

*Growth in practical knowledge and
teachers' self-efficacy during an in-
service BA (TESOL) programme*

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Abstract

This thesis explores growth in practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy during an in-service language teacher education programme; a three-year BA (TESOL). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are teachers' beliefs in their capabilities of supporting learning in various task and context-specific cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social ways.

The study focuses on five non-native speaker teachers of English in a hitherto little researched geographical context, using qualitative case study methodology to trace their development longitudinally. Longitudinal studies into the practical knowledge growth of language teachers are notable by their absence, as are qualitative studies into language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Accordingly, constructs and processes central to this thesis have been under-researched, leading to a gap in the literature that this study addresses.

In this thesis, case studies of the development of teachers' self-efficacy and practical knowledge in ELT are presented. Findings suggest that in-service language teacher education programmes that encourage reflection and deep learning can foster considerable growth in practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy. Various dimensions of this practical knowledge growth are explored and light is shed on teachers' cognitions in previously little researched curricular areas of language teaching. Assertions are made about the nature of growth in language teachers' self-efficacy, and a conceptual model is offered that seeks to explain this process. Insights gained from the study suggest that qualitative methods, including observations and interviews used together, can uncover links between language teachers' practical knowledge and self-efficacy beliefs, and can be used to chart growth that occurs in both longitudinally. This work thus makes a methodological contribution as well as enriching understanding of the constructs themselves. It also makes recommendations for the design of in-service language teacher education programmes with a view to helping them support growth in practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy.

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Acronyms

ACLL	Assessing Children's Language Learning
AR	Action Research
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BE	Basic Education
C1	Cycle 1
C2	Cycle 2
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CT	Communicative Task
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EFM	English For Me
ELCD	English Language Curriculum Department
ER	Email in reply
GE	General Education
GSE	Global Self-Efficacy
GTE	General Teaching Efficacy
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IL	Initial Literacy in English
INSET	In-service teacher training
LAL	Language Acquisition and Learning
MA	Master of Arts
MDD	Materials Design & Development
MTC	Major town centre
MV	Mountain village
OHT	Overhead transparency
OT	Outskirts of town
OWTE	Our World Through English
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PET	Preliminary English Test
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PK	Practical Knowledge
PPK	Personal Practical Knowledge
PR	Progress Report
PRIT	Primary Teachers' in-service course
PTE	Personal Teaching Efficacy
RP	Research Proposal
RQ	Research Question
RSM	Report on Supervision Meeting
RT	Regional Tutor
RV	Rural village
SET	Senior English Teacher
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TEYL	Teaching English to Young learners
TG&V	Teaching Grammar & Vocabulary
TILL	Technology in Language Learning
TPR	Total Physical Response
TR&W	Teaching Reading & Writing
TS&L	Teaching Speaking & Listening
TSE	Teachers' Self-Efficacy
TSES	Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale
TTC	Teacher Training College
UCLES	University of Cambridge Examination Syndicate
UK	United Kingdom
UOL	University of Leeds
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

In my work as a teacher educator, I teach on nearly every module of an in-service BA (TESOL) Programme, offer tutorial support, observe and give feedback in schools. I do some things better than others, but obviously try to do everything well.

When I think about my development in the five years since I started working on the programme, I am conscious of growth in both knowledge and self-confidence, growth fostered by engaging in practice and researching my own practice at the same time. In some aspects of my work, I lacked self-confidence, or to use a more technical term, self-efficacy, at the beginning, in explaining complex grammar points, for example, to students who may have viewed grammar as a prescriptive system to be taught deductively, with the teacher a 'knower' (Richards & Rodgers, 1986) imparting knowledge to receivers of it. In response, I wanted to use a more inductive approach and overcome 'uncertainty avoidance' (Hofstede, 2001), but at first it was not easy and occasionally I felt uncomfortable. There were also curricular areas of which I knew much less than I do now. However, through experiences in a 'collaborative culture' (Hargreaves, 1992) of teaching, reflecting, conceptualising and planning, I developed greater knowledge, of a largely practical nature, of the course content, the students, and of ways in which I could work with them successfully. Becoming more efficacious in different aspects of my work gave me greater self-confidence overall.

I have related this story to illustrate the relevance of concepts such as practical knowledge and self-efficacy growth to my own development as a teacher educator. These concepts are central to this thesis, in which I explore the growth of teachers studying on the in-service BA (TESOL) Programme I work on. I will say more of the programme, below. First, though, I would like to explain, in more general terms, why self-efficacy is worth studying.

The empowering nature of self-confidence has been acknowledged down the centuries. Pajares (2008) draws attention to this: "They are able who think they are able", declared the Roman poet, Virgil; "Self-confidence is the first requisite to great undertakings", argued Samuel Johnson in the eighteenth century. Much more recently,

self-confidence in completing tasks, i.e. self-efficacy, has become a construct of major interest to researchers into motivation working from a cognitive perspective. In contemporary educational psychology, self-efficacy is regarded as a crucial influence on achievement behaviour, affecting effort and persistence (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). An interest in investigating self-efficacy growth was one of the main inspirations of this thesis.

I have researched self-efficacy before. While working in the context of a language school in a South Asian country, I sought to influence self-efficacy growth by introducing learner training strategies to English classes (Wyatt, 2000). My findings suggested that education seemed to have a positive influence on self-efficacy, although the extent of this varied across individuals, tasks and topics. Conclusions were tempered by the small-scale nature of the research, conducted with students on short courses.

