such as textbook ordering, copy requests and many of the more menial administrative tasks the college required of the teachers. Information sheets, including translations of the college's systems were established as staffroom literature, and basic guidelines were written to help new teachers understand the way the classes were set-up, the coding of the system and the college requirements of them and the students. These measures helped provide and encourage a further degree of transparency and accountability to, for and from teachers towards the program, their teaching and the students, and to more firmly connect them to the now forming NELP culture.

With these changes the NELP (Native English Language Program) began to emerge, its existance being recognized around 1992 and now appearing in the school literature and faculty meetings as a valid sub-section of the college. Fig. 10 p. 153 gives the structural outline of the NELP, and appendix B p. 290 gives a sample of a typical semester NELP schedule. The 'native' in the title has remained an important aspect as it highlights the native (English) teachers, and thus 1) distinguishes itself from the university's ELP (English Language Program) and 2) helps to protect the teachers' jobs so that classes will not revert back to Japanese held subjects.

5.5.   The power of the curriculum

5.5.1. Coordination

A move to coordinate curriculum, and thus what teachers were doing in their classrooms, was the first point of teacher interaction and organizational setting to take place in the establishment of the NELP. Although I facilitated teachers on this issue and collated the results, it was the teachers who did most of the decision-making themselves. The value of coordination was introduced as:

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The Structure of the NELP

Fig. 10

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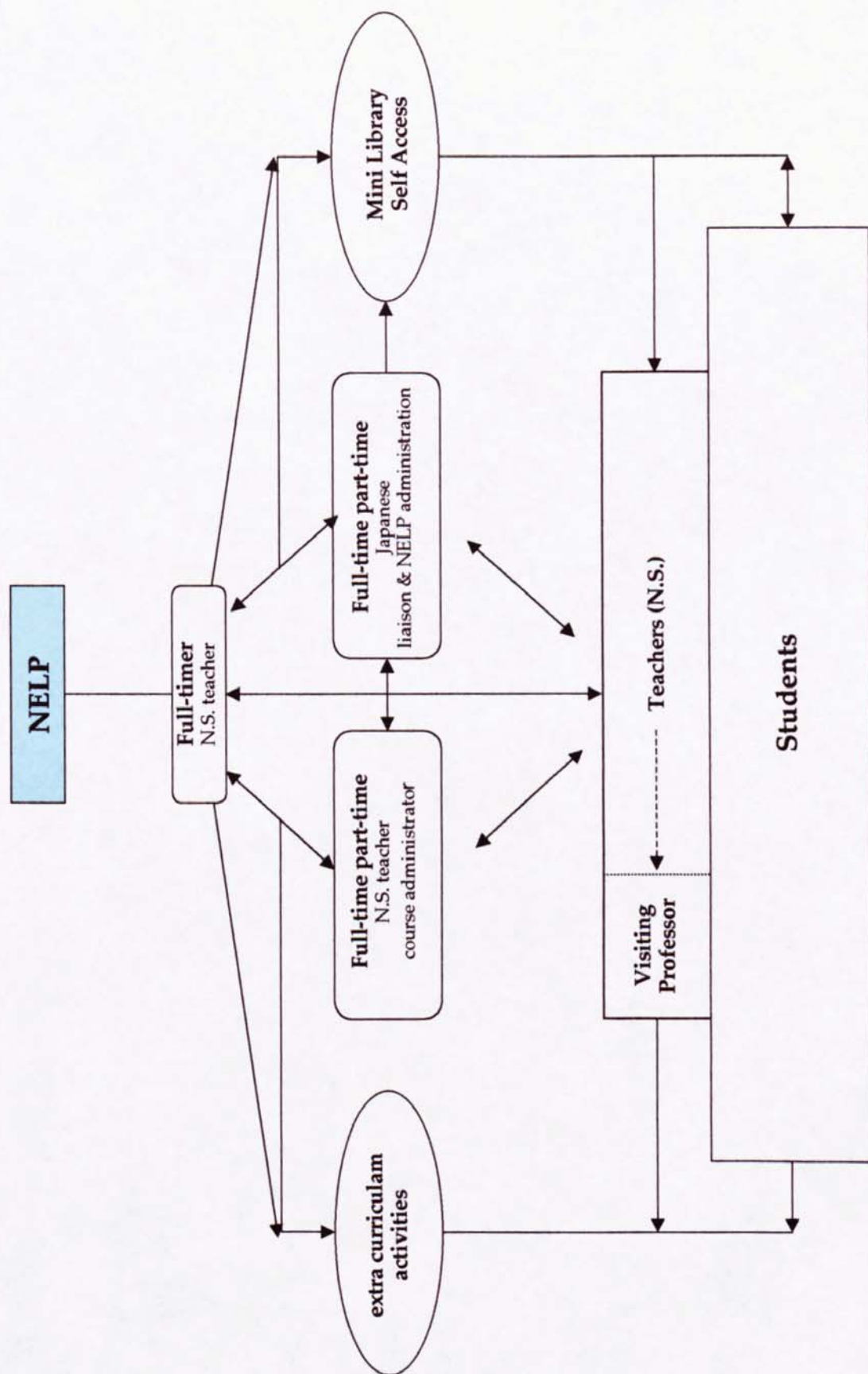
1. a means to maximize class time for the students
2. a way to ensure there was no overlap in work being offered the students
3. a reason for teachers to meet, and to discuss their work, thus making a more standardized English course, but one in which they could contribute to and control.
4. a way to improve their working conditions as regards the number and type of classes they could take.

The Japanese staff supported these moves and the administration, somewhat less willingly, provided equipment and scheduling for us. It is imperative here to note that these moves were won on the good graces and support of the president of the college, the head of the department, and one other supportive professor – all of whom had some knowledge of EFL and fully supported my intentions as good in attempting to make the native speaker English classes more meaningful for the students by improving the conditions and responsibilities of the teachers. I cannot evidence why the staff of the college or the teachers of the time agreed to these changes and supported my efforts (needless to say, I did not get everything I asked for, and not all teachers were comfortable with all the changes). I can only offer the formation of the program from where there was none before as evidence of such support, for it would not have formed without the support of the college and the teachers.

Also, I do not want to suggest this program formed without any political struggle; structural changes for one (especially timetabling changes) did not come *that* easily, and some misgivings were voiced among older professors to my taking such a position of responsibility as a mother with young children –such was the situation in 1988. However, it is not the focus of this particular study to investigate the sociopolitical arena and its consequences; that is another tale. It is important here to note the program did get up and running in a relatively congenial atmosphere.

The support of the part-time teachers themselves for both the idea and implementation of coordination was also vital. Again, I cannot here offer reasons as to why the teachers in

1988 decided to cooperate, and I am not now able to ask them. I would like to think it was because they could see the benefits to themselves and the students, that both they and the students came first in the considerations, that I had no wish to take a superior or distant position as regards them, and that most importantly, no attempt was made to take away or modify their classroom autonomy, thus corroborating the claims of Little and Hargreaves (1994) (see chapter two) that collegial systems form from non-threatening forms of empowerment, joint work that involves personal care and respect for the individual, and requirements that do not impinge on the teacher's classroom.

5.5.2. Student motivation

Any program wishing to be successful in Japan needs to view the issue of motivation and student perspectives to learning very carefully and to anticipate and incorporate planning to deal with these issues. I had noticed that the students' native learning strategies, (see chapter four) stressing holistic, field-dependent learning, although largely discarded in favor of field-independent abstract learning after primary school, were not wholly incompatible with project methodology and the 'communicative' approaches of the day, if only the students could be weaned from their dependency on the teacher and a belief that attendance alone is sufficient to provide progress. Thus I sought to establish a learner-centered curriculum perspective in the NELP and found the new in-coming teachers for the most part to be supportive of this approach.

5.5.3. Syllabus and methods

After an informal needs analysis covering the possibilities inherent in the new structure of English classes for both teachers and students, a coordinated curriculum was implemented and a text selected. The program then ran in two identifiable stages:

1) 1988 until classes were leveled in 1993.

2) 1993 until the present (with college down-sizing changes occurring in 2000, although not much affecting the NELP, except in the total number of classes being offered).

During stage one, the two-class shared course was divided into a skills and a performance day, much in line with the current PPP (presentation, practice, performance) methodology popular at the time, and teachers chose which day they preferred to teach. All teachers then were given a common text containing a large variety of material from which they could select their in-class focus. This class division became a defining factor in the type of interaction that occurred in the staffroom, as exemplified by the log records kept, and will be considered in detail in chapter six under the "pre-1993 style", where, briefly, teachers interacted more with the teachers of the day on parallel work, than with their partners with whom they were sharing a class because they did not meet. Interaction with their partner-teacher then, was mainly through the logs and was transactional in character, where the conversation with the teachers they did meet was more transformational being concerned with the wider issues of teaching in general.

The second stage began in 1993 and continues to this day. The students were leveled into courses each on a different text and syllabus. The teachers came more frequently, most coming both days of the main oral program, and teachers were then able to see their partners face-to-face. This stage is discussed in more detail in chapter six, under the "post 1993 style" of communication and interaction, where, briefly, both transactional and transformational interaction occurred between the pair partners, with short or secluded decision-making sequences appearing for transaction, and longer, open decision-making sessions across all pair groups appearing as typical general staffroom interaction.

From the beginning, attempts were also made to make the overall curriculum meaningful for the students by coordinating not only required subjects, but all the elective subjects offered in the NELP as well. Thus, for example, when the advanced communication class

was working on debate, the speech class was working on persuasive speeches and the writing class on argumentative essays, thus coordination was structurally built into the teaching program. Teachers have always been remarkably willing to cooperate with this level of coordination and remain to this day cooperative in implementing, amending and expanding the curriculum of all courses, often even to some extent the courses they may not be teaching in any given year.

5.5.3. Curriculum development

It is important to note that the curriculum was not tailored to any exact methodology in existence at the time i.e. functional, notional, lexical, or frames. Rather it was built around a teaching perspective (the learner-centred approach) informally agreed on, paying due respect to the teachers' capabilities to implement the theory and perspective of this approach and giving them ample room and freedom within their classrooms to teach in whichever way best suited themselves and the dynamics of any given class they took. Thus the curriculum concerns of the NELP, its organization, its systems have evolved historically in tune with present student and teacher needs and not strategically by plan or bureaucratic design. This gives the NELP a very immediate and 'hands on" character which is to the advantage of teachers who are operating in a temporary mediated shared world, as it has ensured the formation of an organizational culture based on their own beliefs and norms and not one contrived and based on the concerns of an administration. This in turn has led to a wider sense of ownership over all the classes; thus while teachers are much concerned to do well by their students they know they "share" these students and thus tend to be as protective of the overall program as of any of their particular classes in it.

It is tempting here to explain the content of the curriculum and outline its various changes and focuses over the years of the NELP. However, this is not an essential or central issue here. Rather it is important to stress that having helped initially coordinate teachers into a group sharing their teaching, the curriculum thus established then continued to both coordinate and mediate the very shared world it had helped to create. As such, the

curriculum is a major affordance, both a cultural tool and a repository of NELP culture, and offers the teachers a sense of ownership over their work and a connection to the NELP organizational culture which they continually create and re-create themselves. It is from this sharing that the teachers derive their commitment. The NELP has under-gone various syllabus modifications over its 14 years of shared teacher classes. However, it has changed little in its base curriculum ideals instead adapting the degree of implementation much in line with the overall beliefs, norms and knowledge of each present group of teachers.

In 2000, when the college began its down-sizing and changes to the structure of the program made it possible for the teachers to take full-classes (meaning they would no longer need to share classes), they still elected to keep the shared class structure, electing therefore to continue with the pair (team)-teaching arrangement. With their decision to keep shared classes, it is now possible to consider shared teaching to be an integral and defining aspect of the NELP. Whether or not they are aware of it, it is remarkable that part-time teachers would choose to work on a program that by its shared nature requires them to engage in interaction with fellow teachers. Thus, I believe the curriculum structured to require equally based shared teaching creates collegiality, is a powerful aspect in establishing and maintaining a professional commitment, and, that the NELP teachers selected to continue sharing is at least in part in order to preserve that sense of commitment as it provides for them an identity not only as teachers, but also to the program itself.

5.6. Effects of implementing a coordinated curriculum

5.6.1 Interaction

A very important result of the initial set-up of the NELP in 1988 was the formation of a staffroom atmosphere of interaction and sharing, a situation I later found aptly described by van Lier (1996) as one of quality and symmetry. I had an intuitive understanding of Piaget's 'discussion is possible only among equals' and I knew that discussion was essential

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if the program was to grow in what I came to understand as being described as a collegial way, although in those days I was focusing more from a very practical wish to see the teachers "working together". Van Lier (1996) says equality refers to factors extrinsic to the talk, such as rank, being more experienced, and age, whereas symmetry refers to matters related to the talk and the interaction itself. Thus interaction is more precisely 'conversation to the extent it is oriented towards symmetrical contributions' (1996:75). Perhaps there can never be a true symmetry in any program in which there is a 'head' and more experienced persons, but conversation tries to balance and equalize these asymmetries.

> responsive conversation is contingent on the possibility of
> achieving interaction symmetry among unequal participants
> (van Lier, 1996:75)

Such concerns were not overt ones and teachers were not in any way obliged to 'talk in an equal way'. That is, no program of teacher development was initiated to investigate or encourage teaching practices, or attitudes to growth (Edge, 1992, Kessler, 1992), but rather it was believed that if a group of teachers could work cooperatively, equality of a sort acceptable to themselves already existed or would emerge. This may have been naive, and the expected emancipatory proclivity of teachers may have been as much from my own background and up-bringing than from any teaching theories or experience. However, with very few exceptions withstanding, this has proven largely to be "right" for this organization, thus it is rare and to be considered a failure in hiring to find any teacher expecting to be given a prescribed program or expecting to work alone, rather than being instrumental in forming a joint program. The teachers themselves enter the program with the confidence they are vital and important members of it whose willing participation in its running is taken as given by the other members.

5.6.2. Records

To enable the smooth running of the classes in this now coordinated program, a system of records and feedback was implemented to ensure a means of communication and cooperation for the partner teachers in their class work, particularly for those teachers who did not meet, and particularly to help coordinate joint class activities such as the required standardized work (for example, oral book reports and other self-access library work), and other activities which require a lot of coordination such as joint collaborative projects. Later in 1992 when the students were leveled and a new curriculum was implemented dispensing with the skills-performance division of the first curriculum in favour of an integrated approach, the teachers began sharing the course work between and within partner classes rather than across classes further emphasizing the need for teacher-to-teacher interaction and decision-making.

Despite being able to meet their partners, the teachers continued to use logs as a means of communication about classwork in the new program indicating the importance of logs as a functional/cultural tool of the program. The NELP received constantly positive evaluations from the students and the status of the teachers began to rise. Although the college refused the hiring of another full-timer, it allowed for the formation of a coordinating assistant position on a semi-full-time contract (another very unusual move for a Japanese college), and for a Japanese administrative assistant, also on a part-time basis, to help with the smooth running of the program and to take over the self-access library that had been operating until this point under teacher volunteers. The staffroom communication became very interactive and interactive decision-making, along with logs (as will be highlighted in chapters six and seven) formed the contingencies of the program and the means of "keeping things together".

5.6.3. Commitment

The commitment of the teachers is most obvious to the college and possibly even to the students, in their voluntary involvement in the NELP's extracurricular activities, such as after school speech contests and lunchtime Christmas carols. The teachers engage in these activities without salary and in their own time, and although occasionally personal grumblings may occur throughout the year, especially as teachers become busy with the end of term evaluations and debriefings, teachers invariably elect to continue the activities because they are popular with the students and give an up-front face value to all native speaker teachers.

Teachers are also given an opportunity to work and interact with the students on a more one-to-one basis –a situation many students express a longing for in the end of semester evaluations and a wish the individual teachers can do little about because, as part-timers they are usually in the classroom or staffroom whenever they are on campus. Thus many of the teachers get great pleasure at being able to work with motivated students such as those signing-up for speech contest and needing help with their scripts and performance strategies. In this way, the teachers are offered yet another way to connect to their students and to the NELP by being given the opportunity to 'establish powerful collaborative contexts for themselves to examine their practice with language that connects to how they make meaning out of their work' (Sawyer, 2001:51).

Furthermore, teacher participation in these activities also contributes to a sense of professional commitment and identity, and as an aspect of the NELP that teachers up-hold of their own choosing it is one that can demonstrate the power of the curriculum and overall teaching perspective of the NELP course programs in creating a shared world and thus encouraging a collegial and collaborative setting for their work.

5.6.4   Constraints of time

As has been previously mentioned, time constraints are a very pertinent issue for the teachers. The macro-culture assists by allowing a teaching structure suitable for part-timers, often giving the NELP first choice on the weekly student class scheduling, and a measure of efficiency by providing them a physical environment for their work. The practical concerns for the teachers, though, and the concerns that generate the interaction and discussion are bound by the time constraints inherent in adapting the texts and materials of the curriculum to the overall structuring of classes set by the college.

Teachers select the texts jointly, usually doing so from an approach they either feel comfortable with or is in vogue at the time. Good textbook writers may pay attention to theoretical perspectives, especially of language acquisition, and of methodologies suitable for matching and implementing their selected approaches. However, until recently when large textbooks have been divided into A.B. edition divisions of a whole textbook, writers appear to work from the assumption that teachers will have ample time, that they will be working alone with their own class of students, and will in no way be sharing work with another teacher. Since NELP teachers do share, timing factors and classroom activities coordination are crucial topics of consideration for teachers consuming much of their interactive decision-making. Course coordinators help out at the beginning of semesters by penciling in activities on schedules (such as library projects, computer room use, or song performances) in order to coordinate school facilities over the various NELP courses and classes, but teachers are free, with their partners and whole course discussions, to modify the schedules —again promoting much teacher discussion.

Curriculum is also much influenced by the university year, which runs on a two semester year of 15 weeks, reduced to 12 or 13 weeks given holidays and other activities. Textbooks are rarely targeted to a twice a week class of 30 or more students in a 12 - 13 week semester (a total of about 38 hours a semester) shared with another teacher. This makes the selection

of materials, and scheduling of activities within the text a specific task to be tailored carefully to the local teaching environment and culture, and if this is not to become prescriptive and administratively dictated, teachers must be much involved in the running of all the classes in the NELP.

Furthermore, the success of classroom activities, whatever they are, in an EFL situation in Japan where the students are monolingual, often seems to depend on the teachers being able to motivate the students to participate in such activities. Thus no attempt has ever been made to insist on any particular methodology being implemented in the classroom: the classroom remains the domain of the individual teacher, although teachers will occasionally arrange special activities across classes. That student motivational needs must constantly be considered, creates a multitude of decisions to be made on the part of the teacher and the teacher combinations as to how to proceed with their classes and how to select, organize, implement and time their class activities. Essential requirements in a teacher, then, are to be knowledgeable, flexible, versatile, reliable, cooperative and above all, talkative.

Teachers must also be able to "turn on a pinhead"; to be able to implement the curriculum in the face of on-going changes, such as sudden canceling of classes, students being absent for other subject field-work activities, and a college policy of only a 70% required attendance. A first step to ensuring success then, is having that versatile communicative teacher. It has became important in hiring new teachers that they be fully aware of the operating culture and of the responsibilities, accountability and limitations of the program overall, and furthermore to gain their complicity and agreement to work within the confines and character of the established system and culture.

5.6.5. Hiring

Hiring in the NELP is a lengthy affair, involving visits to the NELP for discussions and to familiarize the applicants with the system before selection and agreement is reached. It is also a process the in-coming teacher contributes to in that once the Head of the NELP has checked the qualifications and experience as listed on the resume, and is "happy" the teacher is a communicative personality type likely to fit into the culture of the NELP, the teacher is then asked if he or she would like to join the NELP knowing what kind of commitment and involvement would be expected of him or her. From this point, essentially the teachers hire themselves, and it is thus taken as given by the other members of the NELP that any in-coming teacher will be willing to work in a collegial way. This fundamental aspect of the NELP's culture indicates a clear sense of professional commitment is attached to the NELP and that hiring itself is an important first step in maintaining it. It is for this reason, a present or past NELP teacher's recommendation of a suitably qualified applicant is a valued contribution to the hiring process.

Nevertheless, despite careful hiring of new teachers, and occasional total "disasters", teachers are still often in need of guidance when they first arrive as they are required to learn the complicated coding of classes and courses whilst actually teaching. This requires considerable cooperation from the other teachers who are also busy with their classes. Initially a number of the older teachers unfamiliar with the new ideas came to rely on others to help them out and this seems to have become an aspect inherent in the NELP culture providing a sort of informal mentoring in which more experienced NELP teachers are paired with new NELP (but not necessarily inexperienced) teachers, to help them negotiate their way around the sharing of classes, and thus to help them facilitate a speedy and efficient interaction with the other teachers.

5.7. Conclusion

From the climate described above, a somewhat eclectic perspective has developed in the NELP, teachers making clear their views and actions by way of the logs and the staffroom discussions. Teachers can have a say in the choosing of the texts, and the modifying or dropping of activities in pre-planning, and by their comments throughout the year, in the end of semester debriefings and in their (voluntary) written evaluations of their courses and the overall program. Student evaluations help as well, and teachers can be seen taking great interest in the comments, they being able to do so as all class evaluation papers are openly available to all teachers.

The program had developed into a busy, dynamic one by the beginning of this study. Accepting the occurrence of occasional glitches and difficulties that surface in any group of people working together as being part of the process of working together, the program appears to be generally a highly successful one, aided by its culture and created, supported and maintained in particular by its curriculum, the logs and the teacher interactive decision-making discussions.

The following is a vignette of a day in the life of the NELP. It as been based around one day of observation, expanded with observation material from other days, taped recordings and mappings of staffroom conversations, and by the previously mentioned pre-study (see chapter one). One newer teacher present on the base observation day was replaced by another more established teacher for whom a time-study was taken. The vignette provides a rich text description of the NELP and it is included here to exemplify its dynamics and atmosphere and to give a framework of the NELP for the following chapters in which the logs and the decision-making, the contingent functions of the NELP, will be investigated in greater depth.

The NELP - in –action: the shared world at work

It's ten to nine Tuesday morning –the staffroom door, the one with the NELP sign dangling above the port-hole window on the 4th floor of the brown brick LL building that houses the Junior College opens and Barry rambles in, prominent in his faded brown leather jacket and bringing with him to our smoke-free domain a faint whiff of tobacco. "uh" he says with an upward nod and a cheery grin to the heads that momentarily look up from their desks. "Oh, it's Barry" "aah, here he is, and just in time", add to the chorus of general "good mornings" that grunt around the compact little "foreign teachers' staffroom".

The heads return to their workings. Jean is deep in quiet conversation with her course coordinator, our deputy Head Gillian, who has rolled her chair over from her desk in the upper far corner, to sit facing her. Extras for the day's classes, sorted neatly and cross stacked by Yoko, the office assistant, are positioned on Jim's vacant desk and Hillary is at the next desk characteristically fingering her upper lip indicating deep reverie. Dr. Tom, our "visiting professor" is at the desk nearest the door seemingly buried in a sea of materials as he engages in a staccato conversation with Raul to his left.

Barry makes his way to his desk squeezing himself between Marie, the Head, who is helping herself to coffee at the kitchen unit directly behind the six desks placed in an "T" formation in the middle of the room, and his course partner, Raul, who is to his right. He pulls out his chair and drapes his jacket over it, but he doesn't sit. He looks around a brief second and then sandwiches his way around the desk behind Jean and in front of the course-material drawers at the far end of the room. He moves out into a little more space behind Jim's and Hillary's desks and stops at the neat row of three B4 file drawers along the far wall on top of which sit a long line of blue, black and orange hard-covered folders. He selects two blue folders, searches up and down the row and says to no-one, but everyone, "anyone seen the ABCD first year level 2 log?" Five of the six heads buried in their own busyness, reach to look at the labels on the folders they have. Even those who are reading a

log or have orange or black logs – indicating different years, classes and courses – turn to the binding and check the classifications. All know, from experience or hearsay or imagination, what it is like to pick up the wrong log and head to the wrong class. "ah. OK here it is" says Barry. Five heads sigh and carry on. Barry takes the three blue A4 folders indicating first year classes, spread-eagles the three folders along his arm and walks back to his seat, reading. He does not sit. He places the logs on the desk – open and terraced now to look like three blue butterflies. He pulls his dog-eared text, swollen with inserted prints and paper, and his tapes from his pack and thumps them down on the desk – swinging his pack to the right to land on the floor between Raul and himself.

He flips back and forth through the three page lesson of the text that forms the base skeleton of his five class unit and "ahums" to himself. He stretches his head over to the logs, reads for a further 11 seconds, looking across all three logs, working in Thursday's class as well as today's two, and then speaks up to no-one and everyone "what's that task we did last time [remembering back to last year] – you know the holiday thing". Two teachers look up, interested and knowing – "you mean that ranking thing? Oh ... that works really well, they like that ", says Jean, "yeah I know." "it's the "communication games" [book], isn't it?" he asks. "No" says Hillary, who is taking the same course, and in the voice of confidence offers "it's in the "Klippel" [book]." "Ah, yeah, " says Barry turning to the reference bookshelf less than an arms length behind him, "that's the greeny book with the black stripe. Cambridge. I know. It's here ..." He searches the shelf it should be on and speaks up again. "Can't find it". "Oh" says the Head from the other end of the room " it should be there. "Anyone seen the Klippel?" she asks the room in a louder voice. "I hope it hasn't gone walk-about" she adds, "it's a very useful book and we haven't got much budget left to replace it". Barry pulls and pushes around for awhile "ah, here it is". But no-one is listening. The bell has gone and the teachers are collecting their work and heading for the door and their classes just down the carpeted corridor. Barry turns to the copy machine – another arms length stretch to the left of his desk – and soon the machine begins to whir away.

A few minutes later he too heads for the door. He selects a tape recorder from the shelf behind the door just as the Head says "Barry, about that student.." "yeah" he says in anticipation, "you know, the second year flunky? XX?" says the Head. "How's she doing?

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We have to keep track of her, we don't want her to fail again." Barry's face searches through his 8 classes of 30 students in the NELP, his 4 classes of 40 in the university, and his various other classes at the 2 other universities and institutions he works at – a busy but not unusual work load for a part-time ESL teacher in Japan – and says vaguely "I don't know, I'll check it out. But she's a nice girl, she's trying hard. She's all right with me ... What do you want to do about YY? she's missed the last three classes and the oral book report", he adds with more confidence as he looks at the attendance and grade sheets in the log for this coming class. "Has she?", follows on the Head. "Wonder what's she like in Raul's class? [partner teacher], I'll note it and we'll see what's happening – we could call her in for a warning. Can you give her a make-up? ". "Yeah, well, but does she deserve it? ... got to go. Oh. look. This tape recorder doesn't work, it's got bad sound. Can we get it fixed?" "OK, just leave it there". But Barry leaves the tape recorder on Tom's desk, opens the door and holds it that way with his back as he rolls himself, another tape recorder and all his books, tapes and copies out of the door. This whole discussion having taken a mere few minutes.