The research I am reporting on here was conducted in a very different teaching/learning context; that of a three-year in-service BA (TESOL) Programme in the Middle East, run by a British university in conjunction with the local Ministry of Education. The project of which the programme is part aims to help teachers support nationwide educational reform. The project has been described as “ambitious”, “complex” and “unique in the region” (Richards & Rixon, 2002, p. 4). It has been well funded and is highly resourced, in terms of infrastructure and personnel. Participating teachers are supported through the programme by a network of TESOL professionals. These include academic staff at the university who produce materials, organise the marking of scripts and teach course content. This teaching is shared with part-time teaching fellows recruited and oriented in Britain but sent out to the Middle East to work on Winter and Summer schools, and regional tutors, most based in remote parts of the host country. Regional tutors teach, advise and mentor, offering academic, professional and pastoral support throughout the programme, most of this to a group of teachers from the region they are based in, with whom they can form close relationships. My work on the project as a regional tutor is deeply fulfilling on a professional level, as I can tailor the support I provide to individual needs, gaining a real sense of teachers’ development, while working closely with them over three years. The design of the research I am reporting on has been shaped by my role in the

project. I have engaged in creating longitudinal, qualitative case studies, exploiting the opportunity invited by the context to study teachers' professional growth over an extended period.

Longitudinal studies into language teacher development are lacking, as Borg (2003) reports. Yet, such studies, following the development of individuals over time, are required to shed light on how teachers change, cognitively and behaviourally, as they accumulate experience and learn. Longitudinal studies into self-efficacy in the teacher education literature in general are also rare, as are qualitative investigations into this construct (Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2003), with none I know of involving language teachers and, in particular, teachers who are non-native speakers of English. This group is often neglected in the TESOL research literature, and empirical research methodology is required, as Waters (2007) argues, to access their cognitions.

My research aims to explore the cognitions of five non-native speaker teachers of English, focusing on their self-efficacy and practical knowledge growth longitudinally and qualitatively in relation to the complex tasks they perform as part of their work. I hope that through using qualitative methods, including observations and interviews, I can gain deep insights into the nature of these teachers' growth, stimulated, as it was, by an in-service teacher education programme containing language, methodology and research elements and promoting reflective practice.

The thesis is organized in the following way. First I explore key concepts through the literature review and then provide more details of the research context. Next I discuss the research methodology used, before turning to data analysis. This includes five chapters of case studies, each focused on a different teacher and with a different theme, before a chapter offering cross-case analysis. There is then a discussion, exploring findings in relation to the growth of practical knowledge, teachers' self-efficacy, the characteristics of language teacher education programmes that support such growth and research methodology appropriate for investigating it. Then, in a brief conclusion, I summarize findings, limitations and recommendations. I now turn to the literature review and focus on the key concepts central to the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, my initial focus is on the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers, a vital element of their motivation and cognition, since “among the types of thoughts that affect action, none is more central or pervasive than people’s judgements of their capabilities to deal effectively with different realities” (Bandura, 1986, p. 21).

Teachers, including language teachers, are increasingly seen as “active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs” (Borg, 2003, p. 81), and the study of their self-efficacy is of relevance to researchers in various fields, including teacher cognition and language teacher education (the area I work in) as well as educational psychology. I will attempt a merging of fields, as advocated by Wheatley (2005), to gain fresh insights into this construct.

Throughout much of its history, the line of research into teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs has been plagued by confusion, as researchers have struggled to conceptualise the construct and measure it psychometrically (Henson, 2001a). Issues remain to be resolved, despite a seminal article by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy (1998). My objectives in this chapter include building on the “current conceptualisation” (Fives, 2003, para. 45) of the construct to facilitate qualitative empirical research. I will consider the relationship between teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and other cognitions that influence teachers’ behaviour, including practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1981), and present a model illustrating teachers’ self-efficacy growth. Additionally, I consider implications for future research and teacher education. First, though, I define the construct.

2.2 Teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs

Self-efficacy beliefs are at the heart of Bandura’s Social Cognitive theory (1986), which “is rooted in a view of human agency in which individuals are agents proactively engaged in their own development and can make things happen by their actions” (Pajares, 2002, para. 6). These beliefs have been defined as: “people’s

judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). The goal-directed, task-specific and domain-specific nature of self-efficacy has been emphasised, as these characteristics distinguish it from broader expectancy for success constructs (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). As Bandura (2001, para. 1) has argued: “The efficacy belief system is not a global trait but a differentiated set of beliefs linked to distinct realms of functioning”.

In the education field, teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs relate to their perceived capabilities of achieving desired outcomes in student engagement and learning (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). I have recast this definition, as follows, to pinpoint the specific nature of the self-efficacy construct within the breadth of a teacher’s, and particularly a language teacher’s, work: Teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs are teachers’ beliefs in their capabilities of supporting learning in various task and context-specific cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social ways.

2.3 Previous conceptions of teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs

I do not have space here to discuss earlier conceptions of teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs at length (see Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, and Fives, 2003, for reviews of the ‘teacher efficacy’ literature – the term I use for research in this area). However, since it is relevant to points I later make, I provide a brief overview.