The office is quiet now. But not empty. Some of the teacher's "work-stations" are piled high with books, paper, copies, logs and extra activity materials. Jean's is jumble of junk, with what looks like part of her breakfast spilling over onto the next desk, but others are quite tidy and Marie moves from her own overcrowded desk in the upper far corner of the room to this center block of desks where she usually works when the classes that she doesn't teach are in session. Yoko, who has been quietly working on the computer at the far end of the room, moves over and they begin their business of the day. Some 30 minutes later Hillary sweeps in – checks her log, grabs some papers from the drawers and sweeps out – not at all worried that the Head is sitting at her desk. No-one is possessive of space here, despite the fact that the open-design office is way too small to house so many teachers. Still. It is only two days a week that all desks are in use – on the other days teachers come in smaller numbers, so the room is seen by the main office staff to suffice for the Native Speaker Teacher (NST) needs.

Actually, it's a very pleasant if somewhat overcrowded room. The far wall left from the entrance door supports the notice board and various schedules and information for general use, the copy machine and the computer. The large windows across from the door and

behind the B4 files, TV and video equipment, leave the room with an open, clean feel. The right wall from the door is concrete, and is lined with book cases and the inner wall supports the kitchen unit. The desks are non-standard cream with brown-imitation wood tops, and the strong, thin industrial carpet is also brown as are the long vertical heavy cloth venetian blinds. There are no divisions. The rest of the equipment is standard office gray, but it doesn't look out of place, nor does it harden the generally occupied, "in-use" feeling in the staffroom.

Suddenly Barry pops his head in the door, he needs 10 more copies of the Klippel. He doesn't say what exercise he wants, Marie doesn't ask. He disappears again and this request halts the admin. work in progress for a while as Marie finds the task in the book and hands it to Yoko, who makes the copies and although she doesn't ask where she is to take them, shortly afterwards delivers his urgent copies.

10:30 am rolls around quickly. The door opens and in troop the teachers, chatting and discussing, some followed by inquiring or admiring students. The noise level rises, problems are discussed, lunch requests are sorted out, and tea-bags dunked up and down in mugs left behind by past teachers. Many teachers barely sit down before they are gone again: the 10 : 40 am class. Some teachers are repeating the same content course with a different group of students. Comments range from "here we go again" to "hope they're better than the last lost - just can't motivate that first class". "really?" comes a response - "it's the 3rd class for me - they're so sleepy after lunch", to " I'm so really ready for this, I think first class I'm no good, second is better and I'm bored on the third time around"...((laughter)).

The door closes and the room is quiet again. The Head and Yoko go back to their work, in more haste this time, since Yoko will soon leave for her duties in the Mini-self-access library the NELP runs, and the Head has a third period class herself, which she needs to prepare for. Shortly, she heads for the logs where she selects an orange cover -- an elective class log - - the type that includes all the logs of all the other classes on the course, and begins her preparation. Having written the course she knows well what she wants to do, but

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coordination, cooperation and fitting-in are crucial for her too. Her preparation finished, she then selects the NELP curriculum and schedule folder and checks if anything needs to be done for any of the courses. 12 : 10 pm-- it's lunch break.

The teachers arrive back, logs are written, students and courses are discussed, grumbles, stories, second stories, and suggestions fly about the room in various directions to whole room, small group discussions or individual partners. There is a lot of movement around the room, some teachers discuss while standing up, or across the desks or even across the room. One can hear a lot of ... "well, what I do is...", "what are you doing for ...", "do you mind if I use...." "have you decided....". " what are we doing about ... ", "my students ... ", "oh, I need to check with you... ", "OK", "Well that's that then.", "OK, we'll do that and see how it goes"... There don't appear to be any rules of privacy on this talk as everyone joins and leaves discussions freely. The deputy Head, however, has resumed her discussion with Jean. She has moved all the papers from Jim's desk to the computer table and replaced them with the course text and the logs of the course she and Jean are discussing. Then sitting in Jim's chair she partially turns away from the group effectively forming a boundary to any incoming conversation from other sources. Heads down, they discuss quietly in earnest, Gillian periodically looking over the text and logs she has spread out on Jim's desk. The others, without comment, recognize the boundary and leave them alone, and the staffroom talk seems to float around them.

A student comes to the door -- she peeps in timidly without knocking, "is there Raul?" she inquires coyly. A quietness descends and smiles ripple around the room. "yes, there is a Raul" says Barry, "but he's not here right now." Smiles broaden. "where's Raul?" he asks the room. "Don't know ... isn't he eating lunch with some of the students?". 'He's here at school somewhere, come back later" says Hillary. The student just stands there -- it's difficult to know if she has not heard, or understood, or if her need is urgent and she can't leave. The teachers eye their lunches, and within a few seconds they return to them and small group or pair discussions as they see Marie and Yoko move over to deal with the problem. A little later, the deputy Head moves away from her discussion with Jean, who departs for home having finished her classes for the day, and then begins talking to Barry as she warms her lunch in the microwave on the kitchen unit behind him. Another student knocks and

enters. "She's one of mine" calls over the deputy Head, pulling herself away from the argument that has suddenly formed with Barry, now also standing, over the need for recycling work across classes. "All I'm trying to say is ..." trails off Barry's voice as Gillian disappears with her student outside into the corridor to deal with the problem – perhaps because of the noise or perhaps for privacy. But when she returns she doesn't resume her previous discussion: it's an on-going one with them. Instead she joins two concurrent, dynamically weaved conversations now ensuing on the uses of tofu, and the best way to travel around Cambodia. Jim, the English through Bible teacher, arrives sporting one of his famously hideous ties for which he comes in for the customary good natured rapping. He takes his seat, opens up his drawers for his materials and then soon leaves to get an early start on his class.

Suddenly, Hillary leaps up – "It's time!" All heads turn to the clock "didn't hear the bell!", " is that the bell already?". As they collect their materials Barry, looking at the syllabus calls out "Hey Marie, what's the story on the test coming up?" "Ah, yeah, I'm on it." she says. "Yeah, so what will I tell the students?" joins in Raul who arrived back just minutes ago. "Well, it's mainly vocab. Discrete item, a kind of balance to all that subjective stuff we've been doing." "Yeah, some of the students like that kind of test" says Gillian as she passes by on her way to class, even though the test is not for any of her courses. "Well, they're good at it, it's easy to mark and they can see the results straight away" carries on Barry. "OK, so it'll be done and marked in class" says Marie " I'll have it ready Thursday for you to check, we can make changes then if you want. It'll only cover the words in the text, isn't that what we're telling the students? Check the syllabus blurb, it's all in there. Is that OK?", "OK", they both answer.

"Oh, and how are the semester vocab. projects going?" Marie asks as they leave for class, "just great" says Barry, happy to acknowledge the success of this on-going project he recommended. "it's a great project, it really works, but we need to talk about how to give grades for them". "All right, how about after class?" "Aaah.. no. No. I can't today. Maybe next lunch time?". " I'm not in Thursdays" says Raul walking nearby. "oh yeah" says Barry, "that means I'll have to ... wait a minute ... how about Monday?" "yeah, uhuh", says Raul," maybe between classes will be OK". Marie, their course coordinator who is in most days,

will follow their timing.

It's 12:55 – 5 minutes late. The Head rushes off to her own class.

When she arrives back from the 90 minute class, typically late, Barry has already written his logs and gone, as has Jim. Hillary stays talking for awhile, then turns her back on the conversation signaling her withdrawal. She pulls at her top lip again flicking pages back and forth for three minutes then writes up her logs – this barely takes a few seconds. She then goes to the B4 drawers and searches the long line of files for a log. Not finding what she wants she immediately turns to Marie and says 'Have you finished with the speech log [she knows the schedule], I just want to check my class for tomorrow". The Head hastily finishes up her entry in her section of the elective speech class log for the speech class she has just taken and hands the log to Hillary. She reads through it silently for a while. "what confidence builder are you doing next? " she asks. Raul, another speech teacher, looks up silently joining this conversation as Marie responds, 'I thought I'd do the one on talking about something meaningful, it's a kind of Show and Tell". "humm" says Hillary, "they'll need back-up work on how to describe objects. Do we have enough copies?" She is referring to the Show and Tell handout, but Marie understands, "Sure, in the speech material drawer". "oh, good". "how do the students find the confidence builder handouts anyway?" asks Marie. "Well, OK actually. What I do is ....." and they launch into a detailed description of their classroom work and supplementary work for the lesson. Eventually the conversation wavers, Hillary stands, puts the log neatly on the upper right corner of her desk, collects her things and leaves with a "see you tomorrow".

Gillian completes an intense study of the logs for her courses, pours for some time over her own personal planning log staring through the concrete wall to only she knows where and to what, consults her texts, her personal materials folder and then packs it all away. She talks policy for awhile with Marie and then she too leaves. But Raul is still there, lounging back on his chair, pen to his mouth, a log folder perched on his raised knee. He remains seemingly deep in thought for almost 5 minutes, then he writes with a few short breaks of pen-chewing contemplation. He puts that log down, returns to a desk position and finishes off the other two. The whole exercise takes him just on 12 minutes. Tom, who's been very quiet throughout the day, except for when he was ragged about his haircut, is also still

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there lost in his logs. He has his three non-shared required literature class logs spread out horizontally along the top of his desk. His grade sheet – his own customized, computer sheet – is in front of him. He looks at his sheet, then his class logs which also contain the student information files, photos and the attendance and grade sheets. He humms to himself and looks up and down and back and forth from his records to the logs, flicking frequently to the photographs. He carefully transfers numbers from his sheets to the logs, then completes his entries. This process takes him 17 minutes from observation.

It's 4 : 30 PM. It's quiet in the staffroom and this time it does feel empty. The Head takes the logs and looks at them – they are the records of the day, but they also indicate the work for the next lesson. They are the teachers' immediate life-line to their classes in the NELP. They range from a scrawl across the page, to tightly printed notes, from lists of activities to scripted comments. They do not vary much in length, despite some teachers having spent as little as 15 seconds in writing and others as much as 17 minutes. She thinks of her own logs, of what she writes, how and why and of who is going to read them. She wonders exactly how these log are used. What is their real function? Complaints on log keeping are rare. Why are they so accepted, what do teachers really think about them? how do they act as such a vital point of cohesion in the program? But most of all, she wonders if these logs capture any of that contemplation, that reflection, that often goes on just prior to their writing and if there were any way in which it too could be, or even if it should be, shared like so much else that goes on in the staffroom.

Marie replaces the logs and straightens up the room. As she does so her mind glances back over the day and she is again amazed at how much was done, how messily, but efficiently the teachers work. How the conversations fly about the room, how and what things are decided and what is left pending. She marvels at the power of speech, at the information that can be carried in an "ahhuh", and at the effect of story-swapping. But most of all she notes how this talk, this interaction, is the vital blood supply of the entire NELP.

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5.9. Comments on the Vignette

The purpose of "A day in the life of the NELP" is to highlight the salient factors of this program and help establish, exemplify and add "color" to the organizational climate and culture described in chapters four and five and to show the executive functions and affordances – the curriculum, the logs and the interaction – at work in the staffroom before a more detailed analysis in chapter six and seven. By attempting to capture and exemplify the atmosphere in this way it is hoped the readers can in part enter the shared world of the NELP and thus have a base in which to set their understanding of the content of the following chapters in which the logs and the decision-making are discussed. The vignette evidences numerous references to log use, and the many discussions that continue throughout the day for both the need to make decisions on course issues and for what appears to be an establishing of a social inclusion; a shared world. It also shows numerous examples of teachers accessing the shared world, both NELP and EFL, throughout their teaching day.

The vignette evidences the culture and the contingencies of the NELP. Although it is based on one actual day, the day is typical of the NELP, and the salient features are those that can be evidenced in general on any day, as the freely running tapings of the staffroom day also clearly show. This vignette was constructed from observation notes; the significant difference between observations and tapings is that observations captured more of the transitory decision-making sequences, whilst the longer, open decision-making sequences are much more audible and dominant on the tapes. The reasons for this are that conversations although less speedy, are too long for verbatim reporting as sentences tend to be more fully developed, while the shorter sequences, although speedy, are more dramatic and visual, high in ellipsis and short forms, and tend to end in clearer results (see chapter seven). Finally, it is significant to note (as outlined in chapter one) that the vignette was constructed around the teachers' use of the logs, but ended in highlighting the importance of the interactive talk.

The vignette especially highlights the workings of the shared culture. Throughout there are numerous examples of teachers operating on shared culture, and referencing their knowledge of "the way things are done around here". The following comments illustrate this more directly:

First, the staffroom is small and open: everyone knows everyone else. The room is referred to as "the office" or "the staffroom" and it is very clearly a teacher's work place. It is generally cooperative and in constant dynamic energy flow. The organization allows the teachers a free rein over the implementation of their work in a generally very equal/symmetrical environment, which is reflected in the dynamics of the teachers' discourse. The administrators, Marie and Gillian, being teachers and curriculum developers themselves are indistinguishable from the other teachers who freely make demands on them. The atmosphere is observed to be open, and transparent and although it may appear from the outside to be very disorganized and haphazard, there seems to be a constant on-course direction and no pretension. Conversations are free for alls – even policy ones; reference the sequence of Barry and Marie discussing the absentee student, and Barry and Raul reminding and advising Marie about the test - her response being to check "the blurb" (which both teachers automatically understand), and that she'll have the test ready for them to check by next class-day (that all teachers contribute to setting evaluation requirements, is an understood policy of the NELP).

Materials, syllabus and knowledge are also shared, as can be heard in the sequence of Hillary telling Barry about the Klippel activity, and Barry's EFL knowledge, and past experiences of using it in the NELP allowing him to automatically know where to find it. Commitment and energy are high, but focused and reserved for the immediate day only as evidenced in Barry's refusal to stay after classes; a request he could not grant as he needed to be elsewhere for other work. Other teachers are understanding and cooperative, and decisions are made on the spot, an example being the sequence of Barry needing more

copies of his activity; Marie knowing what activity he needs and where to get it although she was not involved in the earlier discussion, she had both over-heard it and can reference her own shared knowledge of the course and EFL, and Yoko knowing where to take the copies without having to ask or be told; again evidence of shared EFL and NELP culture, but also of collaboration, cooperation and commitment, both in Barry expecting Marie and Yoko to know what he wants based on his trust in their having heard, of their having knowledge of EFL and the NELP and his courses, and therefore knowing what he needs, and Marie and Yoko in turn allowing him to prevail upon them without question.

Teachers also engage in discussions on general, wider planning activities, again resorting to the shared culture, using ellipsis and prolepsis to produce inclusion and freely demonstrating their EFL knowledge automatically knowing this will be understood. The sequence with Marie and Hillary on the speech class exercise demonstrated this: Hillary knows the schedule, both time-wise and curriculum-wise, she knows who will have the log she wants, and that she can launch directly into a discussion of "the next speech form" without clear references and still be understood. She shows her EFL knowledge when she comments the students will need work on describing objects, and assumes Marie will also know what she's talking about even when she does not clarify her references and moves directly to the number of copies she will need for the main activity handout. Throughout this sequence Raul was a participator --silent perhaps, but accepted as being part of the discussion. The decision-making was longer, embedded in other aspects of teaching and talk. Talk-in-action characterizes the day and interaction achieved through the accessing of the shared culture contingent on prolepsis and ellipsis is evidenced in abundance (to be further exemplified in chapter seven).

Secondly, the teachers are clearly very much in control of their daily teaching routines and seem quite accepting of the executive functions that are in place, such as the log keeping and the course schedules. This interaction, based on the known curriculum, aids in the daily management and preparation of their classes and of both innovation and

maintenance. Their work is clearly achieved by the cooperation of all the teachers in the keeping of class logs, the sharing of curriculum and by the freedom for communication made possible by the open-room environment: teachers simply talk whenever they need to, and can be reasonably sure they will elicit a response. Teachers seem able to concentrate on both their own work as well as the work of the others in the staffroom, and yet can easily recognize and ignore those teachers who are idiosyncratically talking to themselves, or who are engaged in a specific teacher-only discussion, as evidenced by their leaving Jean and Gillian to their private discussion session.

Finally, this study focuses the dynamics, purpose and value of the more immediately visible interactive discussions such as the very short decision-making sequences, the frequent pair and group discussions and to the spatially bounded ones such as Gillian's and Jean's.

The most observable form of interactive decision-making frequently occurs in short bursts, often just as teachers are moving off to the classroom, and often rather major decisions are made in this short timeframe. Clearly teachers are working from a common background environment as well as from shared knowledge of the teaching situations at hand. Chapter seven will take up these transitory decision-making sequences and highlight how teachers rely on the contingencies and the shared culture of the NELP to be able to engage in successful short decision-making sequences.

The vignette also mentioned the pair and group discussions, and the secluded, spatially bound discussions that also occur in the NELP. The secluded sequences are relatively rare and are multiple decision-making sessions of concentrated 10-30 minutes (sometimes longer if they are held after classes) involving only the relevant teachers on a shared class partnership. The content is so specific to the class in question others in the staffroom are not invited to join. Analysis of these sessions (see chapter seven) shows these sessions to be about specific planning, reporting of results and more specifically about particular students'

performance, especially on tests, or, about negotiations of specific class problems or classroom management difficulties. Occasionally these secluded discussions may be of a coordinator teacher streamlining activities with a course partner teacher who is in some way disrupting the smooth running of the course.

The short decision-making sequences are the most dynamic in the staffroom, but the most common are the longer, open decision-making sessions; the ones that often start off focused on a particular course or activity and are then joined by others who bring in various other aspects so that the session becomes more generalized and theoretical of teaching practice, or specific to the Japanese teaching situation, particularly of student responses. They too will be more fully explored in chapter seven, but it is important to note that they are not just decision-making sessions; they are discussions, negotiations, often involving a need to make a decision, which is either made early on and then discussed further or is pending throughout a longer discussion with a decision being made just before the end of the discussion; the decision sequence often ending up rather like one of the transitory decision-making sequences in its apparent brevity. These discussions are the ones most likely to contain the swapping of "shop-talk" stories and second stories — stories with messages either corroborating another teacher's experiences, explaining them, or offering an opposite view point.

It is in these decision-making sessions that this study postulates that an intersubjectivity is created by the teachers themselves that gives them a zone of proximal development which they can access for individual teacher development at their own will. Chapter eight will further explore the benefits this has for the part-time teachers, but here I wish to stress that the type of discussion that best sets up this zone is the type of discussion most common in the NELP; the longer, open type, and the type the teachers themselves seem to most like being involved in, thus indicating the frequency with which teachers themselves create chances for personal teacher development.

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5.10. Conclusion

The formation, the creation of the NELP has happened largely as a result of the teachers working together; there is a system, a macro-culture at the helm offering a strong but flexible structure, but the teachers themselves are the essence and substance of the program. As can be seen from the above descriptions and explanations, the NELP is collegial to a very large extent, its existence and growth depending on the interaction and commitment of the teachers themselves.

Teacher Logs

> I see keeping logs as part of the job. I see them as the best way to
> keep organized and as absolutely essential for the team situation.
> It's no trouble to write them up or to have other teachers or a
> supervisor read them. Knowing you have to write something in
> the log means teachers have to have something substantial to say and
> they are then more likely to think about their classes. Keeping a log is a
> good thing, I would keep one even if I didn't have to because in the
> long run its more efficient than trying to remember or writing
> things down on pieces of paper which you can never find when you
> need them.
>
> (compendium of comments from teacher interviews)

6.1   Introduction

In the vignette in chapter five the logs can be seen as an integral part of the NELP,
dominant, as when Barry was preparing his classes for the day and at the end of the day
when Raul and Tom were writing-up their day's activities, and silently, but visibly, part of
the environment throughout the rest of the day sitting on the teachers' desks and being
carried off to the classrooms. The logs provide a major function in the NELP and act as
perhaps its most valuable affordance. In doing so they provide not just a function necessary
in the daily work, but through the interactive decision-making of which they play such an
important part, they create a contingency for mediating the NELP's organizational culture;
in fact, as this chapter will show, the logs are a cultural tool of the NELP, imbuing its
culture, developing its culture, recording and reflecting it. This chapter will show the
functions and value of the logs, especially as regards their part in the interactive decision-
making of the NELP.

The chapter will proceed in five sections:

1) a basic description of the logs and their place in the NELP, indicating how they record,
   imbue and enable the shared culture of the NELP; informed by the documents
   themselves.

2) teacher perceptions of the function and value of the logs; exemplified by the teachers in recorded and transcribed interviews.

3) an analysis of the planning and feedback function of the logs, in two distinct periods, pre-1993 and post-1993; informed by the logs themselves and seen within the culture of the NELP.

4) an investigation of the ways of recording in the logs, indicating the teachers' use of ellipsis and prolepsis, further indicating how the logs act as a contingency of the NELP and thus contribute to the decision-making characteristics seen in the NELP; informed by the content of the logs.

5) A look at the role of the logs in teacher development; informed by the opinions of the teachers in a transcribed round-table log discussion on this issue.

Data from the logs has been selected based on its importance in exemplifying the interactive contingency in the NELP, thus most of the initial work in detailing the exact contents of the logs and discussions with the teachers as to what and why they record this content is not covered here. The main area of concern in this chapter is to see *how* the logs are working rather than what they contain. Readers interested in knowing further details as to the topic content of logs are referred to my earlier study (Wilby, 1993). The results of this investigation will indicate and clearly exemplify the interactive value of the logs and thus exemplify the important place the logs have in the culture of the NELP.

6.2. Description and explanation of the logs in the context of the NELP

6.2.1. Purpose of the logs

Class / Course logs have been a required teachers' class duty from the outset of the program acting both to coordinate teacher work, and to bring cohesion to the program. They function foremostly to provide a place for teachers to record their activities and to know the content of the classes they share with other teachers, but also as a means of administrative communication. No teacher is recalled as having ever complained or objected to the writing of logs per se, and comments from the teachers' interviews (section two) will clearly show that logs are accepted as a reasonable and necessary part of the

program.

Given the difficulty of direct communication between teachers on some courses, the logs were initialized to function as a "window" into the class activities and progress of each class and to thus facilitate the smooth running of the classes for both teachers. Although this function has now been replaced for the most part with direct face-to-face communication, logs still act as indispensable class records for the teachers and act to give the coordinators a tangible and unobtrusive look into the classroom work of the teachers that can in part be controlled by the teacher. Thus logs also help to maintain standards and output levels of teachers. Further, the logs provide a means by which both teachers and the course coordinators can see the success or otherwise of the various course syllabus, and can be alerted to any difficulties with the program or with the communication or cooperative partnerships of the teachers. The logs also afford the course coordinators the opportunity to relay partner or course specific administrative information concerning the program or students, a place to offer suggestions and comments should the teacher be unavailable for direct contact, and to remind teachers of set program and whole school requirements and deadlines, especially as regards the semester time tabling. In short, the logs facilitate not only teacher/student and program operations, they also facilitate smooth communication between all teachers, and with the NELP itself. They are an integral part of the teachers' shared knowledge and understanding and help to make it possible for the teachers to affect speedy and effective decisions about classes they share with others, especially with partners they may not meet.

Data available from the developmental establishment period of the NELP through until the present day and analyzed for this study, show that, despite idiosyncratic differences, the topic content of the recordings in the log books has changed little and teachers' and coordinators' use of them has remained largely constant in quantity and type. The only noticeable change is a less comment oriented content in logs when teachers are able to access their partner teachers in face-to-face interaction.

Although the content of the logs has remained basically stable over the years, innovations

in the format of the log sheets, such as spacing, and added administrative content to the log book folders has brought about a change in the way in which the log books are used by the teachers, providing overall improvements in the speed and quality of the coordination in the NELP. Changes in the curriculum and structure of the classes have also affected the types of communication resulting from log keeping. A major change occurred, for example, in the decision-making functions of the logs when teachers became able to engage in face-to-face communication. The result of various moves over time have worked overall to increase the functions of the logs to make them a most valuable tool for allowing the teachers to access the shared world of the NELP and its EFL courses.

The logs have a dual role:

1) as reports of work done in the classroom; particularly valuable for those teacher partnerships in which the partners do not meet

2) as lesson-planning records; particularly valuable for those teachers who do not keep personal records of their own.

Furthermore they have always been interactive across the teachers, the courses and the program in their decision-making and planning functions, working to help coordinate all the class work and courses of the curriculum. Changes or developments in the logs have arisen naturally in accordance with teacher needs and this cycle of need and adaptation on and over a steady basic function of the program highlights the logs as one of the executive, major defining functions of the NELP, and thus one of its strongly identifiable cultural affordances.

6.2.2. Description and evolution of the log books

The NELP logs are folders containing the class report (record) sheets. Every class is assigned a log book and every teacher is required to make a class report in the log after each and every class. Topic content covers the spectrum of language teaching but is focused to the basic categories appearing on the log sheet; work covered plus comments,

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student responses, homework assigned, and other recommendations. The categories of the log sheets have been modified in wording and format throughout the years according to teacher requests (see appendix C. p. 291:a-d for sample copies of log sheets over the years).

Research shows that the method of recording (described and analyzed in section four) is typically informative and message oriented rather than comment oriented or reflective of individual teaching practice, whereas the teacher interview data particularly shows that the teachers rely on the logs to function as a way to up-hold the program, specifically on the shared class courses. As will be demonstrated, the teachers are largely responsible for creating this condition of reliability and thus logs function to give teachers a way to create cohesion and empowerment in their work environment. That teachers freely create defining aspects in their work is in itself indicative of how the culture is established and maintained.

6.3.   The importance of the format

A discussion of the format is important in establishing the interactive value of the logs because, as a standardized form, it is the first defining formal aspect of the logs, the standard with which all teachers operate, and thus it demonstrates both the positive aspects and limitations of the NELP culture itself.

There are two kinds of logs —those for the shared required oral classes, and those for elective content courses taken by individual teachers working cooperatively with, but independent of, other teachers on the same course. Initially the two class types had separate formats. Over the years the format has been modified in accordance with teacher preferences, and since 1997 the same log sheet format has been used for all courses in the NELP.

All logs, regardless of the format, have been printed on A4 paper and kept in color-coded, hard backed durable ring folders for each and every course. At the end of the academic year, the log entries are removed and filed away, and the log folders are then recycled with

year, the log entries are removed and filed away, and the log folders are then recycled with new sheets and classifications for the courses of the new academic year. Log books are placed in a prominent and easily accessible position in the NELP staffroom, and although it is testament to both their durability and the care teachers take of them to note that the same folders have now been in use for 14 years, it more importantly indicates the consistency and visibility of the logs as an established "part of the furniture" clearly showing their place in the organizational culture.

Each class record sheet format has had a header covering: the year, the subject, the class and class number, the teacher's name(s), the room number and the time of the class. In later logs, additions such as the name and publisher of the textbook, the level of the class and the date have also been reflected on the header. The formatting of the information is selected by the teachers and the sheets are produced by the administrative assistant.

6.3.1. Teacher comments on formatting

As the formatting of the logs is chosen and modified when necessary by the teachers themselves, the logs work to indicate the teaching and organizational perspective of the NELP. Data from the teacher interviews show teachers generally favour a free format sheet as opposed to a highly formatted one which they stated would constrain their teaching, and administrators and coordinators like-wise feel a general header and some titled block areas are best, realizing the enormity of the task of formatting a specific content log sheet for every class of every course.