Prior to 1998, research into teacher efficacy was traditionally based on a conceptualisation of it as consisting of two hierarchically organized dimensions; general teaching efficacy (GTE), referring to a teacher’s beliefs about the possibility of teachers in general being able to produce student learning; and personal teaching efficacy (PTE), “referring to the teacher’s personal appraisal of his or her own effectiveness as a pedagogue” (Ashton, 1985, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p. 159). According to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998, p. 4) the origins of this conceptual division can be traced to Armor et al.’s (1976) use of the following questionnaire items (the first since related to GTE, the second to PTE):

1. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can’t do much because most of a student’s motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.

2. If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.

Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) report that Armor et al. (1976) had been influenced by Rotter's (1966) Social Learning theory and his ideas about internal-external locus of control. So teachers who felt that the influence of the environment overwhelmed the abilities of teachers in general to support students' learning would see the reinforcement of their efforts as external. Their GTE would thus be low, according to researchers such as Gibson & Dembo (1984), who later developed their own highly influential and much employed 30-item questionnaire expanding on these ideas.

Bandura (1997, p. 243) dismisses such research for lack of relevance to self-efficacy. As well as highlighting the difference between his theory and Rotter's, he argues: "efficacy to surmount taxing conditions should be measured in terms of teachers' beliefs about their own efficacy to do so rather than about the efficacy of teachers in general", thus rejecting the concept of GTE. As to attempts to measure PTE, he complains about global self-report items "usually cast in a general decontextualized form leaving much ambiguity about exactly what is being measured and the level of task and situational demands that must be managed" (Bandura, 2001, para. 2).

What are we to make, then, of the findings of numerous studies into teachers' self-efficacy beliefs that have used precisely such global self-report items? These have claimed impressive correlations with all sorts of positive achievement behaviour for their version of the teachers' self-efficacy construct (see Dörnyei, 2001, Henson, 2001a, Ross, 1994, Stein & Wang, 1988, Stipek, 1998, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001, for some of these claims). Indeed, if teachers lack a global self-efficacy in their abilities, this can foster negative attitudes, interfere with their learning, reduce their willingness to try new methods and engender a cognitive dissonance leading to the importance of the subject matter being taught devalued in the teacher's mind, as Wheatley (2001) argues. He claims they are thus less likely to feel guilty over poor performance (*ibid*).

Global self-efficacy can be put in context by considering Ames & Ames' (1984) attempts to explain teacher motivation with the help of three main constructs; task mastery (belief in our ability to help learners accomplish goals – self-efficacy), ability in general (a global construct related to self-esteem and self-confidence) and moral responsibility orientations (including a concern for student welfare and sense of duty). I relate the first of these constructs to the 'current conceptualisation' of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs drawn from Bandura's ideas, which I subsequently refer to as teachers' self-efficacy (TSE), and the second to global self-efficacy (GSE), the PTE of earlier conceptualisations that Bandura disparagingly refers to as "nonspecific social behaviour" (1986, p. 411), or "a generalized personality trait" (Pajares, 1996, p. 547). In making this distinction, however, I am not dismissing any relationship between the two, as I believe that high self-esteem and self-confidence, which relate to GSE, are likely to protect a teacher struggling to overcome low TSE in certain context-specific areas. However, my focus is on TSE, rather than GSE, and in the following pages, I will attempt to differentiate clearly between the two when the need arises.

2.4 Self-perceptions of competence in relation to the teaching task and its context

In arguing the case for a TSE construct grounded in Bandura's ideas, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) developed a model illustrating the cyclical nature of TSE (see Figure 1, overleaf). This model, the first comprehensive conceptual model in the field (Labone, 2004), quickly gained widespread support, as "an important advancement" (Henson, 2001a, para. 20), compatible with the 'current conceptualisation' (Fives, 2003) of TSE.

At the heart of the model is its recognition that teachers assess their self-efficacy while analysing the teaching task and its context in relation to their self-perceptions of competence, i.e., the skills, knowledge, strategies and other cognitive and affective resources available to them in the particular setting. Out of the tension produced by a collision of the various goals and restraints, TSE judgements for the task at hand are developed, and these are highly context-specific. "Teachers feel efficacious for teaching particular subjects to certain students in specific settings, and they can be expected to feel more or less efficacious under different circumstances" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 18).