> a set format would bring a set format of answers & probably indifferent
> ones, it would also emphasize the organizational aspect too much for
> me and distract from the subjective aspects   (T.2)

> I think a general comment sheet [like we have] is better. If the log sheet
> is [highly formatted] the teacher may feel, if he has hasn't approached
> all the listed items, that the lesson was inadequate ... with a general
> sheet the teacher will be more creative and less inhibited in trying
> new things.
>   (T.1)

6.3.2. Recent innovations

More recent innovations have seen more information added to the log books, although the log record sheet has remained the same. For example, the formal student attendance record sheets required by the college now appear in the logs (rendering the separate attendance book irrelevant and making it indispensable for teachers to take the log books to class), the grade sheets are computer processed and have been moved to the front immediately following the attendance sheets from their original place in the back. Student information sheets with their photos and grade records have been implemented and now appear in the back, a copy of the schedule outline for the course appears on the inside cover of the log giving teachers easy access to the syllabus and timetabling directly from the logs rather than having to render schedules to memory or having to take other administrative folders to class, and a sheet for recording any supplementary exercises used appears in the front before the attendance sheets to give partner teachers an immediate review of extra material used, reducing the time and effort it takes to check the material from the file or the original source.

All the above have been teacher inspired innovations aimed at improving interaction and coordination, the most recent being the appearance of digitally produced computer photo spreads of the students in the front of the book near the attendance sheets; a move inspired by one teacher's need to remember the students by name – a task of some enormity when considering most part-time teachers work in several universities and take upwards of 10 or more different classes of 30 to 45 students per class. This innovation was quickly adopted by other teachers and is now in the process of becoming a "tradition" as the NELP administration, noticing teacher enthusiasm for this addition, has now moved to purchase the equipment for all teachers to produce such spreads on the staffroom computer: a clear case of a teacher need and solution surfacing as an innovation influencing the entire staffroom and creating the development of a new tradition. This action demonstrates the continuing evolution of the NELP organizational culture based on the current teachers' needs, and further reinforces the importance of the logs as perhaps the NELP's most used and valuable affordance, perhaps also indicating why the teachers are so rarely seen

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without them. The log then has become over the years a miniature and portable administrative and functional NELP record in addition to being a place where the teachers can record and plan their class lessons.

Log research (see chapter three) finds that most teachers use the logs simply as records of work done, but some use them to project work they will do, or plan to do, pre-marking, for example, the days of special activities, particularly graded activities, much as one does in an appointment book (see appendix C. p. 291: e) where the teacher can be seen planning in advance and ticking off completed activities). As the years have passed the work habits of one teacher have often become the shared work habits of others as they have found certain aspects to be useful, common or (as new teachers have joined) "traditional". The forming of such "traditions" out of the teachers' own work habits and needs has proven to be an important process in developing an acceptable work ethic and culture in the NELP, since it is such traditions and methods developed and freely modified by the teachers themselves, the teachers' needs imposing on the administration rather than the other way round, that have helped create a strong feeling of empowerment and thus a strong connection and sense of professional connection with the program and with the members in it.

6.4. The function and purpose of logs as perceived by the teachers

The teacher interviews cover a range of opinions both negative and positive, but in all cases the overall view of log keeping and the value of the logs is overwhelmingly positive. In this section, the teachers' characteristic uses of the logs and their comments about why and how they use them will be illustrated.

6.4.1. General communication

In the interviews teachers identified logs as being of most importance for information transfer (see section five), but they also assigned considerable value to the logs as a means

of general communication.

> The logs opened things up—then came discussions and then the logs reinforced it —teachers changed not directly from the logs but indirectly through our communication coming from the logs.....
>
> (T.1)

> logs help improve communication... they give us a basis and provide a chance to write immediately after the fact [about things] that other-wise might not come up in conversation because we don't see each other...
>
> (T.8)

> They absolutely help communication ... it would be too chaotic if you didn't have logs ... I don't see how you could have a team situation without them...
>
> (T.4)

Teachers also showed an awareness of the value of logs from the whole program point of view, stating:

> I want to be sure that whoever picks up the log knows exactly what's been done, like if a teacher is absent and someone else takes the class
>
> (T.3)

> logs are useful for tests, and for checking for problems and for monitoring teachers who only wanted to do their own thing ...
>
> (T.10)

> logs are good for improving, for self-evaluation, and feedback in exercises and for knowing which exercises are effective, successful, so they are useful for the administration and are as good for the coordination as for the classroom teacher ...
>
> (T6)

However, while teachers readily acknowledged finding the logs useful for establishing and maintaining cooperation and general communication, most recognized the limitation of the logs for dealing with serious difficulties and felt that if anything of real importance should come up then they would seek out the person(s) concerned and discuss the matter directly with them.

I'd mostly see my partner in person, or you (Marie) or T.10
(supervisor of her course) ...   (T.6)

sometimes what I have to say is too long for the log so I leave a note
for the teacher to look in my tray for a letter or to ring me ... I get
more out of discussing with teachers... although with shared classes
logs are invaluable...   (T.3)

6.4.2. Personal and program value of logs

Teachers also demonstrated in the interviews they have clear and strong views on the
value of the logs not only as a personal feedback function, but also for communication with
other teachers in the staffroom as a whole.

[logs] help me keep an eye on where I'm going with the lessons,
what I've done in the past and to help me think about planning
future lessons... (T.3)... they help me maintain continuity ...   (T.5)

personally I find them [logs] very useful, especially if you're taking
more than one class, similar or same materials with different classes.
Without logs you simply can't keep track of where you are & what
you're up to - it's too much information to keep in your head. So I
write everything I want to remember whether it be for what I've
done in this class or what I'm going to do...   (T.9)

T.10 summed up her opinions of the purpose of logs in the following points:
1. a record for administration   - to help with making tests
2. to improve communication
3. They could be used for evaluation and feedback

for shared classes when you don't see your partner they [logs] are
absolutely essential ...   (T.4)

Only one of the interviewed teachers felt uncomfortable with teachers, other than the

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immediate partners, reading their logs, and even that teacher recognized the benefits of an administrator reading them.

> I don't read other people's logs ... it's a communication between me and another teacher and I'd be upset if I thought others were reading them, like eavesdropping on a conversation. There's nothing confidential here, nothing outrageous or anything, but it almost seems like spying – it's a gut reaction. I feel the same way about the administrator, but there is some cause for it ... (T.7.)

While some teachers did mentione feeling nervous about others reading their logs ...

> if someone questions my teaching practice or style I might feel intimidated, it is intimidating to know more experienced teachers are reading your logs but it only improves through suggestions... I felt it was better to jot down anyway, even if semi-coherent, and we could talk about it later ....
>
> (T.1)

> I sometimes feel insecure about offering suggestions based on what I've done, I suggest to co-teachers sometimes but there are some people I'd never be able to suggest an approach to... (T.7)

It is important to note that both T.1 and T. 7. were unqualified teachers and that in subsequent years all incoming teachers have been required to have basic EFL qualifications and experience and since then no subsequent teacher interviewed in this study has recorded any such concerns; although such comments may have interesting implications for the program as regards new teachers.

6.4.3. Elective courses

In the interviews, teachers reported rarely reading the logs of other shared classes where they might pick up ideas for their classes, preferring instead to talk to teachers in the staffroom. However, some said they read the individual (elective class) logs especially to check pacing, and for ideas.

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I found it useful reading these logs in so far as making sure I
hadn't missed anything the other classes had done ... but it was
not so helpful because people don't tend to write the details
either through lack of space or time or they don't feel it's necessary
because they know what they mean... but I did sometimes browse
through them for ideas ... it was easier to do than with the shared
logs because they are all in one folder...   (T.9)

This last comment indicates the influence of the log formatting and filing; in this case indicating that the placing of all the same content class logs in one folder facilitated the easy access to other teacher's log reports, and this encouraged reading the logs of others working on the same courses – an action beneficial for increasing a teacher's knowledge of the overall program, and perhaps of teaching as well. This point is demonstrated in the vignette which highlighted Hillary (T.9) using the speech class logs in this very manner; an action that resulted in a long dialog between Hillary, Marie and Raul on the teaching content of the speech class.

6.4.4 Communication with administrators/coordinators/self

Teacher comments on the value of the logs as a means of communication focused on writing, rather than reading, but one person at least reading every log is the coordinator of each course, who also occasionally writes in comments or information for the teachers. Most teachers saw the benefit of this, recognizing the need for the coordinators to know what is going on and to keep track of what work is being covered. Others mentioned how they would read the coordinator's log for ideas and pacing since this person (almost always a teacher on the course) best understood what was supposed to be going on, illustrating the use of logs as a learning resource tool.

Only one teacher said she actually welcomed the coordinators making comments in the log and this was the teacher concerned about her teaching...

I'm very concerned in being a teacher. I think there's a duplicity in
teaching English to foreigners because there's the way we learn and
the way they do and that's not inherent e.g. like this whole idea of
genre, schema, subtext, text .... but the girls aren't thinking that when

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they're reading, in a way we're not either, but that's what English teaching is like in the 20th century. I feel like I need to communicate to you and other teachers the validity of my teaching methods because they don't see me on the ground [in the classroom] and .... I would like feedback to know I'm on the right track.....   (T.11)

It is to be noted that such reflective comments as this, hinting at informal theorizing on the part of the teacher, is rare in the NELP as regards the use and function of the logs. However, this comment, and the one below, indicate some teachers recognized that logs were a way to encourage self-evaluation, hinting of a possible potential for logs as a learning tool: a point which will be further explored in section five.

we share... but that's a practical consideration...I see logs as a way of forcing teachers to sit down & evaluate their behavior towards the students - it's a small step towards self -evaluation...   (T.2)

6.4.5. Conclusion to teachers comments

Clearly teachers see the use of logs as a positive means of communicating within the NELP although they recognize the limitation of written records for communication of a more substantial content. Over the long years of log keeping, logs have tended to mirror the pattern of class structure and curriculum and this in turn has defined the means and type of communication teachers use. Logs are clearly an affordance of the NELP culture, reflecting its work functions, perspective and ethic, and acting to initiate interactive communication.

6.5.   Logs for planning and feedback   -decision-making functions

There are two types of course structures in the NELP; the shared oral classes in which a two-class course is shared by two teachers, and the elective courses which are once a week content based courses taken by one teacher. Initially they had different formatted logs sheets, but even since 1997 when the log sheet was standardized, they have shown marked differences in how and what is recorded, which affects how they are used and the resulting types of verbal interaction and decision-making they stimulate and enable.

6.5.1. Shared Class logs

Teachers said they routinely included information on activities, games, videos, recommendations and student responses in these logs, in addition to the text exercises covered and homework assigned. They emphasized the need to be clear, and indeed logs show clearly listed information which tends to stimulate a transaction dialog style (van Lier, 1996:180) for the "business" of making decisions about specifics.

> I wrote what I did, how did the Ss react, and very often overall comments, mood of the class as a whole, special factors ... like a large number of absences or perhaps a particularly disruptive student or group of students   (T.7)

> I tended to fall into a pattern of overall comment, the structures, exercises and then special notes at the end   (T.1)

> set up, what I could do, why, why not, whether I had done enough, about difficult areas, whether it was enjoyed, boring or useful ... [she further commented]... I think I wrote more than was necessary most times, but in individual logs I wrote less because we knew it ... we'd done it before and knew the problem areas and assignments
>   (T.10)

Appendix C (p. 291: f/h) show sample logs clearly illustrating the functions the teachers have said they use them for, although any log entry may be more or less on any given day.

6.5..2. Elective Class Logs

Most of the teachers said in their interviews that they write less for what they call 'the individual' (elective class) logs. However, this is not born out by the logs themselves. The individual logs do not have as many listings of exercises done (teachers said they had to be clear on this in the shared logs), but do show more prose-like comments, which teachers had less of in the shared logs. Although one teacher said ...

I tried to imagine I was sharing the class with someone else and write it as thoroughly as I would if someone else was depending on my records, although on rushed days I didn't feel so guilty about making cursory entries and running off. (T.7)

Several of the teachers said that since they were not sharing a log it was not necessary to write so much and that mental notes of where they were up to were sufficient. The log entry box space is then filled in with comments, in fact making entries as long as and often longer than the shared logs.

in shared logs I'm much more detailed & specific because I know the follow-up lesson will be taken by another teacher, so I make it very clear exactly what exercises I've done, what materials I've covered. In the individual log I have a general idea of the lessons anyway from past experience ... I'm using lessons I'm familiar with, so I just highlight the main points, the areas, functions we've covered. I don't go into any detail on specific exercises - it's more general . Oh yeah, I comment on what works, doesn't work. (T.3)

I think you have to be more specific when you're working with someone else. In individual classes I have my own set ways and have a better idea of what I've done so I just need mental notes and brief notes to jog these memories... but with the other teacher you want to be specific so that they don't overlap & waste time or to make sure they cover things you didn't. (T.1)

I need detail on student reactions, what I need to speed up, slow down, what was included, what was left out, what needed more or less emphasis ... it's more like a diary than a log entry ... I have to have more detail or I'll forget. (T.8)

Teachers seem to distinguish between "clear" meaning specific information, and "clear" meaning explaining what happened, and, "being clear / specific" is not necessarily related to the length of the entry. It seems in shared logs teachers feel it is more important to say exactly what was done, rather than to make comments explaining how it was done. Whereas in the individual logs they know where they are up to and since this does not affect anyone else, they feel less inclined to spend time writing what was done and more

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time commenting on student responses. This tends to stimulate a more transformation dialog style (van Lier,1996) with other teachers on the course or with any willing participator in the staffroom, resulting in the discussion of more general principles of teaching and EFL techniques. Appendix C (p. 291: h) gives an example of the more diary-like quality of the elective logs.

6.6. <u>Decision-making functions of logs</u>

Fig. 11. p. 196 shows the shared class log decision-making and planning functions. As can be seen from these charts, there are two distinct time periods: the initial formation years of 1989 to 1992, when teachers rarely saw each other, and the logs from 1993 until the present, where there has been increased face-to-face interaction. The division here is a major one in that it was in 1992-3 the previously mixed-level classes were divided into three distinct class levels with distinct courses and grade requirements, resulting in a different curriculum which affected the systems and procedures for both log and verbal decision-making functions.

6.6.1. <u>Pre - 1993</u>

Initially, the two oral classes of the shared course met on a textbook-based skills class day (Oral A), with a follow-on "free" practice class day based on prepared "communicative" materials (Oral B). Few teachers were taking both classes and most teachers never met their partner teacher at all. Thus it was vitally important for the Oral A teacher to communicate clearly what was done so that the Oral B teacher could prepare materials for that class. Thus each week, the B teacher could not completely plan the class until first having read the log of the A teacher.

As a result a characteristic log system formed. Fig. 12 p. 197 shows the logs working to inform teachers of the status of their shared class. The content of the log communication was very transactional, since it was imperative for the partner teachers to know clearly what each was doing in the class. This pattern of log keeping is referred to as the A-B class

Process of Log Use

1) **1989 ~ 1992:** mixed level classes; teachers never meet.
logs vitally important.
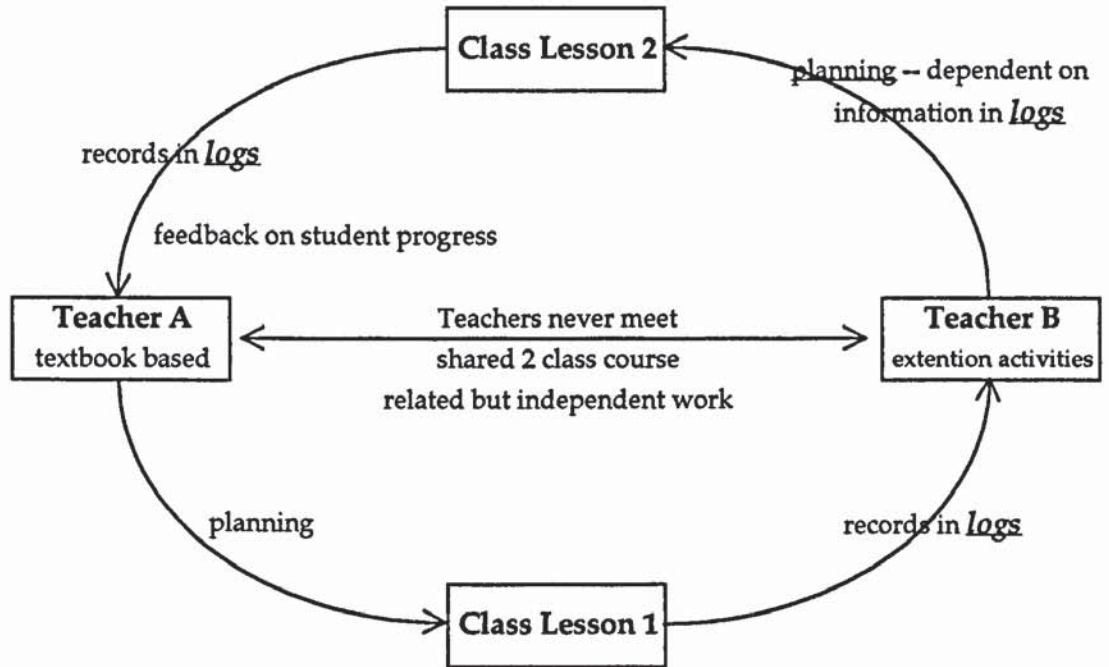
2) **1993 ~ :** logs less important / levelled classes: most teachers meet;
for complex communication / a few on "blind" shared classes.
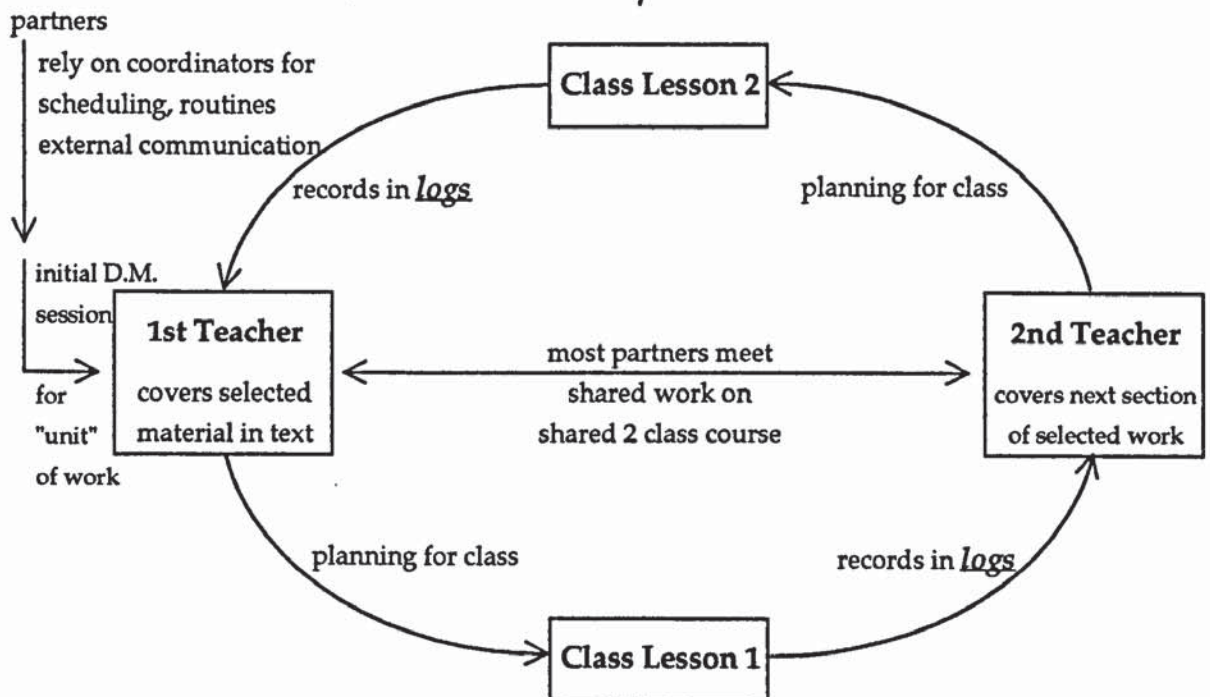
Fig.11

Logs in Action

Historical: logs are vitally important as a means of communication and decision making: partners never meet.
(1989 ~ 1992)

Planning:

Contained in NELP staffroom / few contacts outside the containment; teachers act independently, or are externally contacted. Teachers act cooperatively.

College requirements
NELP curriculum

NELP Staffroom

Class Lesson B
no logs taken to class

Planning:
private, or with other 'B' teachers, coordinators;
focus on pedagogy; purpose of activities, sources and resource of appropriate 'free activities'

Teacher B
"free" extended activities based on textbook goals;

Records in log
discuss with 'A' teachers, coordinators
*focus on achievement of placement goals,
*focus on smoothness of textbook/class management; student H.W. requirements noted
*requests for 'B' teacher as regards students in extended activities, including the reviewing or covering of textbook work.

teachers never meet

classes guided by curriculum; syllabus, communication maintained by use of logs

Class Lesson A
no logs taken to class

Teacher A
textbook based

Records in log
*focus on student response and success in/on selected activities, H.W./requirements

Planning:
*private, or with other 'A' teachers, coordinators
*focus on placement goals and classroom management

Fig. 12

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pattern. However, conversation between teachers was only possible with the teachers present on the same day, thus the staffroom conversation pattern was an AA, or BB class pattern (A teachers discussing with A teachers, and B with B, rather than the A-B partners discussing), and the content was more transformational, since once the teachers had discerned what they needed to focus from their (absent) partner's log entry, they would then discuss their immediate class with other teachers working on the same sections of the units. This resulted in the sharing of teaching methods, materials and perspectives based not on class partnerships (except through the logs) but rather on the teachers teaching the same section of the course. It also produced more discussion among the B teachers, who had no set bookwork (unless the A teacher requested it) than the A teachers who were working on a book and did not have to supplement class work.

6.6.2. Post 1993

As the program developed, shared classes were leveled and more and more teachers began to work both days. Significant changes with the shared combination classes occurred as the partner teachers were now able to meet each other for direct discussions of their classes. The leveling of classes also now required the sharing of class work on a unit rather than over units, that is, the skills/performance division was changed in favour of an integrated approach meaning the A and the B partners worked on both the book and extended tasks and that this system required them to plan their classes together collaboratively and deliberately. Thus they approached their courses and each other for both transactional and transformational issues.

Fig.13. p. 199 highlights the communication flows of this class coordination style. The AA-BB and A-B division of communication is still evident, but it faded into interactive discussion and decision-making according to tasks or purpose, utilizing transaction or transformation dialog as the case may be. The logs being less needed for this interaction became records or information files of a very message-oriented content. In discussions however, the partner teachers now began to interact much in the same way as the elective class teachers – referencing each other for wider aims, such as teaching ideas and

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Logs in Action

2) 1992 ~ present: logs less important for communication; most teachers meet for direct discussion

NELP organizational culture

pre-unit planning

Teacher A
relies on curriculum, syllabus, outlines; text, coordinators, course partner and direct partner pre-planning with partner.

Teacher B
relies on curriculum, syllabus outlines, text, coordinator; course partners, direct partner.

Planning
→
Contained → extensions outside the containment rarely necessary; teachers act cooperatively; collaboratively.

teachers meet in limited timeframes; communication not reliant on logs; logs are message oriented.

Class Lesson B
takes logs to class

Class planning
utilizes information in logs; direct discussion with partner if necessary

Records in log
-activities covered
-current standing of pre-plan
-recommendations but few comments;
+discusses with partner teacher if necessary

Class Lesson A
takes logs, text, materials to class

Class planning
ulitizes information and comments in logs

discuss with partner if unclear, or partner requests / requires it

Records in log
-activities covered
-comments; discusses with partner if necessary

Fig. 13

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methodology, rather than just for the narrower more focused aims of their immediate classrooms, and pair teachers and individual teachers alike began referencing each other in whole staffroom discussions on the current courses; the teachers could now clearly be seen working in an organizational culture, not in an individual partnership or alone.

Chapter seven will exemplify how this now characteristic verbal decision-making, planning, feedback and general teacher talk functions. Important to note here is that the logs have remained but primarily in the A-B pattern, in which message transfer is the main objective of the record.

6.7. How logs afford mediation in the NELP

The focus of this study is to show *how* the logs help the part-time teachers to function within the NELP and to assist them in operating as professional teachers, rather than to discuss what and in what ways the individual teachers write in them. However, since common patterns were found in the way in which teachers write, there will now be a brief discussion of the importance of these patterns, the emphasis being on how these patterns assist communication between teachers and to the significance this has for the teachers operating in the NELP culture: specifically on how teachers are able to gain so much information from the short messages contained in the logs based on the contingencies of shared knowledge and the ellipsis and prolepsis this allows, which further highlights how speedy proceedings are facilitated.

6.7.1. The characteristics of logs according to the data

Teachers tend to develop their own systematic approach to logs within the format and remain consistent in using it, thus developing a characteristic log. At times the characteristics, independent of the obvious one of handwriting, are so distinctive that specific teacher logs can be identified without looking at the headers. For the most part the character of the log reflects the individual teacher's personal character and attitude to the class. This degree of regularity, consistency and display of character provides a reliability

factor for the teachers and helps them to know how to deal with any teacher with whom they may share a class; it becomes part of the shared knowledge bank of the NELP itself.

Most log entries in the shared logs contain lists of exercises covered, homework checked, and directives on homework assigned for the next class, much as the teachers themselves described in their interviews. Shared log entries feature lists of exercise numbers, some of which may be elaborated with comments, occasional references to where the supplementary exercises come from and brief comments on student responses whichcan clearly been seen in example in appendix C (p. 291:i.) In contrast, the information in the individual logs tends to be a covering of the work in comment form with individual student performance and attitudes featuring more often and the reader is referred back to sample h in appendix C p. 291. In both cases the language is usually very brief and often coded or in note or abbreviated form; few teachers regularly ever write full sentences. This point further illustrates the presence of the mediated shared world and the characteristic language functions it allows: ellipsis, the dropping of known sentence elements, and prolepsis, an assumed to be understandable reference to unspoken, or non-referenced, events, persons, actions not evident in the writing/speech (van Lier, 1996, section 5 chapter two). It also shows the allied function of social inclusion by way of informal speech and the very assumption that shared knowledge can be omitted; that there is no need to write or speak in a full, detailed manner since everyone knows what "we" mean (van Lier, 1996, section 5 chapter two).

6.7.2. Structure

The functional aspect of the log content is reflected in the format, the prevalence for listing, and in the writing of sentences in note form in short highly message-focused structured entries. A brief look at the log entries in terms of Halliday's Functional Sentence Perspective (1985), Bloor & Bloor (1992) gives evidence to seeing entries high in message content conforming to the given/new (known also as the Theme/Rheme) structure in which the given (expected/known) element comes first followed by the new/essential information, creating a sentence structure in which new information is end focused; the given often

being omitted as the meaning is recoverable from other sources in the environment making its inclusion optional (Halliday & Hasan, 1991: 326). Furthermore, the prevalence of note-form (dropping other non-essential grammar such as articles, and creating lists of content words only) with frequent use of ellipsis, shows the teachers' reliance on shared knowledge and organizational culture for communication. Also, by using Prolepsis (not referring to elements the speaker assumes the reader will know or will be able to understand by way of shared knowledge) teachers can be reasonably sure their partner teachers will be able to understand their short entries and the significance of them for their shared class work.

For example; in the common entry type: **.... checked ex. 6 & 7**

This is the unmarked form of the sentence: **...I [we] checked ex. 6 & 7....** Ellipsis creates a dynamic direct and unmarked given/new sentence communication in which the 'checked' was a given, expected activity, and the ex. 6 & 7 the new message information.

The teachers sometimes write in the marked form: **... Ex. 6 &7 [I] checked ...** but when doing so they create a marked sentence indicating to the reader a sense of emphasis between what was done (ex. 6 & 7, not 8 & 10) and, with the ellipsis of the pronoun, a sense of detachment to the process of how or in what way it was done.

However, in either form, lexis is more important in carrying information than the grammar and is not dropped because it is essential to the reader-teacher. In this case the lexis (checked) carries much information as teachers will reference shared EFL knowledge (to compare the methodology of 'checked' with "done', 'marked', 'taught', 'deep-ended'), allowing them to read much more from the entry than just the words.

In the prose-like entries, a topic/comment structure appears quite frequently, mirroring an unmarked sentence structure where the reader-teacher is receiving new information from the comment.

For example: a teacher writes:

went through	_ex. 6 & 7_	_which was done well for this lot ._
checked	_homework_	_concentrating on correct use of articles_
moved to	_ex. 3 unit 4 ..._	xxx

Explanation:

1) In this log entry, what action this teacher 'went through / checked / moved to' is written as <u>given</u> information so this information functions as a <u>report</u> of a known action initiated and conducted by the teacher (possibly already decided as needing to be done by the partner-teachers in their previous pre-class planning).

2) What the teacher went through/checked/moved to is written as the <u>new</u> information, extended in this structure with content comments: both pieces of information being of particular interest to the reader (the next teacher), who will be basing their lesson focus on what was done (and how well it was done) in the earlier class.

This is a structure that efficiently, and briefly, covers as much information (report and comment) as is needed for the log to fulfill its function of communicating, or reporting on, class activities. The following is another analysis of a typical entry:

covered the exercises in book and then played landladies from Harrups   (T.1. 1993)

..(we) **covered**	**the exercises in** (the) **book ....**	**and then**	(we) **played** (the) **landladies** (game) ((no " " is written to indicate this is the title of a communication game; Teacher using prolepsis)) (which is) **from Harrups** ((again relying on prolepsis))
method	what/content	Linker indicates next activity and a time shift	new activity (T.1)

This is a characteristic method of log writing that forms within the log format along with listing and comments which shows the class content indepth. The use of ellipsis allows for

speedy, but understood reporting of what went on in the class, the movement of activities from given to new by way of a cohesive linker allows the reader partner-teacher an insight not only into what went on in the class in what order, but also (by prolepsis) as to whether or not the teacher followed the decided upon action for this class. Prolepsis reference is evoked of EFL shared knowledge (Landladies is a language game from a popular communications game book) and shared EFL principles (why the teacher would choose this 'game' and think it suitable for the students), and thus also an insight into the teacher's (or teachers if this was a pre-planned activity, as it is likely to be) teaching methodology (Landladies is a 'free-practice' information gap activity game involving the students walking around the room practicing language elements related to obligations, apologies and requests). Such a log entry can also indicate to any other reader what kind of exercise the students had been doing in the book, regardless of whether or not the book is known. Alternative interpretations are possible, but less likely, as an example: the book and/or 'landladies' might be unknown, then by prolepsis the reader can "guess" what kind of activity/book it is, based on shared knowledge of teaching English in the NELP. If neither is known, clearly the log entry carries little meaning. In any event, further face-to-face conversations may be needed to clarify either aspect, but this need to know is exactly what provides the interaction in the NELP. An example of this type of sentence entry is highlighted in appendix C (p.291;j).

The degree of information the report carries is also indicated in the choice of report form: for example,

> ... (the) exercises from (the) book - covered.   Harrups' - done ...

It would also indicate to the reader-teacher a different atmosphere and focus and a more impersonal "business" feel; that is, the exercises, considered to be the main focus of the class (were) covered (no reference to "we" or "I"), and Harrups (but not which exercise in Harrups, so either the reader-teacher will know this by prolepsis of shared class planning, or this information is being withheld) (was) done (but how was not recorded). This form may indicate a high degree of pre-planning or adherence to course work, rather than vagueness.

Of course as Halliday & Hasan point out (1991:326) there are many possible variations; for example

> a. ... They did the ex. and then the Harrups ...
> b..... the exercises were done and then we played landladies from Harrups ...

Each of which carries information not only on what was done in the class, but the way in which it was done; all information is of use to the reader-teacher and presented without detailed clarification or length of entry. The placing of the words and the form of the report both express the relative importance of the message, and reference to the mediated shared world enables complete understanding.

6.7.3. Comment

Irrespective of how teachers choose to emphasize the information, the message element usually remains quite clear due to the shortness of the entry and it seems to cause trouble only when a teacher does not know the "given" element. For example, if it is not known that the schedule (or pre-planning) states to check (all) the homework, rather than just exercises 6 & 7 of it, contrasted with when the schedule states to just check ex. 6 & 7 of the homework, and not all of it.

Such distinctions may be made for the teachers through the schedule, based on such points as time constraints, or on the basis of the purpose of the homework (for practice of work done, or for preparation of work to come) and this may be a decision of either the course schedule, or of the partner-teachers in pre-planning decision-making, or as an in-class individual teacher decision based on the dynamics of the class. This degree of information from the log entry may be specific to the partner teachers, based on the shared knowledge of their partnership, but anyone picking up the log will at least know what was done, and may even be able to discern if this was the expected outcome. The teachers, then, are able to communicate subtle distinctions to their partner teachers by their choice of report form, the reports carrying more information for them, by reference to their shared, mediated world, than is on the page.

6.7.4. Implications of log entry style

It is the native speaker teacher's ability to distinguish the given and new, the thematic message, the information, and the personal/impersonal aspect in these short notes in relationship to the class, the class schedule, and his or her own teaching experiences both in this program and in general, that enables him to know the focus and atmosphere of the class from the log entry and to be able to follow what went on, despite the log entries being so short. Whichever way teachers write however, they structure the information to highlight the main message content as this is what is most pertinent for the log readers.

In addition to the message orientation, some logs show a great deal of punctuation in the form of dashes, dotted lines and arrows which are used to indicate movement, tonality, cohesion and to replace rhetorical organization such as paragraphing, and all are methods employed by the writer-teacher to communicate as much information as possible in the shortest possible way.

for example:

> — introduced free-writing & purpose of   .... no dictionaries & why
>   B. stormed topic: colors - got fairly OK response. wrote for 15 mins.
>   feedback   — introduced...
>   ...... purpose of ...
> Ss checked writing — had to prompt Ss to write comments, some
>   good ideas ...   (MW. writing class 1992)

It may not be entirely clear to a non-NELP teacher what some of this teacher's abbreviated forms refer to, but knowledge of NELP's writing class focus (no textbook, a process-base, integrative perspective) and EFL techniques (appropriate methodology to implement the perspective; braining-storming, free-writing, peer checking) are assumed. Since writing classes are elective, this teacher was essentially writing an individual log report to herself and thus presumably she knows what she means. The entry however, still follows the basic format of the shared classes with a method, followed by content, followed by a comment. It is highly likely any other teacher, particularly a writing teacher, in the NELP would find this report intelligible and informative. Appendix C (p.291: k) shows another example of a similar log entry type.

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6.7.5. Implications of accessing the shared world in logs

The above analysis of the log content was text based, showing how the highly theme/rheme message focused structure aided teachers at the linguistic level to understand the content of logs when so very little is written. The use of ellipsis and of pronoun references, however, shows an even higher degree of access to a shared world. The constant use of ellipsis, in fact what is commonly called note-form, indicates a high degree of prolepsis is probably also working and teachers do in fact rely most heavily on expecting teachers to "know" the organizational culture, including the classes, the books, work, exercises, policy and students and thus tend to write simple log reports on the understanding that their partner teacher will already know many points. For instance teachers write the number of an exercise they have done, but not the text and often not even the unit. If teachers write they worked on the project they take for granted the partner teacher knows what project is being talked about.

> We know the program, we didn't need so many comments (T.6)

> People know what they are doing so its relaxed, I have a mental note with a long timeframe. (T.9)

> I didn't make many comments, because I felt like that's obvious, my partner knows ... (T.8)

That the shared world is referenced constantly in the logs by way of prolepsis and that teachers are comfortable in relying on the organizational culture in this constant mediating of the shared NELP world fits nicely with the position that an area of intersubjectivity (van Lier, 1996, see chapter two, section five) can also be operant in log communication. Since an area of intersubjectivity is said to be an area in which the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development, Vygotsky, see chapter two, section 5) forms, it could be possible for the log function to be acting as a means of providing a covert form of teacher development.

6.7.6. Conclusion to log contents

The teachers have of their own practices developed a highly efficient means of recording and sharing information about the content of their classes without having to spent a great deal of time on it. Knowing the curriculum, the course requirements and scheduling, knowing the NELP traditions, and knowing the "styles" of their fellow teachers has resulted in the teachers being able to maintain and demonstrate a level of connection to the program as a whole despite being part-time, and may be offering them a forum for covert teacher development while in the process of negotiating their busy teaching schedule.

6.8.   Logs as a teaching tool

Logs are clearly an important recording and planning tool of the NELP, but they are also a form of teacher records which, when in the form of diaries (Bailey, 1990, 1992,1996) are an established method of teacher development said to encourage collaborative learning and reflection (see chapter two section 6). While logs do not work in the same personally focused way for the same developmental purposes as teaching diaries, observations of teachers show they spend, in some cases considerable, time in what appears to be reflection before writing up their log reports; refer back to Raul in the vignette, who spent 12 minutes writing-up just three logs, and how he engaged in much chair-lounging and pen-chewing contemplation before and during his write-up. Teachers also recognize the reflective value of writing-up logs, as evidenced in the earlier teacher's interview comment referring to how the logs fulfill a need to "think about having something substantial to say". Can the logs be operating as a teaching tool?

6.8.1. Evidence of reflection and development

Log entries are written after every class and continue from year to year. No study has been done to ascertain if the logs specifically stimulate teachers to investigate their teaching practices. When asked about it in the interviews most teachers indicated they had not

thought of doing this for themselves, although in reflection they recognized the value of the logs in encouraging learning.

> I get generally get more out of talking to people ... it's probably a
> lazy opinion. I've never used logs by reading a comment and
> then asking directly why did you do that....[reflective silence] ...
> logs can be really good sources of materials and I will continue to
> use them at that level, I guess the problem is time.   (T.3)

Nevertheless, the logs do show some evidences of teacher development having taken place, whether or not this was known to the teacher. For example, the case of Teacher 2. Accustomed to teacher-fronted classes, he had struggled all semester with the new group methods and subjective grading that are large chunks of the NELP oral program. He usually wrote very "thin" logs, did not list much, and made few comments on the classes.

For the oral section of the first semester test, the students were given a graded jigsaw reading/speaking activity with written T/F questions to follow in the test paper. This activity takes considerable classroom management skills to set up and the teacher, who had never done this type of activity before, did not manage well. His retort on returning to the staffroom was ... (unprintable).... but he clearly stated the exercise was a waste of time. He uncharacteristically wrote a full log report

> test conducted, but on speaking activity Ss didn't seem to realize
> they had to share information ask/answer questions etc —
> very difficult to grade, could only give grade to about 30% of
> the Ss.....not able to give a score for the speaking activity
> which would be fair to the Ss as a reflection of their ability
>   (T.2. July, 1993)

No answer was placed in the logs by either his partner-teacher (who made-up the missing grades in the next class), or the coordinator, but in the staffroom responses and discussions that followed several of the teachers put forward different views. Several months later in his own second semester individual teacher-choice unit test for oral class, he stated he had

come up with a really good exercise, and in the log he wrote:

> ..... speaking activity - graded
> groups - Ss in turn described their part-time jobs, made notes
> on each other. Groups split and reformed with new members
> who told their groups' job descriptions. Actually lasted full-
> lesson and Ss gave positive feedback ....   (T.2. Dec. 1993)

This, of course, is an exercise remarkably similar to the one he had found so objectionable earlier. The influence of earlier work was neither acknowledged verbally nor in the logs but since he outlined his method where he did not usually do this it can be said that he truly believed he "discovered" the idea and was pleased with the results. The logs reflected and recorded this teacher's "development". Perhaps it does not make any difference that he did not realize how he arrived at his discovery, he did anyway, and while the log did not initiate this 'discovery' it recorded it as having occurred.

Further examples for considering log initiated teacher development:

> I wouldn't say I've learned anything about teaching English from
> the logs, although I do sometimes read what my co-teacher says and
> think hey, cool, that's a novel idea I wish I had thought of - could
> have thought of that but I don't really see logs as a tool for learning
> about teaching. I think it's a reflection of my character that what
> other people did always seems more helpful and inspiring than
> what I did .... I might possibly come out of this if it were regularly
> done with a group of people ...   (T.7)

> In the university they do expository writing and in the Tandai they
> do creative writing. Through the logs I could catch this difference ...
> by what you wrote, so through the logs we caught it together. It was a
> bit late, but it could be fixed, but if I hadn't had that information
> check it might have been detrimental to the students ... I mean they
> were getting something, but it wasn't creative writing and that's
> what they signed up for.   (T.1)

These comments clearly show the teachers find value in log use for picking up information helpful for their classes and teaching perspective.

6.8.2. Putting it to the teachers

Current theories and teacher training programs (Wallace, 1991, Olsen, 1992, Edge, 1992, Richard & Lockhart, 1994, Richards, J. 1996) suggest reflection is an essential activity of teacher learning and development and this study has observed many evidences of reflection occurring in the NELP; the observation that teachers engage in a period of reflection whilst writing-up logs, that reflection occurred in the process of the teacher interviews, that reflection produces the teachers' comments in the end of semester reports and debriefings, and that occasional examples of modification to teacher thinking can be found in written form in the logs. By the time this occurred to me, I was no longer able to ask the individual teacher (T.2.) in the case cited above as to why he chose a jigsaw activity for his class because he had left the country, but it is not unreasonable to suppose it was due to reflection, whether this was an overt awareness or not. However, it did bring to mind another comment from the teachers' interviews.

> I think making teachers think about what they did is valuable in
> itself. You could set the logs up for more teacher development, I
> can see the potential   (T.4)

6.8.3. Teachers discuss reflection in the logs

In 1996 I decided to ask the teachers what they thought of the idea of encouraging reflection through the logs. In typical NELP form (later to become significant, see below) this was done as a group decision-making activity: teachers were given a sample copy of a possible new log format with an added category called "reflection". Since I was out of the country on sabbatical, the meeting was chaired by the NELP's visiting professor. It was held in the lunchbreak, taped and sent to me for transcription. The following comments are from the transcript. The discussion starts off with five participants and covers why they should discuss this topic, two teachers saying early on that they thought the present system was fine and shortly after excusing themselves - one to go home and the other to take some students in a make-up test. The three remaining teachers then went through the categories one by one, spending considerable time on the headers, until the chair steered them

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towards a consideration of the key issue of reflection. Most of the teachers did not at first see the point, the difficulty seeming to come from a confusion between reflection being personal and the logs being public, although this was never fully clarified. However, as the discussion continued an understanding began to form. It was set-back again about half-way through the discussion by the late arrival of a teacher with dominant views, who did not see reflection or encouragement for teacher development as anything she was to pass on to or share with another teacher through the logs. As the discussion continued however, she too also registered a slight shift in her understanding, acknowledging in the end that comments of a more general and theoretical kind might be appropriate for inclusion in the logs: After 35 minutes and 221 turns the teachers agreed to the inclusion of a category called "reflection", although the general consensus remained that they didn't really need it since they met together anyway and would rather prefer to talk together as teachers face-to-face.

The excerpts start from when a more general value and purpose for the logs emerges; comments relate to the issues and to NELP culture.

95. G.	well, but what the logs do is communicate between teachers, what we're talking about [here in this discussion] is individual searching
101.ML	how useful is more information on teaching techniques, things that work, didn't work. Yeah, I
102.B.	I question it anyway, like when I'm sharing a class with Raul....it's a personal thing ...your teaching style and it's far easily done on a face-to-face basis really, I find it...
104.J.	... its easier just to share a few things chatting over lunch for feedback ....
105.G.	which teachers sort of do generally in passing anyway, you know they talk about ...
106.B.	yeah, well, that's what we do

These comments are a powerful testament to the operating culture of the NELP and the easy way this allows the teachers to so confidently reference each other and the "way we do things". This belief also works to confirm a sense of social inclusion and to preempt any possible negative reactions to conflicts or differences of opinion. Before discussions then,

the teachers reaffirm their group cohesiveness,

116.G.	... that's [writing-up reflections] the sort of thing you write in your report at the end of term....
117.ML	you think the logs may serve as a bit of a journal for you to build up your end of year report...or some useful things to give an overall overall picture...?
1118.J.	there's not enough space ....
119.B.	that's what M's being saying. M's saying an A4...

These comments show the pragmatic and practical focus of the teachers when confronted with new innovations, helping any such innovators to remember the limitation of the program and to not over-tax its affordances. It also corroborates the research work done on teacher's workplace by Lare (1988), Little & MacLaughlin (1993), Hargreaves (1993, 1994),who have also noted that practical concerns are a dominant consideration in teacher's work.

154.B.	yeah, I think the system we've got seems to work well. I think what M's getting at is all right, would you go into more detail though ...
155.G.	I don't think you would...
156.B.	....theoretically it seems like a good idea, but practically it's not going to work ...
1157.G.	well nobody's going to sit down and write for 10 -15 minutes in their logs are they, unless there's something essential they have to ....
158.ML.	there's another dimension. And that's our own personal development.....
159.G.	well, that's what I said. It's personal.
160.ML.	but there are general things that happen as well....

The negotiation of meaning begins to occur here as it becomes apparent they are not talking about the same thing when they refer to 'development'. The following section begins to see the teachers starting to theorize more, thus demonstrating that the act of decision-making is a powerful way to place the teachers in an area of shared intersubjectivity in which the negotiation of meaning, the realization that comes with

awareness of issues, and learning may occur. The theme in which learning from a 'situated interaction among teachers in the course of everyday work' has lately been taken up by Little (2002), where she is working on developing a conceptual scheme to help 'locate learning in teachers' communities of practice'. In the NELP study cited here, we have teachers negotiating their learning through a decision-making activity around a practical concern; that if agreed upon, the decision will require them to integrate another activity into their daily work. I believe this is clear evidence in favor of interactive decision-making as being vital in promoting teacher development. The following excerpt concludes the process, and elucidates another important point for program coordinators.

174.G.	I wouldn't write down things to help a teacher develop in the log. I'd write it on another piece of paper or I'd sit down and talk with them about it.
175.ML	right
176. G.	to me a log means what I did, you know what's coming next.
179.ML	there are other ways of functioning, doing the logs, other than just a record of what we did ....
184G.	I think the idea is to keep things separate so teachers clearly know what they're dealing with
188.ML	but these things are not all separate
198.B.	you wouldn't write everything, like "I was a little teacher–centered today must try and change next class". These are all kinds of little subconscious things that you just always try to change.
199.G.	I wouldn't have thought that at the Tandai level, particularly with the teachers we've got here that we'd be looking at that, that's what you'd be looking at, you know, when you're in a language school and the first few years out. I would think that most teachers, you know, have their methodology and are working on that, trying out their ideas themselves and going from there and seeing if something really works ...
	3 sec. Silence
200.G.	we're not trying to tell, to train here
201.ML.	right, except that I guess we're consciously or unconscious trying to improve what we're doing all the time, I suppose ...

207.G.   … yeah, sometimes you walk in there
          and you take one look at the students on the day and you know what
          you're going to do is not going to work, so you change everything around.
          You have to, yeah…((hesitating))

209.G.   so then you record it, then you would say that I had planned, or what we
          talked about didn't work, so what I did was ABCD and that was great,
          or was a failure and go on with the next thing you know. I think…well,
          that's personal.
                              Ye::ah, I would do that ((prolepsis; write reflections in the log))

*((an understanding now forming that what is a success or failure in a class and why, is
something that might be suitable for recording in the log))

Nevertheless, the teachers continue to echo the following:

B.   I feel with the Tandai, with the way we work in here, and with the system we have…
      we are all meeting each other, so therefore, it's far better to do this ... face-to-face

6.8.4. Comment

This 221 turn discussion contains many views, the hard line against the idea of teacher
development through a more overt reflection softening over the discussion time, with the
teachers finally agreeing to a section at the bottom of the log-sheet for reflections. This
discussion and conclusion leads to the possibility of teachers considering an element of
teacher development in and of their daily work, but more importantly it indicates they are
reflecting anyway, thus involving themselves in constant development as a matter of
course in their work at the Tandai (the NELP), and thus further indicating that awareness
of reflection and conscious action on awareness are different issues indeed.

A cursory study of the use of the "reflection" category shows that teachers G. and B did not
use the category once in their remaining years in the NELP (Gillian for another one year
and Barry for another five years), although ML did occasionally over his remaining year,

and several of the incoming teachers have used it, some fairly regularly. Gillian was also seen to write reflective-like comments in her logs ,but not in the space provided for them (see appendix C p. 291: L). Since this study has not concerned itself with issues of individual teacher cognition, a follow-up study of the benefits or otherwise of this category has not thus far been undertaken. More will be said about the issue of reflection in chapter eight as regards the field of teacher development for part-time teachers in a busy EFL program, with the suggestion that the issue of continuing teacher development might better be approached from the view of 'professional' development. This would allow the teachers to attach a less personally targeted focus and a more organizational and cooperative focus to 'awareness' activities, which would allow for the idea that everyone is involved and "not just me because the administration doesn't trust me and thinks that I need it", or from any feeling or belief that such an activity would be just an empty time-wasting administrative formality. Thus echoing `a Camp's findings (1993) that 'teachers need to know that they are seen as professionals'.

6.9. Conclusion

From the above discussions on the place and value of the logs, from teachers opinions as to their value for themselves and the program, and from an investigation into how they are used in the NELP, logs can clearly be seen working as an affordance, a tool imbued with NELP culture, and as an affordance which not only operates to ensure classroom and staffroom cooperation, but also to ensure cohesion in the program. Furthermore, from a discussion between teachers on extended uses of the logs we find logs contain a potential for on-going work related teacher/professional development, but that teachers would prefer to approach this in a face-to-face situation.

Despite the usefulness and the value the teachers assign to the logs, they clearly place greater importance on their chances to talk with the other teachers, and thus another major function emerges for study in the professional working environment of the teachers: verbal communication in the staffroom, specifically the areas of decision-making and feedback. Thus it is to the area of decision-making in the NELP that this study now turns.

Chapter Seven

Teacher-to-Teacher Interactive Decision-Making

you can detect the heart of an organization by its language

(Handy, 1995:106)

7.1 Introduction

As demonstrated in the earlier chapters, the NELP is a program of teachers who by selection are very verbal people. It is therefore a program of talkers. Any program of talkers will produce a very large and wide spectrum of communication. This chapter will focus on one particular type of "talk": decision-making, defined here as talk aimed at producing an action, either immediate or in the near future, and including comments and feedback on actions already taken that indicate a need for further action or amendments to the original decision. This chapter will look at the common or frequent types of decision-making sequences the teachers engage in and show how teachers are able to negotiate with each other in the confines of a program of part-time teachers who share classes but have limited time for interactive decision-making. A detailed look at a selection of examples will show the process of the interactive decision-making working as a contingency of the NELP where, through the use of ellipsis, prolepsis and reliance on a shared knowledge and organizational culture, the teachers can enter an area of intersubjectivity–a place of negotiation– which allows for the speedy negotiation of acceptable and workable decisions and for the possibility of individual learning.

Chapter six identified two very prominent discourse patterns of movement in the NELP which dominated decision-making (DM) and recording in the logs. These same patterns can be found in the verbal interaction producing much the same results. The transaction (A-B) pattern and the transformation (AA-BB) pattern: the A-B pattern, producing short DM sequences high in message and action and relying on shared knowledge for successful completion, and the AA-BB pattern sequences being longer, involving more teachers than just the immediate partner-teachers on issues that lead eventually to a decision and action, but through considerable negotiation of meaning and practical concerns on the way to that decision that create a more transformational dialog which thus sets up an area of

intersubjectiviy and allows for the possibility of teacher learning.

This chapter will focus on how the teachers rely on and use the contingencies of their shared knowledge and their organizational culture in their daily work by studying their decision-making interaction and will be more concerned with procedural knowledge (what teachers are doing; how DM is happening) than declarative knowledge (what the teachers are talking about, what the topics of the DM are). This requires certain assumptions be made about the teachers in the NELP. Namely, that as they are all native speakers of English and qualified, experienced EFL teachers, this study of their verbal interaction will assume that they will have an innate and inherent native competency of the structures (grammatical and discoursal) of English, that they will have an individual, but nevertheless evident ability to manipulate conversations according to the various speech acts they are engaged in, and that they will have competency in native turning taking patterns and interactive strategies to the extent of their individual personalities. It also assumes they will each have a various repertoire of EFL teaching knowledge and experiences to inform their opinions in their decision-making activities. This being so, no space will be devoted to explaining how teachers can engage in decision-making at the language level, or to detailed identification and explanation of the topics they talk about, which can be inferred from the descriptions and explanations of the macro-cultural influences of teaching in Japan in chapters one, four and five.

A much larger assumption must also be made as to the cognitive awareness the teachers may or may not have of the concept of a shared culture and to the extent that they may recognize and agree that there is one operating in the NELP. I make the assumption that there is, but have no reflexivity from the teachers on this issue. Although teachers were asked individually for their opinions on logs in open recorded interviews in an "after school" activity not in any way interfering with their daily work, no attempt was made to have the teachers introspect on their participation in any of their discussions; briefly, such a request would have been so intrusive and evaluative for the teachers as to end any hope of gaining any taped data or cooperation at all, and would have severely interfered in the teachers' working day and attitude to the NELP. This was a risk I was not prepared to take

since the NELP study was in the natural-real world of the teachers and not in a laboratory; a distinction needing to be respected. However, permission was given to tape whole staffroom conversations on the understanding I was interested to know how they discussed and made decisions, but was not interested in any particular teachers. From selected excerpts of taped and transcribed examples of their interactive decision-making, and from the observations of their behavior in the NELP, interpreted on the basis of the culture described in chapters four and five, I will show that there is a common shared culture in the NELP that they create, manipulate and "know", whether or not they are aware of it. To substantiate these claims, this chapter will show the teachers actively engaging, referencing and relying on shared knowledge to facilitate their work practices.

This chapter will look at:

1.   the types of verbal DM the teachers engage in

2.   a comparative look at the specific characteristics of each

3.   examples of DM sequences; with analysis and comment

4.   the implications for communication and teacher development

7.2.   Decision-making types identified

The observations, tape mappings and tape transcripts have allowed for the isolation of three decision-making discussion exchange types, namely:

1. transitory, which are very short almost in passing decision-making sequences (TDM), reminiscent of the A-B log pattern of interaction.
2. longer sequences, which are characteristically open to the staffroom (LDM), reminiscent of the AA-BB log pattern of interaction.
3. secluded sequences, which are also longer but bounded and privately conducted sequences covering both patterns, but limiting the participants in the interaction to the class partner teachers.