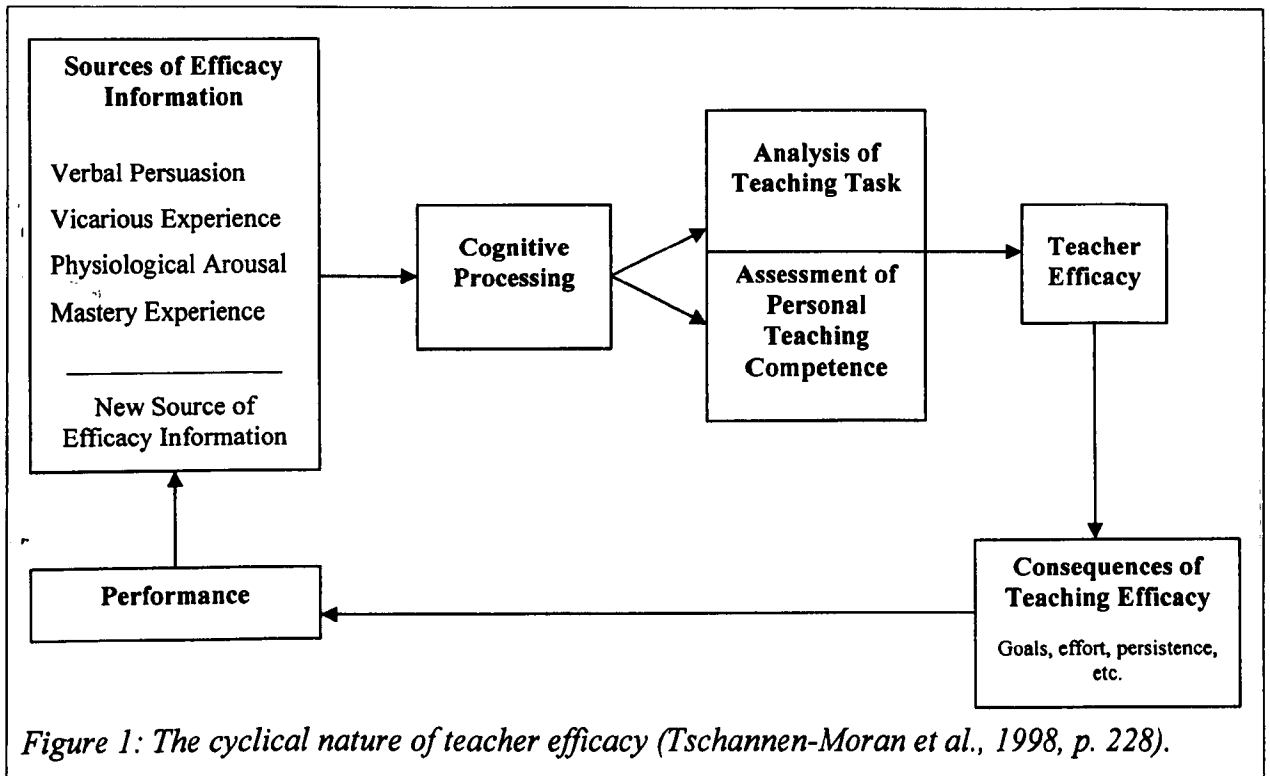


Figure 1: The cyclical nature of teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 228).

Wheatley (2001) argues that out of the tension produced by an analysis of the teaching task and its context against self-perceptions of competence, beneficial self-efficacy doubts arise, fostering disequilibria, change, reflection, learning. He criticizes Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) cyclical model for failing to incorporate the idea "that, at times, doubting one's efficacy might be what helps teachers and teaching the most" (ibid, para. 38), a point I return to later, when I present my own, more fully developed model.

Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) model is useful for its focus on the point when self-perceptions of competence are analysed in relation to the teaching task and its context. This key element of the representation captures the goal-oriented, task and domain-specific nature of TSE. If the construct is conceptualised so, though, with the focus very much on the particular rather than the generalizable, then I believe there are serious implications for applicable research methodology, the subject of the next section.

2.5 Research methods appropriate for eliciting TSE

The 'current conceptualisation' of TSE, following Bandura's (1997) ideas has presented psychometric challenges for quantitative researchers. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2001, p. 790) explain:

Although researchers and theorists alike agree that TSE is situation specific, it is less clear what is the appropriate level of specificity for its measure. For example, is efficacy specific to teaching mathematics, or more specific to teaching algebra, or even more specific to teaching quadratic equations?

Elsewhere, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998, p. 13) warn:

There is a danger of developing measures that are so specific they lose their predicative power for anything beyond the specific skills and contexts being measured (I am confident I can teach simple subtraction in a rural setting to middle-income second grade boys who do not have specific learning disabilities, as long as my class is smaller than 16 students and good manipulatives are available).

I think this is missing the point. These authors acknowledge (2.4, above) that what is important in TSE is the particular, but are hampered by wishing to correlate findings and generalize these through quantitative research. Unfortunately, the quantitative measures they then produce are invariably too general to relate to TSE. Thus, the first item in Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy's recent Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (2001) asks: "To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?". Given that no context is specified, this is a GSE measure of the type disapproved of by Bandura (2001).

If one is focusing on the particular, a logical solution is to use qualitative methodology. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998, p. 29), themselves, argue that: "interviews and observational data can provide a thick, rich description of the growth of teacher efficacy. Interpretive case studies and qualitative investigations are needed to refine our understanding of the process of developing efficacy". Wheatley (2005), too, feels that interpretive research can help resolve puzzles as teachers' understanding is explored. Unfortunately, however, qualitative research methods have been overwhelmingly neglected in the study of TSE, and qualitative case studies have only just started to emerge. One such case is that presented by Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy (2003). I summarize the narrative below:

Dr Wilson's story: Overcoming negative stereotypes while helping learners develop an appreciation of English literature

Dr Wilson is a reflective and articulate African American, with 25 years' teaching experience, including the last 11 in a predominantly White European American high school. Marginalized by other teachers, who perhaps resent her PhD and higher salary, Dr Wilson sees combating negative stereotypes as one of her responsibilities as a teacher. We see her in class contextualizing a novel by Alice Walker, and later, following class readings, describing her own childhood experiences in a way that deeply engages her students. We hear her reflect on positive learning outcomes, in terms of increased sensitivity to minority groups, after a particular lesson, and hear her bask in the memories of graduation days when kids hug her and parents tell her how much she has meant to their child. At the same time, she feels the school is an isolating, unsupportive environment, in which she never feels really very comfortable with some of her colleagues. She is also conscious of never being given higher status classes to teach (Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2003).

There are four main points I would like to make about this story. Firstly, it illustrates how important thick description is for helping us understand a complex and multi-layered teaching context. Secondly, it demonstrates how qualitative methods can help us explore teachers' conceptualisations of the task. For Dr Wilson, the goal is 'overcoming negative stereotypes' within a task I would describe, although this is not specified in the narrative, as 'helping learners develop an appreciation of English literature'. Interviews and observations conducted over a 5-month period enable the researchers to focus on Dr Wilson's cognitions, in relation to the task and the context. Thirdly, it shows how using a combination of qualitative methods can help us assess the depth of TSE beliefs. We have the observer's words describing 'solace' in the classroom, which we can triangulate with Dr Wilson's words reflecting on learning that took place. This triangulation helps us see that Dr Wilson does not seem to be expressing herself over-cautiously ('defensive pessimism', Wolters, 2003), and nor is she making unjustified claims out of a desire to please the interlocutor (the 'Hawthorne effect', Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Fourthly, we can see that such a narrative provides insights into the relationship between TSE beliefs and other motivational constructs, with all three of those identified by Ames & Ames (1984) (2.3, above) present here. Moral responsibility orientations (she talks often about a sense of duty) are clearly important to Dr Wilson, as are GSE beliefs relating to her pride in gaining a PhD and her joy on graduation day. These, together with her TSE beliefs, help Dr Wilson persevere in the pursuit of her goals, despite an unfavourable context.

Uniting these four points is the distinctive focus on the content of ideas that qualitative research into motivation provides (Ushioda, 2001). In teacher efficacy research, qualitative data can help us understand the context, task, depth of TSE beliefs and relationship between these and other cognitions. There are other benefits of qualitative case studies, too. They can be useful for identifying the sources of TSE beliefs, and, if longitudinal, can chart growth of TSE. I will discuss these ideas further after discussing the self-efficacy of beginning teachers, which will help put that of in-service teachers, the focus of my study, in context.

2.6 The self-efficacy of beginning teachers

A high proportion of new teachers leave the profession within the first few years. Indeed, data presented by Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy (2003) suggest that, in the USA, 25% do so within two years and 40% within five. Stress and fragile self-efficacy are often cited as amongst the most common reasons (Dörnyei, 2001), with teacher preparation courses often blamed for not providing sufficient and sufficiently varied practice teaching opportunities (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998), so that novice teachers, still in a fantasy stage of acting out ‘nurturing’ roles learned in childhood (Nimmo & Smith, 1995), and full of ideals as to learner-centredness introduced on the pre-service course (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001), experience a sharp reality shock in their first semester teaching in a real school setting, when survival becomes the issue (Farrell, 2003).

There has been extensive quantitative research into the self-efficacy of novice teachers, using measures I have described (in 2.3 & 2.5, above) as GSE. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2007), for example, asked 74 novice (3 or fewer years’ experience) and 181 career teachers (4 years plus) to complete their TSES survey (2.5, above). This elicits efficacy for instructional strategies (e.g.; How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?), classroom management (e.g.; How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the class?) and student engagement (e.g.; How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?). The researchers found that novice teachers were less efficacious than career teachers in the first two categories. Furthermore, the lowest individual aggregate scores across the 24 items were from the group of novice teachers,

suggesting that teachers with low GSE beliefs initially either strengthened them or failed to survive into a fourth year and beyond.

These findings indicate the importance of GSE beliefs to teachers, when these beliefs relate to survival (instruction and classroom management). Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2007, p. 15) argue that pre-service teacher education (which I will discuss further, in 2.8, below) needs to support the “development of strong, resilient, self-efficacy beliefs”.

What do we know of the TSE beliefs of beginning teachers? Qualitative investigations can help, e.g.; Mulholland & Wallace (2001); a longitudinal case study charting the development of a beginning teacher. I will analyse this in detail. Prior to this, though, I address the following issues relevant to an understanding of the case. Firstly, what do we know of the sources of TSE beliefs, and how they are processed? Secondly, how do TSE beliefs relate to other sorts of beliefs and knowledge, including a teacher’s practical knowledge (2.8, below)? Thirdly, how does this practical knowledge grow and what is the likely effect of this growth on TSE beliefs?

2.7 The sources of TSE beliefs and how they are processed

Bandura (1986) proposed that efficacy and ultimate behaviour are affected by four sources of efficacy building information; mastery experiences (concrete experiences of doing things), vicarious experiences (hearing, seeing or reading about others doing them), verbal persuasion (being told by others how we did/will perform), and physiological arousal (getting this information from our senses). Prior to Tschannen-Moran et al.’s (1998) model (Figure 1, above), these sources of efficacy building information had been “all but ignored” (Henson, 2001a, p. 7), but have received much more attention since, e.g.; by Labone (2004).