Of the three types the longer, open decision-making style (LDM) appears to be the most common. However, since no frequency count has been conducted on the data, this is a

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perception based on long-term observation, tape recordings of staffroom interaction, and participation in such discussions. Each DM type has distinctive characteristics, but common to all three in facilitating decision-making is the use of ellipsis (omitting known sentence features) and prolepsis (assuming, anticipating, prevailing upon known elements of shared knowledge) of the organizational culture.

7.2.1. Selection of Samples

Originally this chapter intended to discuss and exemplify all three decision-making "types" equally. However, as the LDM and SDM transcripts are long and cannot be fully exemplified in the script due to space and word limitations, only TDM and a cursory look at sequences of the longer "types" will be offered. Little, (2002) who discusses the difficulties inherent in extracting and interpreting samples of teachers' interaction from records of their daily work, highlights the problems inherent in attempting to analyze long samples extending hundreds of turns. Her solution has been to select segments, or what she has researched and accepted to be called as 'fragments':

> There is a crucial strategic value in looking closely at bounded segments of text. Starting with small fragments is first and foremostly a way of coping with the sheer density of talk and gesture in a large volume of recorded interaction .... Small fragments of recorded interaction offer the virtue of manageability while enabling us to satisfy the demands of analytic accountability
> (Little, 2002:920)

Little (ibid) referencing the work of R. Hall, identifies three limitations:

1. a fragment increases the risk of misinterpretation because the contiguous interactions that contribute to 'sense-making' are lost, and priorities, history, and context which the participants use to make sense of the interaction is 'relatively invisible'. I hope to be able to bridge this gap somewhat by informing interpretations of the transcriptions and observations with my more intimate knowledge of the individuals involved.

2. there may be a lack of interpretive resources available to catch interaction that falls outside the frame of records made of the conversation, or no systematic record of interactions among teachers between recorded meetings. Although this is a difficulty for

which produces constant close proximity for the teachers, and because the NELP study is a longitudinal ethnographic case study in which I have had time to thoroughly familiarize myself with the individual teachers and the NELP environment.

3.   there may be a limitation on domain knowledge, analysis being limited to the degree in which the researcher is familiar with the content and organization of the conversations under study. In this area, my insider knowledge works to an advantage, the problem more likely being the inability to explain what seems rather obvious, rather than in actually being able to understand it.

In the case of the NELP study, the cutting of large scripts to sequences, or fragments, has resulted in the elimination of the fullness of the DM sequence, as much of the dynamics of the total DM discussion, the negotiation of results and even of references to the shared culture, are dependent on the interactive aspects of teachers such as entering and leaving and participating in more than one session, all which are apparent only in the length. Sections have been taken to exemplify selected points, but the total number of possible instances is too various and numerous to be able to show each in isolation and explanation. This same factor was encountered when trying to isolate individual features of the logs for study (see chapter one), and further emphasizes the interactive contingencies in the NELP, once again highlighting how the organizational life of the NELP is heavily dependent on the participation of the teachers at every level of its existence.

7.2.2.   Decision-making characteristics

1. The shortest "type" of DM typically consists of a two or three line sequence, or a few rapid turns of a few minutes duration only. Mappings have shown these tend to appear suddenly at crucial times such as immediately before class, illustrating a "log-type" decision-making function, and creating an immediate entry into an area of intersubjectivity where an unspoken taken for granted referencing of shared culture is essential for reaching a decision. These sequences are high in both ellipsis and prolepsis, and are much concerned with practical matters of planning and the execution of work responsibilities of an urgent

immediacy. They are highly message oriented, transactional and informal, often rely on kinetics, and the content is usually a singular concern. However, mappings and transcriptions also show many short sequences also function to confirm previous planning, to comment on present or future planning and, with their informality, often seem to function as a means of establishing a social inclusiveness rather than just a simple message transfer.

2. The longer, open DM "types" involve longer sequences of planning and decision-making in which practical matters may be informed by and through varying degrees of problem-solving, experience-telling asides and shop talk, and thus they can be seen to be operating less as a means of immediate information transfer and practical decision-making, and more for the negotiation of projected work, general knowledge transfer, and as a means of exemplification, persuasion, and transfer of beliefs and assumptions concerning teaching in general, and EFL in particular. The longer sequences are either open, in that any member of the NELP can join or leave the discussion freely, or secluded in which (usually) two teachers will engage in a closed session of decision-making specific to their classes from which other teachers in the NELP are excluded. Mappings of the length of these DM and transcriptions of examples indicate they are more amenable to placing teachers in an area of sustained intersubjectivity and to thus increasing teachers' chances for availing themselves of peer scaffolding and thus individually regulated teacher development.

3. A very characteristic feature of all DM is proximity: observations show interactive sequences are usually conducted face-to-face with female participants and with male/female participants, but often show male/male participants standing side by side and rarely looking at each other. Males also tend to talk across the room placing distance between them, even for longer conversations. These proximity features are similar to those observed and recorded on video by Tannen (1997) in her research into office interaction and the interaction and proximity studies of children's' discussion styles in which she found females were more inclusive in circular formation and males more distant in linear formations. This may be an inherent factor of native speaker of English interspatial preferences, but it indicates the importance of the environment in any organizational in assisting with the interactive DM in the work place. Some experimentation has occurred

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informally in the NELP over the years, with teachers working together being seated close by and males given opposite desks, obliging them to look straight forward. For the most part, however, such moves to encourage interaction are unnecessary as the hiring of teachers ensures communicative types.

4. The most frequent topics for the LDM are:

a. grading, especially the deciding of grade content, instructions to the students, and marking standards
b. long projects covering several classes in which teachers need to negotiate who is doing what in each of the lessons
c. failing students and make-up grades

These topics, especially the project and test decision-making, provide the clearest evidences of teachers negotiating differing teaching perspectives and possibly scaffolding each other in the process of covert teacher learning. The inclusion of experience-telling episodes, usually related to teaching in a kind of "shop talk"(Dickinson, 1996) also appear in the longer and secluded DM sequences, thus transactional talk (jointly managed talk for negotiation) often gives way to more transformational talk (jointly managed talk with the potential for achieving change) often aimed at:

a. asking for assistance by outlining a problem situation.
b. attempting to persuade another of a decision by exemplification of experience and knowledge through the relating of classroom stories.
c. expressing expertise or opinions in a more transmissive way
d. covert, and often largely unconscious "teaching" and "learning"

5. Analysis of staffroom talk, to be highlighted in the rest of this chapter, shows that teachers engage in talk connecting and interacting not only with immediate course content, but also to and with the program, and in talk that covertly seeks or offers help through dealing with real and hypothetical situations of a more general nature: an interaction that may be seen as an informal attempt at theorizing, and an attempt to explore new ways to teach. The following is a list of the characteristics of the DM types: informed by an analysis for patterns from the observations and from mapping outlines.

7.3. A comparative look at the characteristics of DM types

TDM	LDM	SDM
* sequence is very short	* sequence is longer	* long & concentrated
* teachers may be standing or across the room	* there are often more than two teachers	* formally arranged
* one of the teachers appears to be 'moving away'	* the DM is 'open', any teacher can join	* physically bound
* teachers move towards quick response, action	* teachers may join & leave at will	* has 'serious/business' feel
* not wanting to "bother" the partner(s)	* teachers are usually sitting down	* more formally opened
* not wanting to take up too much time	* teachers appear to be attending to only the DM	* not necessarily formally closed
* recognizing teachers time constraints & involvement in their own preparations	* of appearing willing to give time to reach a decision	* often closed by school bell
* not wanting to be seen as too 'serious', dictatorial or bossy	* of participants' contributions being valuable	* may take place in staffroom
* not wanting or needing to get into anything deeper	* of cooperation, willingness to concede	* may take place in another room
* not wanting to indicate any failing on part of themselves or partner	* of the decision taken as not being final, just the initial guideline, or pending	* involves only two invited participants
* not wanting to question the partner's ability, knowledge, or preparedness	* of being able to change outcomes, if necessary	* exclusive and not open to others, or to interruptions
* wanting to get the exchange over with	* that there is time for disagreement and final decisions	* content & results are not shared with others
* recognizing this has been done before, it is " just checking"	* that a decision would be preferred	* may not be face-to-face; often by phone
* acceptance of the speed & informality of the interaction and DM	* 'business' of interaction is both transaction and transformation, but immediate focus is to make a decision on a larger issue	* may be continued through mail or phone contacts
* indicating a confidence, trust and cooperation between the teachers		* 'business' of interaction is focused to individual class, for specific decisions, is both transaction & transformation, but
* acceptance of this type of communication		* may be transmissive; coordinator to course teacher
* 'business' of interaction is transaction		

7.4 Types of decision-making exemplified

7.4.1 Transitory decision-making

Observation, tape transcripts and mappings of the patterns of the daily "talk" in the NELP show that the teachers in the NELP handle a wealth of data, information and planning, preparation and checking in short episodes often just prior to going to class. These decision-making sequences can be as short as one or two content words of a mere few seconds duration to a longer exchange of a few turns. Despite the brevity, these sequences appear to function adequately, or at least characteristically, to transfer the intended information either asked for, requested or given. The vignette of the day in the life of the NELP is replete with examples as many occur throughout the day. The following are some examples of the transitory DM sequences commonly found in the NELP, with analysis of the functions and effect. These sequences have occurred as complete DM sequences, but mappings show similar sequences embedded in both the longer open and secluded sequences indicating the heavy reliance the teachers place on being able to access shared knowledge to reach speedy decisions, and especially so for matters of straight transaction.

The titles for each of the following examples have been chosen to reflect the function of the DM in relation to the NELP organizational culture as a whole, and aim to illustrate what the teachers are doing, - how - they use the affordances of NELP routines and culture, and their reliance on their shared world for speedy decision-making through the use of ellipsis and prolepsis of this shared culture. They are not categories in the true sense but rather each reflects a moment in the overall "talk" in the NELP, tape transcriptions and observations showing them to be typical of NELP talk when partner teachers are making speedy decisions on the content and planning of their classes or on policies in the NELP. Each example has been coded as exemplifying the reliance of NELP culture in the process of decision-making, and is followed by an explanation informed by observations and by a comment relating the sequence to the concept of the shared world and thus further highlighting the value of interactive decision-making.

Many decisions are made in brief exchanges made sensible by a heavy dependence on an understanding of the macro and micro culture. This sequence, perfectly intelligible to Robyn and Marie, results in a major decision which will involve the macro-culture (the main student affairs office), the micro-culture (extra work for Marie and Robyn) and the student concerned.

M.	What's that student's name ... did you see her?	((looking & speaking over desks, noise & heads to Robyn))
R.	oh, from my class? Oh: ah:: X. No. she didn't come.	((R. barely looking at her log, and hardly looking up))
M.	Ah::::: OK.	((M. makes a note of the name))

(Dec. 8th. 1998   TDM R & M)

Explanation and comment

This DM sequence took place between classes and took less than a few seconds. Both M. and R. know X. is a problem student in the class that has just finished. R. is the class teacher but M. is the coordinator of the course and the one responsible for acting when dealing with contacting students with absentee problems. This is declarative knowledge of the student known to both teachers. The brief decision-making sequence here illustrates how a shared understanding of the procedural knowledge of the NELP and macro-culture allows for a quick decision about a student problem.

R. was to have "looked out" for this student to give her a warning about her poor attendance. Both R. and M. know this without explanation, from previous discussions and from expected NELP teacher routines, this shared knowledge being assumed by the use of prolepsis.

Most of the decision is based on unspoken reference to the shared knowledge of NELP which includes college requirements. Both M. and R. know what constitutes a "problem" student from the college regulations (to have more than 30% absences) and both know

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what courses of action are available for any teacher with such a student from the known practices of the NELP and past experiences of them. M. also knows from the same source of general NELP culture, that as a result of not attending the last lesson the student will have exceeded the macro-culture's absence rulings and it will now be her NELP micro-culture duty to report the student to the student affairs office and arrange to have her called in for a consultation. R. knows this will happen as this is the policy of the NELP, and her "problem" student will be attended to. Although, by prolepsis she can know this will also mean she may be asked to offer the student make-up work, the content and extent being her own choice.

This sequence demonstrates the action of prolepsis based on college and NELP culture and illustrates how teachers can take for granted in their talk that their requests for decisions will be understood without extensive backgrounding and explanation. Marie's response: Ah:::: OK is the only expression that the decision has been made, but clearly both teachers know what course of action has been decided concerning the student and do not require any more discussion or decision. In this way, decisions can be set up and made speedily.

7.4.1.ii   relying on the shared world of the NELP through ellipsis

1.B.	I just want to check ... with you	((talking over desks to R.))
2.R.	yeah ... so why don't I just put these in order and put them in your tray ... is that all right?	((looking harassed))
3.B.	yeah.	

(Jun. 29th. 1999 TDM R & B)

Explanation

These two teachers share the same oral class and are required to record the results of the students' homework vocabulary sheets according to the teachers' previously made decision on who was to check homework in class, collect in results and record them in the class log grade sheet, and who is to return them to the students. None of this is mentioned in this sequence, but all of it is known, thus there is a heavy reliance on prolepsis of NELP

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norms. However, there is also a reliance on the teachers unraveling the many instances of ellipsis.

1. The homework situation is implied in line one; R. knows by the speaker (B.) and their relationship in the NELP (they are partner-teachers on at least one course) what B. is likely to be talking about (the homework papers B is to collect from R. to hand back to the students). Thus prolepsis puts both teachers in the same area of understanding: their shared class and homework requirements.

2. This shared zone of intersubjectivity allows both teachers to know the matter concerns their class not for now, but for later in this same day, and for R. to understand what B. needs to ask him (is the homework ready for him to give back), to thus "jump ahead" to answer the unasked question by saying he will put the homework papers (pronoun reference ellipsis of 'these') he collected in from the last class (that he has already recorded as earlier it was decided he would), and that he will (very nicely, thank you) put them in numerical order, in the (ellipsis of 'materials') tray (for this class combination; important because there are several drawer classifications in the NELP for various teachers and courses).

3. Thus R. preempts B's 'checking' inquiry allowing the DM sequence to take but a few seconds of time.

Comment

It is quite common in the NELP for any DM sequence to carry a degree of hedging or retraction at whatever point a decision is made directly by only one teacher in a pair sequence, an act which seems to function as a "pulling back" from directness, from attempting to be seen as establishing or speaking from a position of authority. An example of this can be seen in this sequence in R's. use of "is that all right?". By the rather hesitant tone and irritated facial movements, it can be interpreted that this question is less for seeking acceptance or approval of the planned action, or for closing the interaction, than it is an instance of R. holding back to allow the other teacher the chance to change the decision while communicating he really does not want him to exercise his right to do so.

In this case B. may have preferred R. to simply hand over the homework papers (an action requiring a short stretch of an arm, with a slight raising of the body at the most, since they sit at desks nearly directly across from each other). The putting of papers in the tray would require B. to get up and make a special trip around the staffroom later in the day to get them – a situation that would not only require more effort from B. but would also require him to *remember* to do it, meaning B. would have to think about his class preparation again. This may sound trivial, but in a busy working day in the NELP where teachers have three consecutive 90 minute classes, often all of them shared with another teacher, they barely have enough time to think about an issue once, let alone twice, especially if the issue is considered to be a small one. This is not a matter of laziness, but a matter of the pressure of *time*. It is a significant factor in the decision-making requirements in the NELP that the teachers must rely on a partner's efficiency as much as their own.

It was not clear from the observations why R. preferred to put the papers in the tray rather than to just hand them over, since they were ready in all ways except the order. Teachers have been observed to generally comply with other teacher requests at the immediate time of requesting however inconvenient, but it may have been because R was very busy with another class preparation at the time and his desk was covered with papers for that class, one more immediately in need of attention than B. and R's. shared class later that day, explaining why R. was uncharacteristically unwilling to disturb his present preparations. B. could have said, "why don't you just hand them over to me now". That he did not may be interpreted that he too saw R's present planning situation and did not want to disturb him further, thus he accepted the decision with a 'yeah'; a direct and overt act of cooperation.

7.4.1.iii   **relying on Prolepsis**

R.	Oh::h..oh. We're going to do that.	((confirming intonation, handing over test paper))
K.	Ok, ok, so:... I'll do that.	((agreement, picking up test paper))

(Jun. 29th. 1999 TDM. R & K)

In this short sequence a teacher is giving his partner the completed written test they had decided on in their previous meeting, a test the previous decision-making had assigned R. to prepare at home for use this day, but a paper K. was seeing for the first time in finished form. None of this is referred to directly, but all is understood. R. uses "we" since they both share the class, but K. follows on with "I" because she is the one who will administer the test to the students, even though the test is for the class they both share. In this way she indicates to R. her understanding of the prolepsis he has used - that is ... the test he is handing to her is for her to do in their shared class. This sequence is inclusive and is a highly kinetic and visual one, the sense and understanding coming from the shared knowledge of their classes' test (and who is doing what as regards this test), and from both being able to see the test paper in front of them.

R. and K., like most partnerships in the NELP, have been assigned desks next to each other to allow for easy reliance on visual information, the NELP recognizing the importance of proximity and easy physical access as being necessary adjuncts to quick and efficient communication and decision-making between teachers.

7.4.1.iv.   relying on shared knowledge of EFL & NELP to decide conflict

The many completion sequences found in the DM indicate a high level of shared knowledge, whereas the hesitation sequences indicate breeches and repairs of NELP organizational culture, such as in the following example.

1. R it's out of		((R. begins to name the source of his activity handout))
2. ML yeah I know, so ...		((ML sees paper, recognizes source, begins to ask about it...))
3. R I've done this ...		((R. indicates he knows how the exercise will "go down"))
4. ML grea::t. I could use this		((ML accepts R's recommendation without

		reservation; evidence of past positive experience of working with R.; decision is made on basis of shared understanding of EFL and relationship with R.))
5.R.	ah::huh	((R. accepts compliment, and quick decision))
6. ML	is there any reason why we can't give this to all the L2?	((ML use of ellipsis, suggests all teachers on the L2 course they are on could use the activity))
7.R.	we::ll, I:: wo::uldn't want to go ahead a::nd decide for Hillary and Ba::rry	((R. uncertain this is a good idea; NELP culture requires partner- teacher's discuss & agree, decisions can't be made unilaterally; named teachers are same course partner teachers; H. working with R. and B. working with ML.))
8. ML.	I don't see why not, I can't see them not wanting to do this	((ML misses this point, or doesn't know it; is relatively new teacher to NELP, but is confident of EFL & others will share his belief the exercise will be "good"; which indicates use of prolepsis as regards both teachers, and their teaching preferences))
9. R	Oh::?::...ye::~::ah ....?	((R. uncertain, goes against NELP policy))
	((2 sec. Silence))	((awkward silence, R. doesn't agree))
10. ML	I'll run off copies for us ... we can always do more	((ML indicates acceptance, even though he could go ahead and prepare for his class with H. by making copies only for their shared class; ellipsis of copies is less important than the inclusive pronoun "we" which may reference either R. or himself, but is more likely to be prolepsis reference to all other teachers accepting this exercise))
	((silence))	

(Dec. 8th, 1997 TDM   R. & ML.)

Explanation

R. is seen offering an activity to his partner on their class of the L.2 course (which consists of 6 combined classes - the largest coordinated group in the program). In line 1. he begins to quote his source, but ML. preempts the need with a completion line indicating he knows

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the source already (showing evidence of shared knowledge of texts available in the NELP and in the EFL field). R, continues to show ML what he has prepared and ML agrees it is worthy – so much so he thinks all the courses could do the same activity. When R. hesitates in line 7, and again in line 9, indicating his non-compliance with ML.'s suggestion of preparing the activity for all the teachers, he does so because he knows it is not the "done" thing in the NELP for one teacher to decide on behalf of other teacher pairs without discussion. A long silence follows after which by line 10 ML seems to understand a NELP norm is being evoked here and understands he should not proceed with making copies of the activity for all the teachers. However, he does not acknowledge a direct canceling of the idea either, indicating his continued interest in the activity for everyone by saying it was easy enough to run off copies later– prolepsis allowing R. to understand when, or if, the others have approved it and that ML thinks this will likely be so.

Comment

This sequence demonstrates the teachers' shared knowledge of EFL texts and a shared agreement of activities suitable for the students. It also shows the action of prolepsis stimulating an entry into a field of intersubjectivity – the area of shared understanding: although prolepsis of NELP culture failed at first at lines 7. and 8. when ML demonstrated he did not know, or had forgotten, that in the NELP culture teachers do not go ahead and make decisions on behalf of other teachers as regards their class work, it later successfully allowed for the negotiation of this knowledge when R. in line 9. repaired the breech in NELP culture by hesitating to ML's continued insistence on his view of the activity being OK for everyone. Usually hesitation or holding back alone is enough to activate, or remind teachers of shared NELP cultural norms and practice. In this case, R.'s initial hesitation signal ('I wouldn't want to'...) with protracted intonation and hesitant facial features was either not understood or not accepted. In the second instance of hesitation with the prolonged 'Oh::' and a questioning 'ye::ah::?' a stronger sense of doubt is communicated and ML is quickly able to understand there is some norm operating which prevents R. from agreeing to his plan. ML closes the exchange with a prolepsis reference indicating 'for themselves if they want it' by the use of 'we can always run off more', thus indicating that he has now understood the norm but is expecting the other teachers to accept the material.

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Conclusion

This sequence, taking place by the copy machine, illustrates how teachers rely on shared knowledge of EFL resources and past experiences as well as the reputation and recommendation of partner teachers to make quick decisions on the use of proposed class activities. This sequence also shows reference to the NELP culture for decision-making and the power off the NELP culture for eliciting compliance in which there is an element of disagreement and where the issue to be decided is extramural to their particular classwork. Tapping into not only the NELP culture, but also into knowledge of other teachers' preferred ways of operating, R. provides the final decision for not sharing materials with two other teachers not present in the room at the time of the discussion.

7.4.1.v.   relying on logs in interactive decision-making

H.   in case I don't see you later , I did putting the students in groups.

ML.   but what about XXX   ((students))

H.   yeah, we had a lot of absences...

ML.   that's going to make a difference... how can
we let them know...

H.   their groups will have to contact them

ML.   yes .... but ... some are going away ...

((ML & H. look at each other for a second and H. silently and hurriedly gets the log for this class and they begin looking down the student class list))

ML   she needs to be ...

H.   she doesn't need to be in a group ... we're down to 23 ... that'll...

ML.   they
don't contribute much anyway

H   .... its not such a problem

     [   ] there's not so many ...

ML   ... no, no, should be OK

H.   OK

((they take the log for their other shared class and do the same))

Explanation

This sequence shows the importance of the logs in the smooth running of the NELP and the interactive decision-making that occurs. Hillary is letting Michael know the student groupings for the up-coming long project covering December and January classes. She is standing, about to leave for the day, and ML is sitting. ML reminds H. that some of the students will be away. Although this probably referred to the fact that on any given day each class is bound to have a few students absent that teachers must have a contingency plan for, the word 'away' acts as reminder and immediately alerts H. and ML, to the realization that some students will be away abroad on homestay programs in January and will need to be placed in a group in December that will not be disrupted or disadvantaged by having some of its members leave in January. Both ML and H. know that this means they must judge in advance the best groups to place these students in. The two teachers turned to the logs to help them do this. They were able to easily access the students going on homestays from the logs because they knew from a previous staffroom discussion that the NELP coordinators had coded the college's Japanese memo and name list of the students going on homestays into the attendance sheet of each of the class log lists. Thus ML and H. were able to complete the placing of the few students they had leaving in their class in the short time it took to discuss it, and to confirm the disruption would not be problematic.

Comment

H. remained standing throughout the decision-making sequence, leaning on the desk near ML. Both talked in short, strong and confident bursts. ML's comment that 'they don't contribute much' was understood by H. to refer to an opinion that those students mentioned as being away would not be "vital" members in any group, and probably would not be missed. H. makes no comment, indicating consent. Although this is a short sequence it carried an important response action affecting the students in a very physical and practical way: the groups they would be in. Neither teacher hesitated in discussing the individual students in question, indicating a shared knowledge and agreement about the abilities of their students. Shared knowledge and the NELP organizational culture,

especially the availability of vital information in the logs, also helped to facilitate their speedy response to the sudden emergence of a problem in their class planning.

7.4.1.vi   relying on coordination of teacher and environment

Barry:	book repo::rts:: ...		
Hillary:		in the tray over there	
Barry:			uh.

<div align="right">(May, 1998 TDM . B & H obs.)</div>

Explanation

This TDM sequence is indicative and illustrative of many such sequences in the NELP. They are short and efficient sequences heavily relying on the NELP culture, especially on the cooperation and collaboration of the teachers.

B. calls out into a busy and noisy room just as he has been seen to do numerous times in observations and is highlighted as doing so in the vignette in chapter five. H. looks up from her work and sees B. has not got the green report cards needed for the book review activity. She knows he needs them even though she is not his partner teacher because she also teaches courses using the same report cards and is now working on the same activity in her own oral classes.

H's desk is opposite and adjacent to B.'s, she remains sitting at her desk turns her left shoulder slightly behind her, and all the while still looking at B. she points to the drawers behind her to where he can find the review cards; she barely halts her own class preparation. He goes and gets enough for his class. There is no acknowledgment or thank you, just a grunt. H. does not seem offended: it's business as usual. This sequence not only highlights the teachers working in a shared world they can tap into at will, it also shows that their shared world is contingent on, among other things, the NELP affordances of open program planning, staffroom tools and a high degree of accessibility to required elements in the courses, such as the shared book review cards mentioned in this sequence.

<u>Comment</u>

This sequence is extremely short and heavily reliant on both the physical environment and kinetics of the teachers; I was lucky to catch it. Such sequences are more obvious in observations than they are in tape recordings,

1. because they tend to happen so spontaneously and quickly
2. they are often in overlap to several other discussions and are too muffled to catch in the tapings
3. they are often accompanied by kinetics vital in the success of the exchange which find no expression on the tapes. Thus such sequences really need to be directly observed to be heard or for the significance to be understood.

And yet this type of exchange is very important to the functioning of the NELP. It highlights how the individual teacher's knowledge of the NELP's shared practices, courses, and staffroom layout, works in conjunction with content language and kinetics to constantly help all the teachers negotiate their very busy working day. I interpret the confidence the teachers show in being able to access the others in the staffroom to know, or care, about their work, and the reliance they can place on their partners to respond as being not only illustrative of how and why the teachers can work so seemingly well in their part-time positions, but also as an indication of professional connection to the NELP itself.

7.4.1.vii   <u>relying on right to interject decisions</u>

Teachers join any conversation at any point they wish, often bringing a new dimension to the discussion. The following is such an example:

There is a general conversation going on between several teachers about what to do with failing students to which Raul and Barry are not participating. No decision seems to be forthcoming, then suddenly ...

| R. Oh::, put them in a remedial class. | ((loudly, although sitting nearby)) |
| B. yeah ... create more koma! | ((from the other side of the room)) |

Explanation and comment

Barry, busy with other tasks did not follow through with this conversation, and although Raul did join in adding many comments on the issue of failing students, he did not pursue the issue of remedial classes. Both R. and B. gave decisions *they* would make as regards failing students *if* they could have the choice; namely, instead of creating a way to pass failing students that invariably have the teachers running around offering make-ups (and taking up teacher time), they express the belief that the NELP should have a remedial class for failures and thus indicate they think the students should be required to repeat the courses if they have failed.

While R. voices the teachers' concerns for teacher integrity, (a matter touched on by the others presently discussing this topic), B.'s comment covers the part-time teachers' concerns for steady employment, for if remedial classes were implemented this would create more Koma and thus more work. A koma is a once a week class, paid monthly throughout a 13 month financial year. From insider knowledge I know B., especially, is much concerned to have as many classes for native speaker teachers as is possible, and opening new classes would be a way to do this. Hence his support of 'creating' a remedial class. B.'s use of the word 'creating' is important, since although the NELP can open up more classes of a course to cater to large student sign-ups, it has no power to implement new courses. The implementing of new courses is an academic decision made by the Japanese faculty, a structural and financial decision made by the college administration, and a decision that requires the mandatory approval of the Mombusho (the Japanese Ministry of Education). Thus B. indicates he understands we would need to do more than just make a class; we would literally have to create one. Marie, the Head of the NELP was much interested in this idea. The possibility of a remedial koma was negotiated with the Japanese side, and over time was finally approved in 2001. It has become a steady "subject" of the NELP program, this event indicating the NELP reliance on the macro-culture for its overall structure but its ability to have its concerns considered and even implemented

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and demonstrating that even suggestions for decisions interjected in a seemly passing way are decisions that can lead to innovations in the organization of the NELP.

7.4.1.viii shared knowledge at work

M.	Tomorrow's the new unit?		
ML.		yep. As good as.	
M.			((nods head))

Explanation and comment

A shared knowledge of the NELP systems and programs makes it possible for teachers to check activities and timing at lightening speed, with little or no clarification. In this sequence, Marie and Michael who share a class are on their way to other classes, Michael to the class he shares with Marie, while Marie is off to a class she shares with another teacher. In their exchange they do not clarify what unit, what book or what course they are talking about, just that a new unit is starting tomorrow. However, they know, by shared knowledge of the curriculum, the course, and by the teacher they are talking to, exactly what is being referred to: that their shared class should be ready to start a new unit tomorrow. Marie is checking the pacing of their shared class, her planning for it being contingent on knowing whether or not the class will be ready to start the new unit. Her question implies a wish to know if the present unit is on schedule and will indeed be finished today, for her to go ahead with the new unit tomorrow and by prolepsis she receives the desired response.

7.4.1.ix completion demonstrating teachers working as one

Student:	This is for Barry		
Jean		the best thing is to	
Jean			
	[ ]		put it outside
Hillary			
Hillary:			yeah, yes, in the drawers

Explanation and comment

This is another sequence referencing the shared knowledge of the NELP, this time the wider organizational culture including the administrative functions. A student comes to the staffroom with what looks like a homework assignment. She enters without knocking and when she cannot see the teacher she wishes to speak with, she addresses the whole room. She is answered spontaneously, and directly by two teachers. Completion sequences such as this one are very common in the NELP, partly because many questions are open to the floor, and partly because everyone knows the systems very well and is free and usually willing to answer. The Head, the deputy head and the Japanese assistant were all in the room at the time, but did not need to deal with the student. This common behavior may signal to the students all or any of the NELP teachers can help them equally.

7.4.2. Conclusions to TDM

These sequences "work" even though they are so very short because they make reference to the NELP organizational culture, including its structural and curriculum affordances, shared knowledge on the courses, teachers and students, knowledge of student activities in the college, by shared expertise in the field of EFL, and reference to previous discussions and outcomes – all of which may be carried as much in kinetic data such as head, facial and body movements as in words. These decision-making sequences carry heavy message information on the basis of this unspoken shared knowledge. Teachers attend to them according to time and interest, availability or perceived teacher need, even if it cuts into the work they are presently doing.

The transfer of information is the prevailing need of short sequences. These quick exchanges may appear to be minor to the casual overseer but as shown in the examples above, they may cover comments or questions on policy decisions about the program and the school that affect classroom procedure and may carry harsh realities for students such

as in the "well she's had it" sequences about frequently absent students on a path to failure. These sequences resemble Sinclair and Coulthard's (1992:7) Rank III analysis category, the IRF (initiation, response, feedback) teacher exchange which is later referenced by van Lier (1996) in his discussions of conversation types (see chapter two). In the NELP, a teacher will make an inquiry, another will respond and this will be followed by an acknowledgment, verbal or action, making a characteristic three turn pattern. However, since the purpose of the sequence format in the NELP is not to "teach" but to question, inform or confirm (in which either one teacher has the required information and another accesses it in as short a sequence as possible, or they are jointly negotiating work), their resultant three turn pattern, although having transmission as its primary purpose, is not therefore as limiting in function and meaning as the IRF. Van Lier (1996) says this form prevents the teacher and student from entering into any further discussion and thus prevents the entering into an area of intersubjectivity where learning may take place. In the NELP, however, the three turn exchange dialog sequence is already high in ellipsis and often relies on prolepsis to be understood. Thus, the three pattern move works because it operates already in an area of intersubjectivity where much information is carried and implied by shared knowledge.

As seen by the previous examples, a QAR (Question, Answer, Response) sequence is a common pattern, but there may be some other order used such as a comment, followed by another comment or a question. Interestingly, these sequences usually do not have any introduction and teachers simply speak up directly to either a specific person or to the whole staffroom. This characteristic demonstrates how informality allows the teachers to operate quite like the note form found in the logs, and thus evidences the teachers working within their own shared knowledge world. It further demonstrates how even just a content word can activate an entire (often unspoken, but shared) situational script which then instantaneously opens the shared world, an area of intersubjectivity, they thus create for themselves in the staffroom. The success of these short sequences is contingent on the teachers being able to tap into that shared world, and thus the interactive decision-making itself can be considered a contingency of that shared world, and of the NELP organizational culture. This may explain why TDM is acted upon immediately as the

teacher thinks about it in the staffroom, and why this behavior is tolerated by the others even taking precedence over longer discussions that may be in session. In this sense TDM acts rather like a phone call in a meeting where the caller is rarely put on hold, and the others simply wait or carry on with other discussions or activities.

These short sequences can also be reminders of administrative requirements, and may refer to an activity, requirement, or reminder for a class combination not on that day. This DM style resembles that of the shared class course logs in that it is almost entirely message focused. This form of DM shows the greatest degree of ellipsis and prolepsis in the program, in fact the success of such sequences in communicating is contingent on a shared knowledge of the NELP culture, the curriculum, the courses and EFL/ESL teaching.

7.5. Longer Open Decision-Making (LDM)

These are sessions, which last more than 5 - 10 minutes and sometimes as long as 15 or 20 minutes, are usually held between two or more individuals. However, the field is open in that others can and often do spontaneously join in, or are asked to join in, entering much in the same manner as a transitory sequence, or with a comment affirming sequence. Since the length of these sequences does not make full transcriptions viable for exemplification within this paper, only sections of interest from a variety of sequences will be highlighted after a general description of the salient features of this type of DM discussion.

7.5.1. Characteristics of the longer decision-making discussions

The longer sessions (LDM) are usually held during the breaks between classes or at lunch-breaks, and they arise as a need to address and discuss class outcomes and plans for the following class lessons. This need may also be based on having found something in the logs, the text or the scheduling that needs attention. Initiation often starts much like a transitory sequence, although they are sometimes more formally initiated with teachers requesting partners or a supervisor to "save a little time to discuss". This DM sequence

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often extends to a more involved, and usually less specifically end-focused, discussion expressing personal opinions on various work related issues.

These discussion types may also be ways of discussing conflict concerning course, student and policy matters. However, most of the conflict sequences taped have involved just two teachers, with the others remaining in passive roles. A conciliatory teacher may enter as a means to close the conflict or the discussion, although talk tends to end with no solutions. This may be because conflicts tend to be at the level of firmly held individual teacher perspectives to language learning in general and are beliefs and assumptions less prone to immediate modification.

The sequences that could be considered as conflict in that teachers are conflicted in their opinions and will not give up their view point, are rarely seen as arguments or conflict per se, but rather as disagreement or differences of opinion needing negotiation; they are attempts to get a teacher to "come aboard" or to convince him or her to change an opinion. However, occasionally this "conflict" may extend over several sessions, weeks or months, as one teacher attempts to persuade another on a teaching perspective without being involved in an outright confrontation. Since conflict is rare and thus participants easily identified, for privacy reasons, examples will not be offered to illustrate any of these more dynamic instances of staffroom decision-making.

The following are characteristics which have been observed in the transcriptions of longer open decision-making sessions involving sequences of discussion and decision-making.

1. Discussions often involve comments expressing teachers' perceptions or beliefs and assumptions of what the students would like or be prepared to do in their classes with the activities under discussion and what the students are able and willing to do in classes and on tests and project activities.

2. Discussions often refer to issues of methodology and theoretical underpinnings although rarely is this done directly. Comments on learning and motivational theory which in turn may be exemplified with (lengthy) examples from personal experience are quite common, and reference is often made to previous work and experiences in the areas under

discussion, or from other teaching locations.

3. In those sessions in which the majority of the teachers become involved, personal interludes in the decision-making process may be made as teachers digress or are side tracked with non-teaching matters, particularly cross–cultural issues and experiences. Many of these interludes have some connection to the topic of the nature and characteristics of Japanese students, schools and society, and may function as social inclusion station stops aimed at confirming the collegiality of the participants.

4. Sessions that have shown conflict or personal disagreement in any way are often put back on track or ended with a sequence all teachers can agree on thus re-establishing the bond between them, and the same is often done for unresolved decisions. Teachers appear to prefer leaving a discussion on a personally agreeable note.

5. The typical range of native speaker sentence patterns can be found– although there is considerable use of ellipsis, prolepsis and unspoken reference to shared knowledge and norms. Little formal EFL/ESL metalanguage can be heard, teachers possibly relying on shared knowledge of EFL classrooms and methodologies, or explaining in non-technical language, although there are frequent references to activities by name and to named textbook sources. This does not imply that the teachers do not understand the theoretical underpinnings of their beliefs, teaching actions and routines –no such study was done in this area- it rather that they do not make them explicit.

6. Although considerable ellipsis is used, some teachers speak in fuller and longer sentences creating a more formal atmosphere. The more usual conversations tend to rely on prolepsis and the accessing of shared, at least known, beliefs in a "shared social world", set up by the teachers themselves and the frequency of this style indicates it is the preferred means of communication. This is in keeping with van Lier's comment (1996) that formality of speech creates social distancing, thus a shared inclusiveness would be difficult to attain if the teachers approached their DM in formal language and manners. The frequency of short forms, ellipsis and prolepsis in the NELP indicates the degree of social inclusion the teachers have created for themselves.

7. Long DM involves the whole syllabus and curriculum, and frequent references

are made to actual exercises and pages in the text. Teachers often take time to explain in more detail and thus these decision-making sessions are more instructive of NELP operations and perspective than the transitory type, possibly being unofficial teaching forums or at least providing some form of spontaneous scaffolding arising from the interaction itself, especially for any new comer.

8. Logs and the syllabus play a significant role in planning and are frequently seen in teachers' hands or on the desks. "Introductions" to longer sequences often resemble the short, note form of the logs.

9. Teachers will tolerate their time being taken in immediate information search –either in the books on the self or through the file cabinets of supplementary and past materials– and conversation usually continues during this search, the searching teacher often engaging in "talking through their actions" as they search. Teachers frequently call on their memories of the success or otherwise of material they have used previously. Thus there is often a great deal of movement around the room, with teachers periodically standing or sitting as they move to find books, or search past activities files or their drawers or notes. Talk may also continue through, or in competition to, other conversations to which some members may give part or all of their attention –thus leaving, for good or temporarily, the discussion at hand. If leaving in this way, a hasty decision, summary, or postponement of the decision progress may be made, usually by the participants, often in tandem, but teachers will not leave a session if time constraints make it imperative for a decision to be made. In this case decisions are often made at lightening speed, usually by the "on track" (van Lier, 1996) participant, to which the others agree, at least for the time being. There are no leaders in the sense of "bosses" in these discussions, but there is usually one teacher less likely to wander wide of the mark in the discussion at hand who acts as the one who keeps the discussion on track.

10. In sessions that reach an actual decision, one of the participants usually summarize what has been decided, giving a last chance at that moment for anyone to disagree. Teachers will often begin the sequence with a summary of what they would like to happen, or think should be happening, and discussion extends on the basis of the acceptance of these initial proactive summaries. The discussion, thus, has a definite, observable shape. However, in the sessions that have wandered through several topics and come to a

"natural" end (no-one seems to have anything more to say), conversation just drops, often stopped by the bell signaling the next class, by a teacher turning away to deal with immediate preparation and collection of materials for the class, or by moments of silence and then a focus back into individual work. In some cases, however, a topic may be of such interest that teachers may leave the staffroom still discussing as they make their ways to their classrooms and it may reappear later in the day.

11. The outcomes of these DM sequences may be general, or specific enough for one or more members to make more personal and local plans for classes, or for the coordinator to formulate a test or project outline and as such can be seen to be functioning much like the transaction dialogues. However, the length and wide range of topics often covered in such sequences also allow for a more transformative dialog or for any one teacher to make (private or public) amendments to their teaching beliefs assumptions and knowledge.

7.5.2. Decision-making longer session LDM example

<div align="right">Martha and Liz: June, 1995</div>

Setting

The following longer decision-making session was tape recorded and transcribed. It is of two teachers joined occasionally by another, Marie, deciding the content of an up-coming test for the Oral I Home Economics English class.

The conversation took place in the NELP staffroom in the second period Wednesday, a relatively quiet day in the NELP. It was chosen for its simplicity, and therefore its very obvious examples of ellipsis, prolepsis, reference to shared culture, and because there are clear examples of asides involving other teachers, comments on Japanese students, and what appears to be an irrelevant aside discussing hat names, which in fact acts as a sequence demonstrating bonding and social inclusion.

Background

1) the Home Economics classes are elective classes of generally very low level students thus teachers often adapt textbook work. This group was presently working on a text called "Chatterbox'. Each teacher takes a class of her own and is therefore not required to share the classroom work. However, the course is the same and these teachers were working in tandem over the syllabus, sharing information, ideas and supplementary materials.

2) the teachers are working from a skeleton schedule constructed by Liz, although Martha has been teaching in the NELP longer. They are heard here talking about the lessons and attempting to find an activity that would test the students on the work they had been doing in the text on describing objects - particularly the patterns, colors and shapes of objects.

3) The discussion had been continuing for about 5 minutes before I asked if they would mind if I tape recorded it. Both seemed shy, but agreed. They were a little self-conscious at first, but soon began to speak freely. The sequence is 167 turns; fragments highlighting the use of ellipis, prolespsis, scaffolding and thus indicating the degree of social inclusion and the culture of the NELP will appear here.

1.M.	give them the equivalent	((ref. to students; prolepsis of vocab. suggestion for test situation))
2.L.	and then they can write what they would have thought of for each situation	((projection & completion))
3.M.	yeah, yeah	((agreement))

11.M.	... a lot of these books just	((ref. EFL knowledge; idea understood, taken over))
12. L.	yeah. So we could do a couple of these pages and then write the tests	((refer. shared EFL knowledge, ref. prolepsis, ref. to extension from practice exercise in class as Ss. prep. for test))
13.M.	ah.huh	((interested agreement)
	((laughter))	((long pause))

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14, M.	if you just comb some of these pages	((ref. EFL text, EFL standard practice))
	sometimes you can find some quite	
	useful stuff.	((refer. EFL practice/personal knowledge))
	That's all anyone else does really	((refer. NELP cultural practice re: making tests))
15. L.	ah.huh	(("is that so" intonation))
16.M.	see what's there (...) make a test	((continuing M's outline of methods for making test))

18.M.	they can't exactly describe something	((ref. Ss. abilities; ref. personal teaching perspective))
	until they know the structure and the ...	
19.L.	... now this	((ref. Ss.; targeting level))
	looks a little easier ...	

51.L.	So basically these are doing the thing	((ellipsis; 'these' refers to the vocab. in a resource book as appropriate for the test; prolepsis))
52.M.	yeah	
53.L.	and then on the test we could have	((continuing her suggestion))
	questions like ...	
54.M	Do you know	((refer. to EFL))
	Harrups games?	
55.L.	yeah, the one they have ...partner ones	
56M.	They have	((they are looking for a more interactive activity for
	something called Lost Umbrellas which is	the Ss.))
57.L.	oh, really?	
58.M.	which is a lost and found game. Yeah.	((suitable for describing))
	we always do that.	((assumption L. will understand pedagogical value;
	Let me find it for you ((walks around the	ref. "we" meaning EFL/NELP teachers; knows NELP
	room to find book))	staffroom))
59. L.	we could design /?/ to that	((understanding))
	((high pitched, excited voice))	

67.M.	see here. Here's a pairwork thing. We	((ref. another resource book - not Harrup: ellipsis))
	could always just change it .... For?	((ref. EFL practice))
68.L.	for? (...) a questionnaire ((long pause0)	((prolepsis)) ((both ref. EFL, NELP methods, look at drawer where 'designed' NELP materials are filed))
		(((intersubjectivity achieved))

75.M.	what's Barry done with the Harrups games He always has it..	((still researching for the book, M. finds another...)) ((indicates she knows teachers well))
78.M.	here it is. Here's "Signals". This is interesting cos' it's like at a fashion show ... so that might be	((flicking through pages of a different book to reach a possible focus for the Ss test)
80.L.	might be ... o:::h, ye::s	((looking and sounding excited)) ((prolepsis understanding of suitability of material for test) and seeing the value of the work))

81.M.	again it's too hard	((projecting Ss. needs/abilities))
L.	ahh	((agreeing))
83.M.	but, well you know this seems to be very popular when we've used it before	((very strong ref. to both EFL and past NELP experiences, M. relying on past experience))
88.L.	'what do you think of these books?' (...) 'which is the most attractive'	((L. is looking at another book, "books" is the vocab. item, attractive refers to an adjective they may use in the test. practices "mock test" question))
89.M.	a::h ((yes)), use your materials. Describe the clothes of someone in the class but without mentioning /?/	((M. still looking at Signals; use your materials here ref. to EFL methodology, and she starts to outline an oral activity the students could do: .scoffolding))
90.L.	eh? .....oh yeah!	((L. is less familiar with personalized info. gap activities tailored to the class, but catches the methodology :))

And so the conversation proceeds. The teachers go through a number of other books and vocabulary items, projecting what could be done with them, and whether or not they think the students could manage the items. At line 101 the other teacher in the room is brought in to help look for the Harrups book and they continue together looking at vocabulary items and possible exercises they might adapt for their test that would be fair for their students, until they find the Harrups, where upon they return to 'Lost Umbrellas', and begin working on a test methodology around the activity.

Up until this point is seems as if all the knowledge of texts is coming from M., but this is more than just a leading exchange; it's M's. introduction to "our" world of EFL and how things are done in the NELP. M. had been a teacher for three years at the time of this DM session, but L., fully qualified, but with little experience of such low level students, has only been on the staff for three months. She seems content to let M. lead, although she is not

swayed to agree simply to defer to M.'s knowledge.

The discussion changes somewhat:

125.M.	so that's what we're doing. ?	((summarizing tone))
126.L.	So. Ok. ... it's Ok ... we need someone with a, ahhh, ... copy the large pictures so each get one of those. OK. So then copy the small ... (flicking pages)	((agreeing. But hedging, avoidance of direct question as to who will do the mechanical preparation)) ((Accepts:))
127.L.	probably me ... doing copies	((phatic noise of agreement. accepts task." probably me" is ref. to knowledge that L. is, although new to the NELP, the coordinator of the H. Econ. classes)) ((NELP culture up-held)) ((still more searching through books))
128.M.	So	((agreement))

Liz's reluctance around the task of preparing the papers causes a moment of awkwardness, and the two then engage in interaction that is often seen in the NELP at points like this; social inclusion talk. They engage in another 19 turns of talk about the names of various hats found around the world, which leads to a sequences in which the two of them together (both Canadians) explain to the third teacher (non-Canadian) a particular item of Canadian vocabulary she does not know, thus allowing themselves a bonding sequence where they can both inform this teacher together. This brings them back to talking about hat names and then at turn 165, suddenly we hear...

165.L.	yeah	((brings DM back on track, a task L. has done through the session))
167.M.	OK. Shall we do that then	((formalizing the decision. M. has been largely in 'control' of the content throughout the session))
168.L.	sure	((the DM session comes to an end and they move away from each other))

Comments

Seven pages (3263) words of observational notes accompany this taped and transcribed

DM session. Coding shows it conforms to all the characteristics of the longer, but open decision-making type.

Two teachers strike up a DM session for a specific purpose: to find material to test the work they have been doing in their classes. They are looking for very specific work for low level students covering vocabulary and similar objects for description as those in their text book. They identify what they need to do, look for material, call on assistance from another in the staffroom, check each other, simulate possible student responses, wander off the topic by way of talking about a cultural point whilst trying to decide whether or not their students will know the required vocabulary in the exercise they have chosen. They are interrupted by other conversations, eventually come back on task with a summary collation, make a decision on who will do the copying, and after a bonding aside bring their DM session to a definite end. The discussion was congenial and rejection of suggestions was done by ignoring the suggestion or offering another. Liz did not appear, in comparison to Martha, to be suggesting very much, but she was doing most of the rejecting (by way of non-accepting "Ah huhs") -indicating to Martha her expertise in the field and her reluctance to accept anything that was not to her satisfaction.

The discussion started off spatially bounded with Martha sitting and Liz standing or sitting on the desk facing her. As the discussion continued, they moved around the room looking for material in books on the shelf and involved another in the staffroom, not on their course, in this search. They had difficulty finding material due to the low level of their students. Their course was for Home Economics students, but most of the NELP students are English Department majors, with the lowest being lower intermediate level. Thus they rejected most of the texts they looked at as being too difficult. They finally decided to adapt material; a common NELP practice.

Martha made references to work she had done or experiences she, or others she knew, had had previously, to books that contained useful exercises (thus covertly teaching Liz about them), and added to her power in the decision-making process by appealing to the success of some of the previous work "we" had done before.

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Interestingly enough, she left it up to Liz to arrange the test itself (she'll do the copying), possibly because Liz was the official coordinator of this course, but also possibly because Martha is not a "detail" person and does not prefer to do administrative tasks. Liz accepted this task.

7.5.3. Conclusions to LDM

There are numerous taped and transcribed examples of this kind of longer, but open DM sequence; space preventing the presentation. This example does illustrate the importance of this type of interactive decision-making engaged in and is "typical" of such sequences.

Although this discussion seems transactional at first glance, much of it, and the movement of it, indicates a more transformational dialog was also operant. These two teachers were moving in an area of shared conversational logic, speech acts, voice, footing and passing theory, the area van Lier (1996: Fig. 4. p. 58) indicates is the area of intersubjectivity. The DM was contingent on an interaction between external factors such as language conventions, turning-taking, adjacency pairs and the task to be completed, and internal factors such as the individual teacher's cognition, schemes and frames (even imagined ones in the case of their students) which they presumably base on their own experiences and beliefs in teaching, their students' abilities and learning. However, all of this is set in the environment of the NELP organizational culture that holds that oral tests should, as far as possible, be interactive, information gap oriented and act as learning experiences for the students, not just as achievement evaluations, thus giving the teachers a shared world to mediate in and a means of effectively attaining their goal.

In this DM session, the teachers had created a zone of learning in which Martha appeared to be assisting, providing scaffolding for Liz to negotiate not just the materials they might use for the test, but also how they might use them and in doing so was imparting not just NELP culture, but also EFL methodology, knowledge and learning perspective. I did not ask Liz if she thought she was "learning" anything; learning or not is her prerogative. The session seemed beneficial for both of them as both were cooperative and appeared to have

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enjoyed themselves. Since this type of DM is perhaps the most common in the NELP, it does give some indication that teachers are managing their continuing teacher development within the staffroom themselves and that the NELP organizational culture is enabling this action at least in some part.

7.6. Secluded decision-making (SDM)

The last of the three types of decision-making is the secluded type. It is the rarest, the longest and the most private of the decision-making and discussion types in the NELP. For this reason only a small segment of such a session will be presented here. These DM sequences show similar characteristics to the longer open sequences. However, they tend to be very personally focused to the specific class, students, course and problem at hand. Thus the discussion is so proleptic is often difficult for the outsider to follow. This is of course the reason for the discussion to be held in a secluded manner: teachers are unprepared to allow the interference of others, possibly because the work is too specific to their classes and students, and it would take too long to explain, and also because the decision-making session does not gain any particular benefit from the inclusion of other ideas however allied those ideas might be. The point here is to get the business of class preparation done without having to consider the ideas of others outside the partnership.

This type of DM is anywhere between 20 or 40 minutes, and is usually focusing either feedback and outcomes of a previous decision-making put into practice, or the set-up of a new block of work, and often the comments are quite specific about particular, named students. In this DM style, teachers often negotiate the needs of their class and decide who will be doing what throughout an entire block of work, including the pacing of specific exercises, in a preferred order, right through until the test, which is also planned, along with contingent plans and supplementary exercises in case they may be needed.

This type of session has a "serious business" feel to it, even though the participants may in fact be quite congenial. Not all sessions are between "equal" members. Many such sessions

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are between a coordinator/supervisor and a teacher, or a supervisor who is also a teacher on the course, and who may be working with a "difficulty" in the team play, or between a teacher who has experience on the course and one who has not and is working in such a partnership for the first time.

Although most SDM sessions are by arrangement and are privately conducted, they sometimes spontaneously form in the staffroom. A common and very noticeable point at this time is that they are more formally opened, and the goals for the discussion are more clearly established by the using of other DM patterns. Transcriptions show teachers sometimes initially attempt to open a secluded session which then fails to form when others join in, and sometimes beginning a transitory sequence which then becomes an unexpected longer secluded one. This indicates the flexibilty and cooperation of the teachers and the valued NELP organization characteristic of "turning on a pinhead". Since how a SDM is opened is of apparent importance in successful entry into this decision-making type, and since such sessions are of considerable length once entered, the following analysis and comments will focus the characteristic openings and closing of these sessions. The first example shows a log type report Rheme/Theme movement in both the entry and conclusion.

7.6.1.i.   A typical opening sequence

P.	Ok. Gil. Here we go. Uh. This is the 2nd year's.. so that was their first go
	at these discussions ((establishing place and reporting))
G.	right
7.	and I'm really happy to say that's the most English they have ever
	talked ((comment))
G.	yeah, they like it don't they… ((prolepsis of discussion activity))

This discussion starts by establishing where they are and acts much like a verbal rendering of the log headers. It then follows on with what was done; again, much like a log entry. It then moves to a comment which is followed by another, again like the log before finally moving to the discussion and decisions on what to do next: a discussion which continues

for another 57 moves, until a very transitory TM-like sequence brings the lengthy sequence to an end.