According to Tschannen-Moran et al.’s (1998) model (Figure 1, above), these efficacy building experiences influence TSE beliefs through cognitive processing, a concept rarely explored in the teacher efficacy literature, and then only from a psychological perspective. Thus, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), Henson (2001b) and Labone (2004) emphasize the importance, in efficacy building, of motivational constructs,

such as Weiner's (1979) Attribution theory, but neglect other cognitions. I agree, though, with Fives & Alexander (2004, p. 4), who argue:

Those sources of efficacy information, those experiences, do not lead directly to cognitive processing, but rather contribute to the development of knowledge and beliefs within the teachers' cognitive system. Those knowledge and beliefs then influence how teachers analyse the task and evaluate their own competence, resulting in efficacy beliefs. Thus, we contend that experiences alone do not affect subsequent cognitive processing. Rather, these experiences allow teachers to construct knowledge and belief structures that subsequently influence cognitive processing.

It seems important, therefore, to consider the knowledge and belief structures that the sources of efficacy building information affect, and for this I turn to the teacher cognition literature for insights.

2.8. Knowledge and belief structures

"Conceptualising a belief system involves", as Pajares (1992, p. 315) argues: "the understanding that this system is composed of beliefs connected to one another and to other cognitive/affective structures, complex and intricate though these connections may be". Beliefs are inextricably linked with knowledge, conceptions and intuitions in the mind of the teacher (Verloop, Van Driel & Meijer, 2001, as cited in Borg, 2003).

Beliefs have been defined as "convictions or opinions that are formed either by experience or by the intervention of ideas through the learning process" (Ford, 1994, as cited in Borg, 2006, p. 36). When established early on in life, they are thought to be resistant to change (Nisbett & Ross, 1980), but their degree of fixedness depends on their degree of centrality (Pajares, 1992) and their temporal and contextual dimensions. Thus, I would argue that GSE beliefs are likely to be more fixed than TSE beliefs, a point I return to later.

Teachers' beliefs seem to stem from prior learning experiences, teaching experiences and formal education. Though Richardson (1996) argues that the impact of formal education is limited, recent large-scale reviews on learning to teach (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998 – 93 studies) and language teacher cognition (Borg, 2003 – 64 studies, some of which related to learning to teach) have suggested otherwise. Borg (*ibid*, p. 89) concludes that while the precise nature of the impact "varied across

studies and indeed even amongst different trainees in the same study”, most researchers agreed that teacher education made a difference. Wideen et al. (1998) share this conclusion, arguing that where support was provided by “program, peers and classroom situations, and where deliberative exploration and reflection were encouraged, we saw the flowering of empowered teachers” (ibid, p. 159). Clearly, much will depend on both the context and the nature of the programme, a point I return to later with regard to in-service teacher education. I would argue here, though, in relation to language teaching, that if a pre-service course offers a strong and intense practical orientation through daily classroom teaching, feedback sessions promoting reflection, the modelling by trainers of desirable practices, together with the introduction of a coherent professional discourse, then, as Borg (2006) claims, it seems likely that powerful influences on a beginning teacher’s beliefs can be exerted.

As to the relationship between beliefs and knowledge, Pajares (1992, p. 325) argues that: “the potent affective, evaluative and episodic nature of beliefs makes them a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted”. Of self-efficacy beliefs, in particular, Bandura (1986, p. 359) conceptualises their role as fostering action as well as serving as “a filtering mechanism for self-referent information in the self-maintaining process”. He contends (ibid), as Fives (2003) reminds us, that self-efficacy is the central mediator of effort, a point taken up by Raudenbush, Rowan & Cheong (1992), who describe self-efficacy beliefs as mediating between knowledge and action, influencing the degree of effort and persistence brought to bear as knowledge is transformed into action.

Since TSE beliefs influence the way that knowledge is transformed into action, we need to consider the knowledge possessed by teachers. Much of this is practical, as “much of what teachers know originates in practice and is used to make sense of and deal with practical problems” (Elbaz, 1981, as cited in Borg, 2006, p. 13). Working within the same strand of research as Elbaz (1981), Clandinin & Connelly (1987) developed the holistic concept of personal practical knowledge (PPK), “knowledge which is experiential, embodied and reconstructed out of the narratives of a teacher’s life” (ibid, p. 490), or “a moral, affective and aesthetic way of knowing life’s educational situations ... permeated with a concern for community, for how teachers’ knowledge and action affect others” (Golombek, 1998, p. 449). According to Elbaz

(1981), teachers have practical knowledge (PK) in five key areas, relating to the self, milieu, subject matter, curriculum and instruction. However, as Shulman (1987) argues, teachers also possess formal knowledge, relating to subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), implying that “teachers transform their knowledge of the subject matter into a form which makes it amenable to teaching and learning” (Borg, 2006, p. 19), and knowledge of the following areas: curriculum, general pedagogy, the learners and their characteristics, educational contexts and educational ends.

According to Fenstermacher (1994), the line of enquiry influenced by Elbaz (1981) is asking: ‘What do teachers know?’, while that influenced by Shulman (1987) is asking: ‘What knowledge is essential for teaching?’. I prefer to subsume the second of these questions under the first, and to see a teacher’s formal knowledge as part of their PK, after Borg (2006), who characterizes teachers’ knowledge as personal, practical, tacit, systematic and dynamic, defined and refined on the basis of educational and professional experiences throughout their lives. I further believe such PK can be explored through narratives shaped around teachers’ experiences, after Clandinin & Connelly (1987), and it is my contention that such narratives may provide insights into how teachers’ PK grows. This growth is the subject of the next section.

2.9 Growth of teachers’ PK

There is evidence that teachers’ PK grows throughout their careers, as they move through stages of development that have been variously described; e.g.; fantasy, survival, mastery, impact (Ryan, 1986), becoming, growing, maturing, fully functioning professional (Gregorc, 1973), novice, advanced beginner, competent teacher, proficient teacher, expert teacher (Berliner, 1988). Though the developmental process is unlikely to occur in a smooth linear manner, it is thought that the focus of teachers tends to change, as they develop, away from the self and the coursebook being taught to the learners and learning outcomes. Thus, while Wideen et al. (1998, p. 143) report consensus findings that beginning teachers tend to see teaching itself “as the simple and rather mechanical transfer of information”, Berliner (2001) describes expert teachers very differently. He argues that, having developed automaticity for the various repetitive operations required for the achievement of goals, they are more sensitive to task demands within the social contexts they operate

in, are more opportunistic and flexible, perceive more meaningful patterns and draw upon richer and more personal sources of information in problem-solving, but excel mainly within their own domain and in particular contexts.

After surveying literature on novice and expert teachers within the field of language teacher cognition, Borg (2006) reports that, having automatized routines, experienced teachers focus more on content as opposed to classroom management (Nunan, 1992), improvise more often through making greater use of interactive decision-making (Richards, 1998), think more about the subject matter, which they have a deeper understanding of, from the learners' perspective, and know how to present this content in more appropriate ways (Richards, Li & Tang, 1998). The emphasis of experienced teachers is more on developing a language focus, building on student difficulties and maintaining active involvement, and less on covering the lesson plan within the time available, a preoccupation of their less experienced colleagues (Richards, 1998). An expert teacher described by Tsui (2003, p. 223) possessed knowledge that was "richer, more elaborate and more coherent" than that possessed by less expert peers. She could articulate her principles clearly and explain her decisions on the basis not just of practical experience, but also on the basis of formal knowledge she had assimilated into her practice.

As teachers develop towards expertise, it is clear that their PK changes in terms of content and quality (Borg, 2006). Given that TSE beliefs can be seen as mediators of knowledge, influencing the way it is transformed into action (2.8, above), it is perhaps surprising, therefore, that research into the relationship between TSE beliefs and knowledge, the subject of the next section, has been limited.

2.10 Research into the relationship between TSE beliefs and knowledge

After surveying literature on the relationship between teacher knowledge and the self-efficacy of teachers, Fives (2003) points out that knowledge in such studies has only been assessed through the following 'proxy variables': education level (e.g.; MA, BA, Diploma, Undergraduate), explicit learning experiences (e.g.; attendance on a course in special needs education versus non-attendance), and measures of demonstrated knowledge (e.g.; paper and pencil tests). These proxy variables have then been correlated quantitatively with measures that I have argued above (in 2.3 & 2.5) elicit

GSE beliefs. These studies, therefore, shed little direct light on TSE beliefs, though they suggest avenues of research and provide interesting findings. E.g.; Schoon & Boone (1998) found that pre-service elementary science teachers who held 'alternative conceptions' of science, such as: 'Planets can be seen only with a telescope', 'Dinosaurs lived at the same time as cavemen', 'North is toward the top of a map of Antarctica', had lower GSE beliefs in teaching science than pre-service teachers who knew the right answers. The study indicates, therefore, that teachers with greater subject matter knowledge experienced higher levels of GSE, indicating a positive correlation between the two. Would we find a similar relationship for this type of knowledge with TSE beliefs? And what of other kinds of knowledge?

Citing Lafayette's (1993) argument that language proficiency is the most essential component of a language teacher's subject matter knowledge, Chacón (2005) conducted a study into the self-efficacy of Venezuelan teachers of English. Using Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001) TSES (2.5, above), she found positive correlations between GSE beliefs in engaging students and orchestrating instructional strategies and GSE beliefs in language proficiency. So teachers who reported feeling more competent about using English for a variety of purposes (e.g.; understanding when two English-speakers talk at a normal speed, knowing how to act in social English-speaking situations) also reported feeling more competent in teaching English.

Chacón (2005) also tried to correlate the same GSE beliefs with reported classroom practices (without, however, discussing how these practices relate to PK) through the proxy variable of scenario testing. She found that, regardless whether their reported GSE beliefs were high or low, the scenarios these teachers described suggested practices more in common with grammar-translation (an approach grounded in the nineteenth century) than with communicative language teaching methodology. Therefore, higher self-efficacy in their ability to speak English fluently and in their ability to motivate and instruct did not appear to support teachers to adopt communicative methodology in line with government initiatives. However, Chacón also reports that the teachers attended staff development sessions only once or twice a year, which suggests they may not have had much support to adopt innovative

practices. So, it is perhaps hardly surprising that their practices failed to show much development.

Chacón (2005) acknowledges limitations in her study relating to the use of self-reported data. I believe she could have achieved greater ‘trustworthiness’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by sampling teachers’ language to assess the accuracy of GSE beliefs in language proficiency, and by supplementing the proxy variable of scenario testing with classroom observations. She could also have included in-depth qualitative data to shed further light on the teachers’ cognitions, including their PK and TSE beliefs.