P.	so I'll get the lot of them over the next week or two.	((for the graded activity)) ((summary checking))
G.	Yeah, OK.	((agreement)) ((sequence ends))

<div align="right">(SDM.P.& G. 1996 2nd S. L.3)</div>

7.6.1.ii. <u>how a TDM becomes a SDM</u>

R.	Ok. So on Thursday I'll be doing the movie reports, correcting the homework that you just showed me and ….. conce:::ivably ::: if there's time …give them a task to do.	((sounding very efficient)) ((this sequence is functioning rather like a report of projected activities the teacher takes as being decided; perhaps obvious from previously working this book))
ML	Yeah	(2 secs silence)
	Oh. what I can't figure out is this … it seems to be a progression for that …	((the short but strong 'oh' indicates something now noticed needs considering; a further need for DM with the partner teacher is necessary)) ((This discussion continues for another 32 uninterrupted moves, until))
ML	Ok. Movies next Thursday. You're doing this ((pointing)). You're basically working on the script with them	((this acts as a summary & closure which includes the new work just now decided in their long uninterrupted sequence))
R.	excellent.	((shows a strong clear closure))

<div align="right">(ML/R.SDM(+)'98 trs)</div>

This sequence clearly starts out as a transitory checking – the teacher not intending to spend time in any lengthy discussion or decision for changes of plan to their shared class work.

It changes to a SDM sequence when the second teacher notices an issue he wishes to clear up and after a lengthy session, ends with the new changes being confirmed in a very clear closure move.

7.6.1.iii.   opening and close of long SDM

Long SDM sequences have identifiable openings and closes; here Andy and Gillian are discussing a 5 class lesson using a 6 page text and workbook unit as a base which is to lead to a graded project activity. Their decision-making session starts with a fresh unit of work, was private (held after school in an empty staffroom) and lasted over two 45 minute tapes which they agreed to record.

A.   Ok. So.   ((short, but definite opening))

G.   OK. Well I made some notes. I thought because of all this vocab. this should be done
     first   ((indicating readiness; moving directly into decision-making))

A.   all right

The session continued for 340 fast turns on the first tape alone. There was an occasional longer turn, but most turns were short, high in back channeling, repetition, and ellipsis, rapidly covering issues of planning, teaching, supplementary exercises, and involving very much sharing of both experience and teacher expertise on activities and methodologies. There were also off side sequences discussing Japanese customs, students' likelihood of understanding the exercises and vocabulary due to cultural influences and the bias of some of the material, teachers electing to substitute other activities and spending much time in the decision-making, outlining in detail other exercises they knew of and where they could be obtained and how they could be implemented in the classroom. These two teachers also spent much time pacing the level of their materials, and offering suggestions for reasons and solutions to student motivation issues. The discussion also included long sequences where the teachers "tried out" the activities, mimicking what they thought, or expected, the students would say in reaction to the material. They started their DM session with day one

of the five class block and continued through each of the days in the same way, planning, adapting, amending, selecting of graded activities and evaluation procedures and standards, and checking through all five days of the block of work. Gillian acted as "secretary" writing down what appeared to be check points of agreement.

In this case, Andy had done the block of work before, and Gillian was sharing it with him for the first time. As such, he tended to take a slightly more dominant lead position which Gillian allowed —accepting his experience not as superior but as practical, in that he had previously done this work at the classroom level. The overall discussion was symmetrical and the entire planning session was very personal to the teachers and their shared class. Only another teacher with an equal degree of knowledge, involvement and interest would have been able or interested to enter this discussion. This DM was essentially exclusive to the two participants. It also ended very typically with a sudden...

A.	that's it then, we'll see how it goes	((a very short closure statement after such a long and involved DM sequence, but one indicating the decisions are made but still pending; ellipsis of 'it' referencing both the planning and the students responses to the plan))

(A/G/SDM(+)'93 trns)

7.6.2. Comment

Most teachers engaged in secluded sessions are, it would appear from observations, simply wishing for an uninterrupted session and do not wish to join the more "chat-like" and wondering DM of the longer sessions described in 7.5. above. However, some regular participants of this style can be seen with notes for the discussion, private files in addition to the logs, and a planned agenda prepared for a more formal negotiating in a more business and "professional" (bureaucratic) way.

Participants of these DM types, tend to be very organized, often keeping private logs and lessons plans, and tend to expect the lessons to go as planned. Deviations are considered

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more serious, since this would require a re-working of the overall plan. The topics are similar to the longer DM sessions, but usually contain more specific classroom content, a much more personal focus on the individual students on the course, and of student results on graded activities. In this DM form teachers will display a considerable degree of personal EFL expertise, especially in materials search and classroom methodology, but will at all times remain "on track" to a definitely needed decision. As mentioned in chapter six, this highly planned form of DM also tends to result in logs in a listing format; as evidenced in the log sample of A. and G. from this period of work (appendix C. 291: (e/h)).

7.6.3. Conclusion to secluded decision-making

It is harder to know what actually is said in these discussions, since they are bound and exclusive; only three tape recordings exist for this DM type - each recorded and controlled by the participants themselves. The only one of these three examples observed was held out of hearing range, by the teachers' request. However, teachers can be seen from time to time engaging in SDM in the staffroom, their "space" clearly identified and closed. The other members of the NELP rarely ever ask participants what they were discussing and participants never offer to explain. This is not a common decision-making type, possibly because it is so time-consuming and requires privacy and thus usually requires teacher time after classes. As could be expected, in order to preserve privacy SDM sessions also occur when there are serious problems in the team-work; such discussions often involving the Head or the deputy Head of the NELP, as they are much concerned with these issues.

SDM discussions follow the same patterns as described in the longer open sessions and sometimes become open sessions after a period of time, where the whole staffroom is addressed on matters arising in the discussion.

7.7. Other forms of discussion and decision-making

Teachers have shown no inclination to come to extra-scheduled meetings, to have

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conferences, or to have increased preparation time, and to thus increase the chances of more planned decision-making, even if this were to be a paid activity.

Teachers do willingly accept the end of semester required debriefing and the writing of confidential individual end-of-semester reports, and it is from this material that I can say the teachers, while always rushed, do not appear to wish to make any changes to the situation of harried decision-making even if offered structural time changes and extra remuneration, although this might change if they were to be offered full-time positions. Perhaps it is indeed the negotiation in this chaotic time-pressured context that motivates and drives them to excellence, and that not wishing to "let down" their partner teacher in the shared classes ensures they remain both cooperative and collaborative.

It is also to be noted, that individual teachers prepare more or less according to their own needs and perspectives on teaching; some coming early and/or staying late, and/or doing considerable preparation of class materials at home on their own computers. The NELP assists this ad hoc arrangement by providing the availability to print class copies on demand, and the teachers further assist by having developed the ability to "turn on a pin-head". This ability is quite amazing and cannot be adequately demonstrated here, it remains for a future investigation in which individual teachers are followed through into the classroom to view the changes, adaptations and activities that occur there as a result of their various DM sequences in the staffroom. Since this study has not entered the classrooms of any of these teachers it makes no comments on the success or otherwise of the DM; it notes only that the teachers control the amount of time they spend on their decision-making and can extend it if they should wish to do so.

7.7.1. Other forms of talk

Clearly not all of the conversations that occur in the staffroom and contribute to the function and maintenance of the NELP are decision- making episodes. Teachers also engage in social personal bonding talk; talk on topics unrelated to teaching, and they also

spend time talking about and discussing general topics in teaching, textbooks, work environment and happenings. They are very fond of telling stories of their teaching experiences, revelations, concerns, events that have happened in their classrooms here and around the world, often making reference to very specific detail, situations and persons.

They rarely ask directly for help or opinions, but they tend to do so by relating their issues through narrative stories or indirect questions (the "what are you doing with your lot", given in statement inflection.). Teachers understand this genre, and respond with advice, or with other stories ..." well, what I do is...." "yeah, that happened to me once"... "yeah, I've got a student like that/ had a student like that", before launching into what is often a blow by blow description of what they have done with a class, activity, and or student in that situation, the listener taking from the talk whatever connects with his needs.

Teachers also spend considerable time talking about their lives and experiences in Japan, with cross-cultural stories often directed to attempting to "explain" or "understand" the students and their attitudes to learning and life. Teachers spend less time talking about taxes, visas, finding other jobs, and other matters of life in Japan since the 1993 changes (see chapter 5), unless there is a new teacher aboard who wishes to know specific facts.

7.8.   **Chapter conclusions: summary**

DM sessions form the core of the interaction in the NELP. The DM sessions tend to occur spontaneously according to the participating teachers' agendas. They do not often request DM sequences, but tend to simply launch into them as their need arises. Others in the staffroom are tolerant of this, and expect the same in return. Teachers have resisted efforts by coordinators in the past to formalize their decision-making sessions to set assigned times. However, this fierce resistance is possibly because, generally, the teachers find that free continuous and spontaneous DM affords them the quickest responses, and that they would rather have an intrusion to their privacy in the staffroom, than an infringement on their freedom and time imposed by a coordinator.

The recorded discussions and observations show that most DM sequences are symmetrical (although not necessarily of equality since there is always some teacher who knows the "ropes", the schemata, more than the others, be that the NELP culture or EFL teaching), that teachers tend to disregard any divisions of rank of any sort, and that this is tolerated by those of position of rank. Administrative persons in the NELP are also teachers, acting more as secretaries to the other teachers than as dictators of policy. Teachers, as evidenced by the numerous recorded discussions between Gillian, Barry and Jem in my data bank show clearly they have no qualms about taking a coordinator to task on work that has been given to them that they do not approve of, and I would think coordinators would have little chance of "pulling rank". Despite this freedom, teachers are remarkably cooperative with the NELP requirements for the most part, again perhaps because they are requirements they generally approve of or at least see the point or benefit of. The DM in the NELP, along with the logs and the curriculum provide the affordances of the culture and allow for the teachers to work so well in the confines of their part-time positions.

The culture and its special context – the staffroom – in turn provide for the execution of the affordances, so in dynamic contingency, these aspects *are* the program to which the teachers belong and operate in and that allow for the business of teaching shared classes to proceed in what appears to be a quite acceptable way to part-time teachers. The language of the NELP does indeed reflect its generally collegial perspective. The following chapter will explore the implications of these findings in regards to maintaining the NELP over time and teachers and for encouraging covert on-the-job teacher development.

Chapter Eight
Implications and Future Directions

> Great untapped opportunities for the professional development of teachers
> reside within the school   Barth (1990: 50)

> it would make more sense to strive not for the creation of effective partnerships,
> but rather for the creation of caring and helping communities of learners ...
> the psychological aspects of development result from the interaction of the
> individual and the broader community context ... [the process of becoming
> a teacher] depends on the development of psychological aspects of the teaching
> self. Teachers need a wide range of developmental opportunities within the
> community setting ... we should be concerned with ... 'the creating of setting'.
>   Cole (1991: 425)

8.1.   Introduction

The NELP has been studied from the stand point of its macro and the micro culture, with specific importance placed on the functions of the logs and the teacher-to-teacher interactive decision-making. It is an ethnographic study that set out to explore naturalistic data collected over a number of years on an English language program. It looked at what the teaching environment offered the teachers, what culture of teaching the teachers created within this environment, and what contingencies they formed to mediate their shared world. Teachers could have been asked such questions directly, but to study the behavior and language of the teachers in the program over a number of years and groups of teachers provided a richer and possibly deeper understanding of the basic questions of how this program works, of what its contingencies are, how they have formed and how they are maintained, and in doing so to perhaps indicate how other ways or future programs could be set in motion for part-time teachers to create an organizational culture that best satisfies their needs.

This chapter will summarize the points found and look at the possibility of in-service teacher development for the part-time teachers, both as a personal way in which teachers may be bringing a sense of reflection, evaluation and growth to their own work and in how

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the organization can facilitate it. Collating what has been gained from a study of the NELP interaction, this chapter will suggest that despite the excellent programs for pre and post teacher training and development, it is in the end the will of the individual teacher as to whether or not he or she "develop" in his/or her teaching and that the most any organization of this type can do is to provide a suitable situation, context and teaching environment in which the teacher can do this for himself, in conjunction with his co-workers.

No matter the extent of their training, or the qualifications and experience any teacher may amass, there is always room for more development, for continuing exploration of human living and learning. As more and more businesses move towards work assignments and environments involving groups taking responsibility and accountability (Handy, 1995), so too, teaching moves towards seeing responsibility and accountability as essential in student learning. Similarly, teachers also need to see themselves as central to their own learning as regards their teaching profession. However, part-time teachers are severely constrained by time; efforts to include or encourage teacher development involving diaries, peer observations, teacher action research or reflective meeting times, are simply not a viable option. Personal development needs to be encouraged in some other way. Ashman and Conway, (1997), found that teaching strategies learned in training courses quickly disappeared with teaching experience, and that it was the informal master-apprentice relationships that form in an organization that are what establish the attitudes, beliefs and the teaching practices of new teachers. They concluded that teacher training acculturation takes place in the school and that this acculturation comes primarily from other practicing teachers rather than from the role models presented by lecturers.

For the experienced teacher, the busy worker, the one with responsibilities to many places of work, and to family as well as to himself, it is not always possible to continue formal education or training, to return to 'refresher courses' or in any other way engage in formal development programs. But as the teachers of the NELP have said:

we are not (supposed to be) training here   (G. Log.Trns.'96)

> I don't need special training. Teaching ideas come from
> ideas around the office, from sharing in the staffroom,
> a grapevine element.   (T. 7 1993)

> I'd rather just talk with the teachers   (a constant refrain)

These comments would indicate the teachers are aware of their position and status as teachers, even "mentor-like" teachers, of the value of their work, their partnerships and the sharing of their experiences, and therefore of the benefits of an interactive organizational culture in providing for their development needs, even if they do not approach this matter in an overt or reflective manner.

These comments also highlight it is the importance and power of the primary function of interaction found in an organizational culture based on shared knowledge and participatory decision-making (Humans Resources Development Theory) rather than the structure and systems of an organization, that most affect the every day teaching lives of the teachers. Hargreaves, A (1994), in his work on school cultures, concludes in a similar light by saying that 'collaboration is an articulating and integrating principle of action, planning, culture, development, organization and research', that it requires 'trust in (the) complementary expertise' of teachers and that it can best be achieved by changes in the teacher culture rather than by structural changes in the organization itself. He quotes Werner (1991: :228) as saying:

> the strategy for improving schools (comes) from within
> rather than (from) reforming them from without ... and...
> more significant than centralized control of curriculum
> development and implementation are the groups of teachers
> who search out and discuss ways to better understand and
> organize their programs, and who take action in and within
> the structure of their own schools   (1994: 255)

In the NELP it is the organizational culture itself, characterized by its interaction contingencies that produces the opportunity to not only work satisfactorily and efficiently, but to allow the teachers to meet with each other and lay the grounds for free, or directed, exploration of their teaching. Engaging in interaction is learning, thus nowhere is it more

apparent that conditions for teacher learning do exist in on-the-job situations than in the teachers' micro-culture to be found in the staffroom. This is a view point echoed by Little (2002: 935) when she states she takes it as a *fundamental premise* that resources for teacher development are...

> created in and through interaction, as teachers talk with one another and with others, and as they work with and on the materials artifacts of teaching and learning (instructional materials, lesson plans, products of student work, tests and assessments).

The NELP is at least one living, evolving teacher culture in which these beliefs can be seen to be operating. Interactive talk is an essential ingredient of a learning community of teachers (Routman, 2002), as is participatory decision-making (Jarzabkowski, 1999) at not only the classroom level, but also at the level of the organizational culture, at the level of curriculum, and even leadership and hiring. As Owens (1995) says, participatory decision-making *is* the means of enabling the empowerment of teachers.

8.2. <u>Interaction: learning through the contingencies of the shared world</u>

As outlined in this thesis, teachers in teaching situations requiring them to share work in order to complete their teaching tasks (especially when this arrangement is endorsed or chosen by the teachers), and supported by a macro-culture structure providing a physical environment for this to happen, will find themselves in a privileged position of being able to form affordances, cultural tools, such as the logs and the curriculum, which in turn allow the contingencies that build through these many forms of sharing to create their own organizational culture based on their own shared knowledge, norms and beliefs. In creating this shared mediated world, they will find themselves in an environment which supports an intersubjectivity, a zone of cooperation, where "things" not only come together, but where teacher support and camaraderie exists allowing for the automatic self-regulated negotiation of their own learning.

Fig. 14 p. 266 outlines the shared world found to exist in the NELP modeled on Schein's model of levels of culture Fig. 2. p. 58, and Fig. 15 p. 266 modeled on van Lier's model of contingency types of pedagogical interaction shows the contingencies operating in the NELP that assist interaction and thus exemplify the principles enabling teacher learning.

More specifically; the organizational culture, the visibly apparent environmental aspects of staffroom, including curriculum and logs, feed into the area of shared knowledge from the top. From beneath, the various decision-making styles open to the teachers create contingencies for them, which, through the resultant interaction places them again in this shared knowledge area. This area of shared knowledge is, even more than the physical environment, their shared world: and it is an area of intersubjectivity where speech acts, conversational logic voice, footing overlap (fig. 4. P. 58) and where the Vygotskian ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development, fig.5.p.78) is activated. In this area learning takes place. Teachers then are constantly accessing an area of learning by being interactive members of the NELP. The NELP, with its focus on interaction, provides the teachers with the opportunity for entering an area of on-going learning, an environment in which teachers can engage in learning at will. Perhaps this process could be considered as the source of the "grapevine effect" mentioned by Teacher 7 above.

The freedom to engage in interaction and thus enter an area of learning and development, is in keeping well within the idea that learning is not an action that any other can dictate or cause. It is something only the individual can negotiate, mediate for himself between the environment and any others in the interaction, and that this will be something the individual teacher will regulate or himself according to his own convenience and need. Thus, just as good EFL teachers will provide their students with comprehensible input, challenging and interesting material and to encourage interaction in the classroom by attempting to encourage various forms of dialog, moving from transmissive, through transactional to transformational, so too, teachers need to be left to find their own ways in their own continuing development. It is the responsibility of the organization to provide the conditions that will enhance every opportunity for them to do so. This will then allow teachers to be involved in "learning" as they wish or may need, overtly or covertly, and it is,
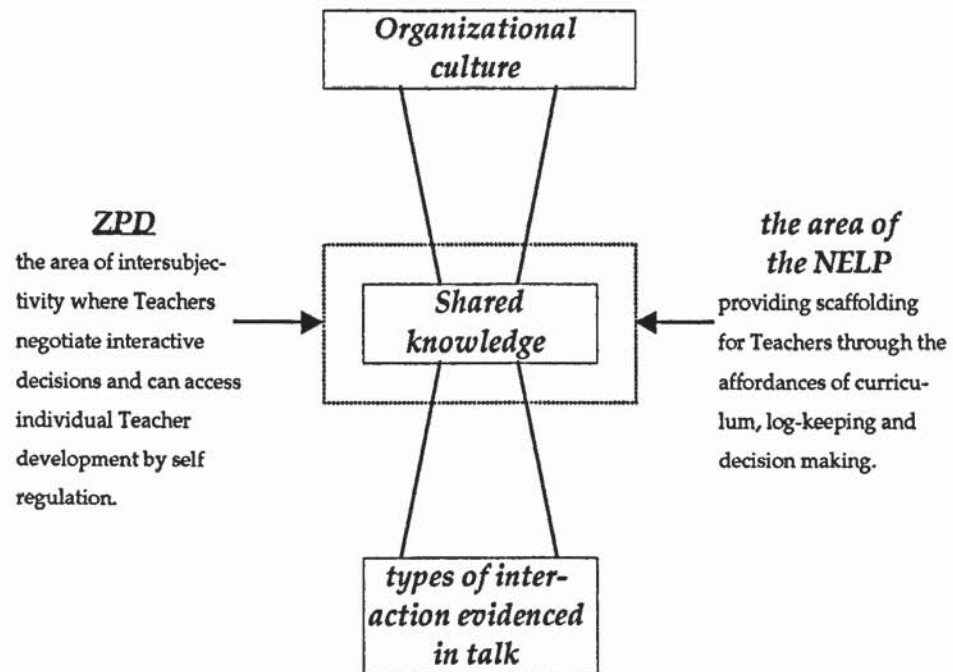
The Contingencies of the NELP
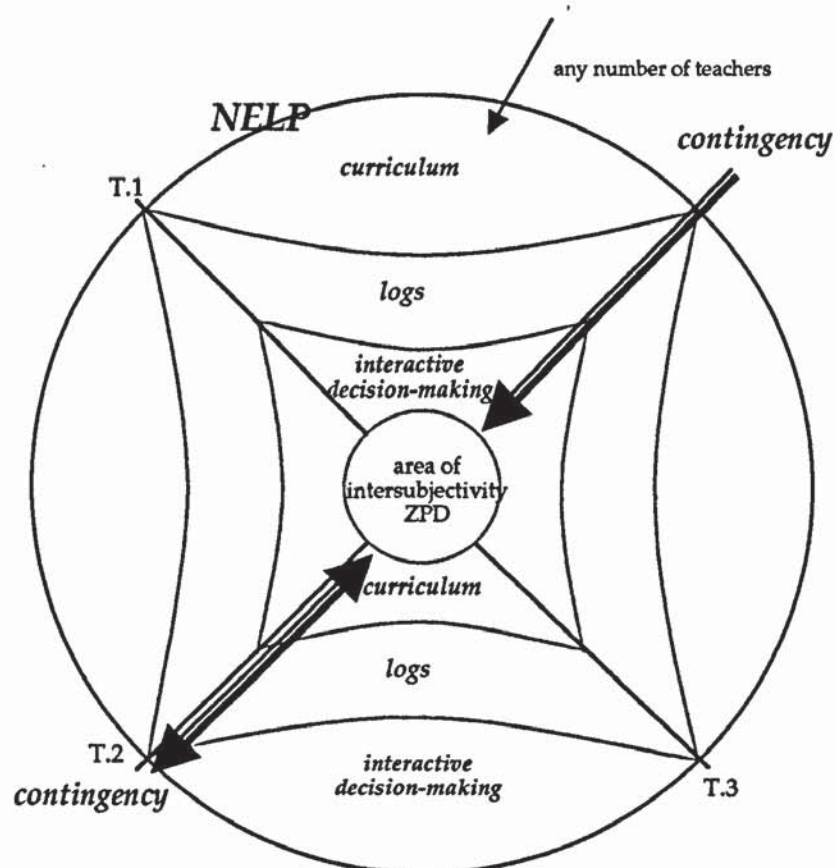

Fig.14

Wheel and Web of the NELP

Fig.15

Intersubjectivity is contingent on NELP affordances: curriculum, logs and interactive decision-making.

from observations of the NELP, evident that indeed some teachers avail themselves of this inherent "service" more than others: this is as it should be.

To further summarize the means, the way in which this staffroom learning works, I have chosen to exemplify the contingencies of and operating in the NELP (Fig. 15 p. 266) as a web and a wheel. It is an important point. The wheel is too strict and unbending an image for the process occurring in the NELP although it indicates the NELP is contained within its macro-culture context; the web better captures the more natural and home-spun aspect and affect of the NELP micro-culture; after all, the contingencies of the NELP are the connections the teachers themselves spin and uphold by their cooperation and collaboration, and they are the ones who "repair the web" when teachers leave and new teachers arrive or when changes in the structure or culture occur.

As with van Lier's model, and the model of the organizational culture of the NELP, the contingencies model, is concentric with both centrifugal and centripetal movement – a pulling outwards, and pulling inwards as the teachers may need. Van Lier (1966:183) says the outward pull is towards diversification and the pulling inwards is towards unification. In the NELP, this gives the teachers a great variety of interactive opportunities, allowing them to be "more or less" as their work requires them and their personal effort motivates them. Having partner teachers is clearly a driving force for the teachers, stimulating a great deal of the interaction that services them so well.

In bringing this study to a close I will now look at the significance of the outcomes of this view. It is clear the NELP gives its part-time teachers an identifiable culture and thus a framework for a professional connection to the program. Specifically, the macro culture gives the teachers an identifiable environment in which to work, a title and purpose, and an organizational culture they can have high stakes in and commitment to. As can be seen from the previous chapters, the culture is dual in nature, taking its structure, physical environment and overall existence from the wider institution, and the society in which it is a part, and its own vibrant micro culture, created by the curriculum, the teacher records, the sharing of classes and decision-making, from the interaction itself. The works of Hargreaves, Little, Woods and others, mentioned in the sections on teachers' work and

organizational cultures, and of Owens (chapter two) in the sections on Human Resources Development focus on the participatory decision-making functions, all point towards seeing the NELP as a largely collegial organization and thus providing an environment ripe for teacher development. While the study of the NELP would tend to up-hold Little's (1993) suggestion that teachers cooperate in a collegial way if their teaching is not threatened, the evidence from the NELP would suggest Hargreaves, A.'s (1994) suggestion that teachers need solitude is not necessarily so, and certainly not so for the teachers of the NELP, who manage their workloads and teaching life in a very busy and noisy environment. Of course, the NELP teachers are part-timers, they are not on campus everyday five days a week as are compulsory school teachers. More studies of a similar type, focusing on perhaps a possible critical and characteristic number of teachers, could be attempted to ascertain if the NELP teachers are unique or if this is a characteristic case of any organizational culture that relies on its part-time teachers to carry the lion's share of the teaching load themselves when they, themselves, can have a controlling influence and say in and on their teaching practices. This matter may be of particular interest in that 11-13, the usual number of teachers in the NELP, is an oft quoted number in studies on collegial cultures (Jarzabkowski's 1999 study with 12-20, settling for 16; Hopkins, 1990, with 21, Nias, 1989 with 5-12, Zeichner et. al. 1987 and Cole, 1991 with 13, Goodson and Cole 1994 with 8 teachers, and Little, 2002 with 12 members, in their studies of teachers and schools) and may be significant in indicating there is a critical limitation of numbers of teachers for successfully establishing and maintaining any collegial organization, with obvious implications for the establishing of communities of teachers.

8.3.   Cooperation and collaboration

The results of this study also clearly indicate the high degree with which the teachers are prepared to involve themselves in cooperation and collaboration when they are not pressured in a formal way to do so, when it can be left to happen naturally according to their own needs, and when they can see a direct and practical result coming from it. These results tend to question Ashman and Conway's (1997:226) reference to Andrew and Wheeler's works showing that school staffroom discussions about working, memory,

cognitive strategies, metacognition, planning, procedural knowledge, interactive assessment, assessment of cognitive processes, internal speech, mediation and cognitive modification are extremely rare, since teachers in this organization are involved in collaboration in a practical, pragmatic and cooperative way and do involve themselves covertly in the discussing of many of the above mentioned aspects with varying degrees of awareness and 'scholarship'.

8.4. Awareness and reflection

Teacher development programs stress the need for awareness and reflection, and no-one would deny a teacher the opportunity or right to this. Furthermore, the theories of experiential (based in "real" life activities) and reflective learning (introspecting and articulating on ones' own learning), (Kohonen in Nunan 1992), which form the theoretical base of much of today's teacher education and development, and extenuated by Wallace (1991) in his concept of the 'reflective practitioner' (teachers engaging their own teaching habits), clearly indicate the enormous importance of individual responsibility and awareness that is needed in the learning process and the enormous benefits to be gained if learners engage their individual efforts in a collaborative setting.

However, the NELP study, through interviews, observations and tapings, has indicated that the concept of overt awareness and reflection in the form of planned awareness and reflection exercises may also not be so very important in the daily work of the teacher. In fact it may even be detrimental. No teacher would be able to continue interacting in the NELP in the busy way they do if they were to become aware of their every move, and to be aware of their every conversation. A focus on how to speak, suggesting there is an appropriate way to be speaking in each situation would bring the teachers to silence. Rather, it is better to let the work unfold, and the 'unseen meanings behind the lines that create unity' (Owens, 1995: 84), take their own paths; to trust the teachers to do as they need to. This is not a "cop out". My experiences on working on this program, and in researching what exactly the teachers are doing everyday in their noisy, chaotic staffroom, have given me confidence to know that all is well. They are learning, evolving; not only do the logs

and taping reflect this, my personal experience and involvement corroborate it. To other program coordinators then it may well be prudent to be careful in attempting to implement organized programs or activities designed to engage teachers, especially experienced teachers, in further introspection, reflection and development; particularly if obliging them to develop such an awareness may make the teacher become too self-aware and thus interfere with the daily work at hand.

Rather than concentrating on attempting to overtly involve the teachers in endless critique of their own and others' work, it may be more valuable to set up an open staffroom and shared teaching tasks, and to then allow the teachers to form their own culture of interaction, allowing the teachers themselves to "do the rest". Thus, the issues of knowledge and experience, which are so difficult to quantify probably do not need to be issues in the staffroom; these are points teachers know amongst themselves. Rather, perhaps it should be the responsibility of the Heads of any program, even school, to promote a professional organization development focus by making sure the teachers on their staff can say

'I like it here, its a place I can get to talk with the other teachers'.

(T. quote. chapter one)

8.5. Directions for the future

This was an holistic study; it attempted to show the NELP working in its entirety, but as a case study it had a long and involved history to contend with. From the whole, aspects were extracted as being of vital importance to the program, and data was collected and interpreted in light of these areas. However, the difficulty of focusing an entire program left many other areas inadequately reviewed for lack of space. Also, the areas of teacher logs, and teacher decision- making used but a small fraction of the examples collected, and each sample not appearing still has something interesting to say. Clearly, there is room for more studies in the following areas:

1) The various aspects, component "parts" identified as influential, particularly decision-making and the influence and power of storytelling as a learning forum.
2) Studies highlighting how cultures like the NELP manage teachers who are unable to

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follow or comply with the operant organizational culture, and how issues of conflict are resolved; open examples of conflict and hostility are rare in the NELP, but covert frustrations sometimes exist.

3) Studies on the management of change, growth, and a stronger exemplification of how the culture is transferred to new members.

4) Studies on administrator and coordinator roles, and issues of leadership.

5) Studies of the various aspects in the light of any one of the multitude of "perspectives" in language learning, curriculum, shared knowledge, teacher development, emanicapatory and ecological improvement of programs for teachers.

The NELP studies do indicate that given the right environment, "learning" (transformational) discussions do not have to be so rare since the willingness to share is evident, although it becomes equally clear that the study of the interactive decision-making processes in an organization like the NELP need to be studied from the view point of the teachers themselves and in the entirety of the whole program, not as isolated factors of specific evidence of conversational "types". This would necessarily involve the practicing teachers' as informants on their real-time work and this may be difficult to obtain. However, this should not deter any future insider-researcher attempting studies in their busy work places. Teachers in such an organization as the NELP are necessarily very pragmatic, teaching is their livelihood, thus perhaps a way to involve teachers in any future studies might be to do as it was not possible on a Ph.D. thesis, but is common to the working practices of the teachers themselves –collaborate. Researchers could propose and work on joint investigations, articles and presentations, or any other academic endeavor in which there is equal power, distinction and "pay back".

This study did not choose a perspective in which to make firm interpretations; opting not to force the naturalistic data, much of which was retrospective of the fact and rooted in the history of the organization and the study. The NELP as a living, evolving organizational culture is both experiential and pragmatic and will likely survive any theorizing about it. However, I could firmly see the benefits of the human resources development theory and the theories of the sociocultural perspective as being most useful in interpretations the deeper the study went. The concept of intersubjectivity, of the shared mediated world, is a powerful and compelling one in explaining how teachers can work so well in a teaching

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organization, even as part-timers, and more work is called for in this perspective.

Further studies could look towards similar organizations for the study of similarities and differences, in order to see if the interpretations here outlined have any general validity or applicability. I cannot make generalizations, I can say the study was interpreted as honestly as I could make it and I attest to its reliability according to my knowledge, understanding and interpretation. This study may add to the dilemma of the researcher's paradox, that such a researcher is so involved as to influence the behaviors being studied, or to be so desensitized as to any results arising from it; or, it may lead to a greater understanding and perspective in the research world to studies done at close range by people involved in the study they are researching as being valid, and not just anecdotal, unfocused storytelling. Thus, if this study could lend weight to a legitimate research status for insider researchers for the light they can shed in holistic studies, in which external objective researchers may lack a feel for or knowledge of the nuances, and who may lack 'a context for relevant interpretations, for the priorities, circumstances and history' (of both the culture and the individuals), then this alone would give a measure of satisfaction from this study. The insider researcher has a unique position that gives them access to the nuances of a teachers' voices, moods and context, for being on hand to catch the informal interaction that occurs 'in the parking lots, the hallways', and for utilizing 'other resources not readily available to [outside, temporarily present] researchers' (Little, 2002: 920-1).

8.6. Conclusion

The nature of development is change. The NELP is a living organization, it is not static and cannot be studied without due recognition to its own dynamics, which are forever changing and modifying. This is both the strength and the weakness of this study. For anyone else arriving at the NELP, they will find the macro and micro culture intact and the interaction as whatever the present group of teachers provide. I believe the program is essential enough in itself to continue surviving change, just as it has survived the comings and goings of its teachers over the past 14 years, and that it will continue to survive as long into the future as its macro-environment, the college, does.

As a case study the NELP does not generate principles directly applicable to other situations. However, I believe an indepth look at this case in which part-time teachers have managed to create a vibrant teaching environment with help in structuring and organizing only from one full-time member and a part-time assistant, is of interest and value to others in similar fields in that it shows how and what enables teachers to create professional bonds beyond a reliance on the personality and good-will of other teachers. Furthermore, the storytelling of the teachers, so evidenced in the tapings and observations was barely touched upon in this study: it is an area of great interest for further studies, especially given that it is identified by the teachers themselves as the "grapevine" for learning.

Through personal involvement with others teaching in Japan I have constantly heard, "I don't know any other teachers or what is going, I just teach there", and "I wish we could coordinate". For such teachers perhaps the descriptions and explanations found in this study could help convince their parent body to establish teacher groups by providing a staffroom for them and coordinating their teaching periods so that they can meet each other. If the teachers in this study are typical, then it is safe to say the teachers themselves will "take it from there" and proceed to create and evolve their own organizational culture from which not only they can gain so much benefit, but also their parent body and most very likely, their students too.

Although the NELP study can offer no "proofs" or generalizations, I nevertheless have a strong belief that the patterns of communication and contingencies found in the NELP are facets of the human learning condition, helpful in explaining all on-the-job learning. Thus I believe it is useful for at least the administrators and coordinators, if not all the teachers, to be aware of the power and influence of staffroom organization. Personally, this study has been invaluable, allowing me to see the whole picture in context, even if it is deemed to be only my own context, and to understand more deeply what is going on in the NELP in the context of principles I can communicate to others.

This study presents the value of one way, a way I recommend, in which to organize and fulfill the needs of part-time teachers in an EFL environment.

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Appendix

    a - d: (ref. p. 184)   highlighting the various formats the teachers
                          have experimented with over the years

    e: (ref. p. 187)   highlighting pre-marking, ticking off activities

    f/h: (ref. p.193/195) showing typical log content

    h: (ref. p. 195)   showing the more diary-like quality in
                          individual logs

    i: (ref. example f) showing typical log content and organization

    j: (ref. p. 204)   highlighting a typical sentence structure

    k: (ref. p. 206)   an example of formatting within the log report
                          teacher's typically adapt the form to their needs;
                          others accommodate this

    L: (ref. p. 216)   reflective-like comments embedded in the
                          report; evidence of teachers continuous
                          'development' - an on-going activity in which
                          the logs provide a place for expression, even if
                          this is covert and largely unconscious.

Background: Since the inception of the NELP, logs (records of class work) have been kept by each and every teacher for each and every class taught. A study of the content and value of the logs was done earlier in which the teachers' use of and perceived value of the logs was investigated by way of open -ended interviews and the results then descriptively and interpretively presented. In this study, teachers unanimously agreed on the benefits of the logs, but some had expressed a view indicating they thought the activity of recording logs too time-consuming and thus perhaps somewhat intrusive. These teachers had suggested that a set category log form for checking, as opposed to the standard free form, might be less time consuming. Before setting out such a form it was thought important to discover more factually just how much time teachers actually spent on logs. Furthermore, the on-going observational study of the NELP seemed to suggest the logs were not only being used as recording tools, but in some way as a necessary everyday function of the NELP. It seemed then that the time spent on the keeping of logs might correlate with the value the teachers placed on them and thus to the running of the NELP, and that a time-frequency study may give a way to quantitatively demonstrate this.

hypothesis: there is a direct correlation of time spent on logs to teachers' perceived values of them and their usefulness in the NELP.

To test this ambitious hypothesis, it was first necessary to dispel the null hypothesis: time spent on logs is an insignificant variable to log keeping.

Method of testing:

The log use of each teacher in the NELP would be timed and recorded over three teaching days. Three days were thought to be adequate to give averages covering the various courses the teachers were taking. The mean average time spent on logs for each teacher and for the total population of teachers would be calculated. Should a significance at the O.5 standard mean deviation be demonstrated thus dispelling the null hypothesis, time could be considered an important variable in log keeping and further studies to test the hypothesis could be implemented.

The days and teachers for recording were set out over the period of June 1996, however, the study proceeded only as far as the first run and was then dispanded. The further two days were not recorded as the results of the first running, in conjunction with the difficulty of recording accurate data in the natural setting, clearly indicated the futility of continuing the study.

Results:

a) no individual results: study done only once, no mean averages possible

b) <u>Total mean average:</u>   total time: 63mins.38 sec. (divided by 13) = <u>4min.97 sec.</u>

c) Three teachers included in this calculation recorded zero observed and recorded times on the day of testing. Minus these people, the total figures:

total time: 63mins.38 sec.   (divided by 10) = 6mins.38 sec.

Comments:

1) Clearly, even without the application of statistical procedures, it was obvious time was not a significant variable in log keeping. The raw data indicates the range of recorded times between teachers to be of more interest; <u>time spent on logs ranged from 0.22 secs. to 18 minutes and 38 secs,</u> indicating that time spent on logs was an individual investment of each teacher and not uniform in practice, and possibily value and function, for all teachers. Given that teachers are free to write as much or as little as they wish, teachers could be taken to be seen as using the logs as they much as they needed.

2) An indication of the teachers' stated value of the logs for themselves and for the NELP clearly lay in other variables. The difficulty of recording data also clearly indicated a more adequate investigation of the function of the logs would be discovered through qualitative rather than quantitative study techniques.

3) Although the study was clearly a failure, and, if better planned and implemented experimentally, could possibly have yielded more significant results, it opens up the question as to how the logs actually help the teachers to function in the NELP and to why they rate them as so important when in fact they, on average, spend so very little time on them.

Appendix A: ref. Chapter one p. 25

Frequency Study 1

Wed. June 5th '95

background: quiet teaching day, only 4 Teachers present: coordinated classes, but not shared.

Liz on H. Econ. X2
Marie. on Writing x2
Denny on Bible x3 + H.Econ. Oral x1 ⎤
Terry on Bible x3   ⎦ Bible classes have no logs

classes run:
9:00-10:30
10:40-12:10
12:50-2:30
2:40-4:00

Names	Time	10:30	12:15	2:20	log Use / Total obs. Time
Liz 1 + 2 (Oral H.Econ. x2)	8:45 *in no logs used *waiting for D. to discuss (Liz course coordinator)	*no logs used *asked M. for writing log to write/check (Thurs.) class	*writing logs *worked for 3 mins. *didn't use H.Econ.logs *collected shelf – left		3 mins.
Denny H.Econ. x1 Bible x3	9:05 *no logs. Liz gone to class *looked hurriedly at textbook, rushed off	*no logs used *discussion with Alison *about how why he was *doing on his course	*no logs		0 mins.
Hillary (Secret. Eng. x2)	9:05 *logs opend 10 secs. looking *did other activities Q.(C) "no word on grades Ss. get?" ... L... going well. *took grading sheets, off to class	*looked at logs for 10 secs. (no writing) *did other activities *took logs to class	*came in *wrote (standing up + over desk) for 3 mins. but was upset over happening in classroom *collected stuff – left		3. 20 secs.
Marie Writing x2	8:40 *looked at writing log – 5 mins. in conjunction with textbook *made basic class plan for the day	*wrote log for 1 min. interrupted – passed log to Alison 11:01 *began log again spend about 5 mins.	*no logs worked on	2:35 *wrote log (with 2 student interruptions) *spent less than 3 mins. / didn't elaborate. very busy	10-12 mins.

Frequency Study

Appendix A: ref. Chapter one p. 25

Frequency Study 2

Mon. June 10th '95

background: 4 Oral classes x2; one speech class + coordinator's study period

Teachers:

Jane: Raul / Hillary: Prue – Oral

Barry – Speech: Marie / Gillian – admin. *didn't obs. these people

classes run: std.

log Use

Names	Time	10:30	12:15	2:20		Total obs. Time
Jane (oral) x3	9:00	*in just on time, didn't look at logs – took 2 logs to class	*didn't work on logs	*worked on logs about 2 mins.	**2:20** back 2:25 *wrote 1 min. left abruptly without any comments to anyone	3 mins.
Raul / Hillary	8:45	*logs out: new unit of bk. out schedule out. *Discussed next unit (holiday) *'cut up' the work 4:10 secs. *not finished. R. off to class. H. followed	*didn't see either T. during break	Hill: Put logs on desk. In and out during break. Raul: heated discussion between Barry and Raul (see notes); didn't notice log use	Hill: Put logs back at 2:45 *didn't write in staffroom: did in class(?) *made call (private) discussed with M / left. Raul: sat musing at desk about 12 mins., periodically writing.	→ 4:10 → 16:10
Prue		*rang (M's home) 6:50 – was afraid she'd be late *when M. arrived at 8:45 was already there. Logs on desk but not working on them. *took logs to class	**10:35** *looked at logs for 20 secs. Eyes also on textbk.	*heated discussion between Barry and Raul; didn't record P's log use	**2:41** *wrote grades in log bk. (2 mins.) Gil / P. seated down for discussion on what done: what to do for test. Went thru. test focus point: how to admin. for 10mins. *taped and transcribed:see notes	2:10 secs.
Barry		(no classes) ✕	✕	**12:40** *discussion with Raul in a hurry quick "Speech" class discussion with M. – left for class	**2:20** *discussion with Raul 1 min. on Speech log	1 min.

1995 - 96 Class Schedule (Second Semester)

	1 — 9:00 - 10:30	2 — 10:40 - 12:10	3 — 12:50 - 14:20	4 — 14:30 - 16:00
Mon.	Oral English II (1I-L): L3=M.S., L2+=R.B., L2=P.M., L1=M.H.; Speech II (2I-L) C.T.	Oral English II (1A-D): L3=M.S., L2+=R.B., L2=P.M., L1=M.H.	Oral English IV (2I-L): L3=S.S., L2+=R.B., L2=P.M., L1=M.H.; Speech II (2A-D) G.F., A.B.	Advanced Studies C.T.
Tues.	Oral English IV (2A-D): L3=S.S., L2+=G.F., L2=P.M., L1=R.B.; Speech I (2E-H) C.T.; H.Ec. Oral English I (1ADE) A.C.	Oral English II (1E-H): L3=S.S., L2+=M.S., L2=P.M., L1=G.F.; Speech II (2E-H) C.T.	Oral English IV (2E-H): L3=S.S., L2+=G.F., L2=P.M., L1=R.B.; Bible II (1CD) T.T.; H.Ec. Oral English II (1ADE) M.S., A.B.	Bible II (1AB) D.C.; Bible II (1EF) T.T.; Seminar (2A-L) C.T.
Wed.	Writing IV (2A-D) C.T.; Secretarial Conversation II (2F) B.M.; H.Ec. Oral English IV (2CEF) A.B.	Bible I (1IJ) D.C.; Secretarial Conversation I (2E) B.M.; H.Ec. Oral English IV (2ABD) A.B.	Bible II (1GH) T.T.; Bible II (1IJ) D.C.	
Thurs.	Oral English II (1I-L): L3=S.S., L2+=R.B., L2=B.M., L1=G.F.; Writing IV (2A-L) C.T., A.B.	Oral English I (1I-L): L3=S.S., L2+=N.C., L2=B.M., L1=G.F.; Advamced Studies C.T.	Oral English II (1E-H): L3=S.S., L2+=R.B., L2=B.M., L1=G.F.	TOEFL I (2A-H) G.F.; TOEFL I (2I-L) A.B.
Fri.	Techniques for Reading English Literature I (1C) C.G.; Business Communication I (2D) T.M.	Techniques for Reading English Literature I (1D) C.G.; Business Communication I (2CE) T.M.	Techniques for Reading English Literature I (1B) C.G.; Business Communication I (2BF) T.M.	Wriging IV (2I-L) C.G.

C.T. = Christine Tanaka
B.M. = Beverley Mutch
D.C. = David Cole
T.T. = Timothy Turner

C.G. = Colin Godbout
G.F. = Gary Fawcett
S.S. = Susan Stackhouse

P.M. = Peter Mattersdorff
T.M. = Tony Maver
M.H. = Meredith Hinton
M.S. = Marcia Smith

R.B. = Robert Butkus
A.B. = Alison Barbour

Home Economics course

CLASS LOG   1991-2

CLASS:_____

A TEACHER:_____ DAY:_____ TIME:_____ RM:_____

B TEACHER:_____ DAY:_____ TIME:_____ RM:_____

DATE	Worked Covered/Homework assigned	Comments/Recommendations	initials

MEMO:

CLASS LOG   1995 -1996

CLASS: _____   SUBJECT: _____

TEACHER: _____   Day: _____   TIME: _____   ROOM: _____

DATE   Worked covered/Homework assingned/Comments/Recommendations   initials

MEMO:

YEAR LOG SHEET 199....

CLASS............   SUBJECT............   LEVEL............
TEACHER(S)............../............   DAY/TIME............
Date:............

Comments re: materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment

Work covered:

Students responses/problems

Homework assigned: to be checked when, by whom

Reflections/queries arising from teaching

Signature:............

MEMO
Administration
Coordinator

YEAR LOG SHEET 2003

Class: ___2A___ Subject: *Academic Reading Skills* Level: _____

Teacher(s): ___Christine___ / _____ Room: ___1405___

Date: _____ Day/Time: ___Tues.3___ Text: ·

Work covered:	Comments:

Homework assigned: to be checked when, by whom.

Students responses/problems

Reflections/queries arising from teaching, materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment.

Sign:

Reminders for next class: ·

YEAR LOG SHEET 1997.

CLASS _EFG_ .:.   SUBJECT _Oral English II_   LEVEL _2_

TEACHER(S): ~~Bennier~~ / ~~Kenny~~   DAY/TIME _Tues : 10·40—12·10 p·m._
                                              (Thurs) 2·30 — 4·00 p·m

Date: _25th Sept_

Work covered:	Comments re: materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment
Page 49 — Read 6	NOT TOKYO, KYOTO, KAMAKURA, YOKOHAMA
	HOKKAIDO ✓
	OKINAWA ✓
WKbk ✓✓	~~KARUIZAWA~~ HAKONE
Pg 44&5 Ex ~~4~~,3,1.	KOBE ✓ --
Pg 44 Ex 5 ✓	~~Niigata~~ ✓ CHIBA
Get into groups decide place ✓ and areas of interest ✓ for brochure	
	In groups, individ topics decided.
Dark reports + Green card ✓ · 6th Nov	

Students responses/problems

CHOOSE A PLACE AND
TOPICS WHICH WILL BE
OF INTEREST TO THE
OTHER STUDENTS. IN THE CLASS
TAKE A VOTE ON WHICH
PLACE (EXCEPT THEIR OWN)
THEY WOULD LIKE TO VISIT
1st AFTER LISTENING TO THE
PRESENTATIONS

Absent
G Chika Sasaki
H5 ~~Yukka lizuka~~

Homework assigned: to be checked when,
by whom Collect info for project
 draft of speech (2 mins) 100 words in English
Pkg read H/W.
 Find pictures/photos/maps for the poster

Reflections/queries arising from teaching

Signature: ....

MEMO

Administration

Coordinator

CLASS LOG 1991-2

CLASS: ___W___

A TEACHER: ~~█████~~   DAY: Mon.   TIME: 2.55 pm   RM: ~~TRM~~ 1204

B\TEACHER: ~~█████~~   DAY: Thurs.   TIME: 1.15 pm   RM: 1204

DATE	Worked Covered/Homework assigned	Comments/Recommendations	initials
11/21	As ~~████~~ was sick I did Unit 28 1-8. #6 was very hard so we did it as a listening ~~exercise~~ exercise & they wrote them out – very difficult. 7 & 8 I did orally –	Gave HW sheet assigned # 1-3. Students managed this unit well & seemed to enjoy. We only did first dialogue of #6. Students were a little sleepy.	SS
25th Nov	Unit 28 Ex 9, 11, 12, 13. Do Me A Favour Harraps Game.	If you need something extra you may want to continue but it's hard for them! They found the listening v. difficult but enjoyed the Harraps Game. Gave rest of homework so check Thurs please as we didn't have time · They were V. slow.	
27/11	Many were absent at a tourism fair so I didn't check the HW. I can do it next week. We discussed the movie report – types of movies likes & dislikes – What to include in a written report – Intro/summary / Ending. Watched part	of Indiana Jones & discussed, plot, character, setting, animals etc · I did not put the students into groups because there were so many students absent. I'll do it next week.	SS.
2nd Dec	Sorted Ss into groups (only 2 absent) this took until 3.30!! To decide who would say what U 29 Ex 1, 2, 3, 8 – seemed to enjoy this switching from 1st pers to 3rd pers. verbs. Enjoy future ideas – thought life in the future would be worse!	To decide who would ~~say~~ what seemed to enjoy this switching Gave out U29 homework for B class on Thurs.	

MEMO:

CLASS LOG 1994 - 1995

Class: _____ Subject: _Engl. Oral_

A Teacher: ~~_____~~ Day: _Tues_ Time: ~~10-40~~ 9:00 Room: _1401_

B Teacher: ~~_____~~ Day: _____ Time: _____ Room: _____

DATE	WORK COVERED / HOMEWORK ASSIGNED	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS	INIT
8/11	1) Checked movie Repts titles 2) Brainstormed Sports 3) Sport/Place/Person/Equipment 4) Non-stop discussion 　Sports - the best 　　　- least active 　　　- dangerous. Hmwk pg 48 Nº 5.	Reasonable	SES.
16/11	① Checked Hwk. ② Warmer - labelling board pic. of body. ③ Text p46 #3 ④ " p47 #4 reading a) comp. 　　　　　　　　　　　　　b) verbs. ⑤ Simon Says. ⑥ Teaching each other warm-ups for new sport (Hwk. WkBk p48 #1)		lu
15/11.	① Warmer: Talk about favourite Sumo wrestler. ② WkBk pg45 Nº 2 pg 47 Nº2. ③ Sports quiz - 5 Questions in gps. 　2 teams - whole class plays ④ Text pg 48 Nº 1,2,3,4 ⑤ Japanese trad. sports in gps 　discuss - rules + vocab pert. to the sport 　Split up into gps (1 person from each diff group) ⑥ report on your findings. (Graded)		SES.
17/11	Movie Reports. Scattergories.		lu

MEMO:

CLASS LOG   1993-1994

CLASS: GFGM L3

A TEACHER:		DAY: Mon	TIME: 9:15	RM: 1401
B TEACHER:		DAY: Mon	TIME: 9:15	RM: 1401

DATE	Worked Covered/Homework assigned	Comments/Recommendations	initials
09/10	Ss performed palmist's dialogue outside - practised. Meanwhile rest of class Did test paper (written + vocab). Gave a 'personality test' but so didn't show interest or enthusiasm.	in attempts to do self-analysis. (as per normal).	Jo
05/10	Book report - ~~very~~ good. Did noisey neighbours afterwards then brainstormed on household objects. Generally more positive	than is usual; (But then very closed activities).	Jo
12/10	lodging - landlady activities and lodger interviews following text books until 19 including listening.		Jo
18/10	Lesson 20. Worked through exercise 1, important aspects of a house choice, in depth making Ss consider the implications of each.	Did listening exercise and set Ss the HW of reading rules and deciding their character for tomorrow's 'Ideal Homes' exercise.	Jo

MEMO:

YEAR LOG SHEET 1997

CLASS _____ SUBJECT _Speech I_ LEVEL _2nd year_

TEACHER(S) _____ DAYTIME _12:50 Tues_

Date: _June 3_

Work covered:	Comments re materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment
① Impromptu speeches ✷ 10 minutes to plan ✷ ② How to organize a speech Body conclusion intro (talked about what each should do) ③ Confidence Builder — something meaningful	

Students responses/problems

It might have been better to do them in groups first or two or four and then to choose a few to do in front of the class.

Homework assigned: to be checked when, by whom _something meaningful — Prepare speech_

Reflections/queries arising from teaching

Signature _____

MEMO
Administration
Coordinator

TEACHER(S) _____ DAYTIME _12:00 Tues_

Date: _June 10_

Work covered:	Comments re materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment
① Confidence Builder — something meaningful ✷ example one done by the ✷ Ss practise w/ partner → do in small group — feedback (imagine that they...) ② Confidence Builder — describing a-jar ✷ time to brain storm ideas	

Students responses/problems

→ Introduce how to organize speech in note form (it is giving so many usa to experience) and the order in which to prepare it doing the introduction first)

Do really good today. More relaxed — funny much better.

Homework assigned: to be checked when, by whom _Prepare speech on a-feel_

Reflections/queries arising from teaching

Signature _____

MEMO
Administration
Coordinator

YEAR LOG SHEET 199:....

CLASS...JKL.   SUBJECT....Oral English   LEVEL........L3......

TEACHER(S)..................../...........................   DAY/TIME.....12:50~2·20 Thurs.

Date:...6th Nov.

Work covered:

Comments re: materials, syllabus, scheduling, assessment

Discussion prax — Debating **For & Against**
(Writing: For + Against)

1. <u>Smoking</u> pqs: 2 — 4.
In gps prepared | materials
re: background | reading / vocabs work.
then in groups of | 3 all for or all against
prepared their arguments. 15 minutes

Students responses/problems

Worked on predicting what the other side
would say. 30 min discussion / debate.

They enjoyed this very much.
Very lively for 15 minutes then it
began to fade out. I think students
would benefit more from a longer more serious prep time.

Homework assigned: to be checked when, by whom

The Dinner Party

Reflections/queries arising from teaching

Signature:..................................

MEMO

Administration

Coordinator

291: L