2.11 Longitudinal growth in TSE

The relationship between TSE beliefs and PK can be explored with the help of qualitative case studies, as I demonstrate, with reference to the longitudinal case study of a beginning teacher (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001). To facilitate the ensuing discussion, I summarize the narrative account these authors provide of her experiences, below:

Katie’s story: Using groupwork in teaching elementary science

Katie is confident in her knowledge of ‘space’, has taken a thorough unit on ‘electricity’ and is looking forward to teaching science at elementary school in a way that provides hands-on experience. Providing hands-on experience is an important objective, she learns from the pre-service course, one realized in the coursebook through groupwork activities. Katie reflects on negative experiences of learning science at school, and wishes to encourage positive attitudes by using appropriate methods.

In her first science lesson during the pre-service course, Katie offers learners hands-on experience, looking inside an egg, but the groupwork breaks down, and she switches into whole class mode. A year later, reflecting while preparing to teach the same lesson again, she plans the composition of groups more carefully, splitting potential troublemakers up. No eggs are thrown, and Katie judges it a success. She feels she has a better understanding of learners and of managing them now, and is impressed by the enthusiasm of a group she takes for chemistry. During field placements, though, she gets only limited support from experienced teachers she is paired with. They do not teach science very often, never in her presence, and only topics they feel comfortable with; ‘space’ and ‘life’, but not ‘energy’.

Katie starts teaching full-time and finds the first six months very difficult. Anxious about keeping control in science lessons, she feels disturbed by unruly behaviour and finds using groupwork challenging, ascribing problems to her newness as well as to the learners’ lack of experience of cooperative learning. Her lessons become very teacher-directed, as she continually cuts groupwork out of the curriculum. She still

believes in hands-on investigation in science, but doubts her ability to teach in this fashion. She talks about teaching as 'doing time'.

Gradually, though, it starts to get easier. She learns to organize the classroom more appropriately for groupwork and reduce her focus on control, accepting more noise and mess, thinking more about the children's learning. Her observed lessons are still uneven, but towards the end of this first year, Katie teaches one, on electricity, she can reflect on happily afterwards. On this occasion, she teaches first one half of the class and then the other (while the others are in the library), and the groupwork works well throughout. The observer judges it better the second time around, after Katie makes adjustments that demonstrate a problem-solving ability, an ability to reflect in-action (Schön, 1983). Teaching is more enjoyable now, and Katie becomes the school's elementary science specialist the following year (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001).

This case study raises a number of issues. We may conclude that, after going through a difficult period, Katie seems likely to survive, her TSE beliefs for using groupwork in teaching elementary science enhanced. However, for a fuller, deeper analysis of the narrative that exploits the rich qualitative data, we might consider how these changes have occurred and to what extent Katie is more efficacious. What part did PK, beliefs, and efficacy building experiences play in this?

Katie's level of subject matter knowledge at the outset was good, one of the reasons, it is implied, why she was chosen for investigation. Then, during the study, she developed aspects of PK (2.8, above), including pedagogical knowledge in how to use groupwork, knowledge of the curriculum, the learners and their characteristics, the context, and the self.

Efficacy building experiences that led to this growth in PK included 'mastery' experiences (2.7, above), an awkward term as these can be either positive or negative. When, during her pre-service course (2.6, above), one of Katie's students threw an egg and she switched to whole class mode, the mastery experience was negative. (Information from the egg-throwing incident indicated to her that her pedagogical knowledge in using groupwork with this particular class for this particular purpose was inadequate.) Her lesson on electricity, however, produced a positive mastery experience, as the groupwork succeeded. Mulholland & Wallace (2001, p. 20) argue that she gained positive mastery experiences "when she was better able to manage both the manipulatives and the children's behaviour in the classroom" (pedagogical

knowledge and knowledge of the learners). I would describe the mastery experience more broadly, though. While Mulholland & Wallace (ibid) see the learners' enthusiasm during Katie's chemistry lesson as a source of positive 'social persuasion', I see it as part of the mastery experience gained from teaching the lesson in that particular setting to those particular learners. She gained PK in getting through to the learners, and may have sensed she was capable of fulfilling both curricular and personal goals. The lesson on electricity taught near the end of the study would also have been particularly satisfying (partly explaining her elation), as her declared belief in the value of cooperative learning would have made this particular success with groupwork more valuable.

Of the other sources of efficacy building information (2.7, above), Mulholland & Wallace (2001) report that Katie seemed to gain little of value from vicarious experience, as the elementary teachers she met tended to avoid science. However, she probably received positive 'verbal persuasion' (another awkward term), in social interaction experiences with the researchers, who were encouraging her to teach science, and probably contributing to her PK growth, though they say little of this. In terms of physiological arousal, Katie's ultimately greater enjoyment of teaching, after a period when the classroom seemed like a prison in which she was 'doing time', might be an indication that she was receiving more positive feelings from this source.

In their analysis, Mulholland & Wallace (2001) do not explicitly discuss Katie's growth in PK. They focus on sources of efficacy building information. Nor do they define her task in the way I have done. They describe it more generally in terms of elementary science teaching. However, their narrative account is shaped by Katie's experiences, so that issues of importance to her emerge, and the tension in her work is very apparent. She believes in cooperative learning, and wants to use groupwork, according to the requirements of the curriculum. However, she finds it very difficult, and, in her particular context, doubts her TSE. Gradually, however, by relaxing her need to control, by becoming more tolerant of noise and mess, by focusing more on learning, and by developing, at the same time, PK of various kinds, including pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of the learners, and buoyed by minor successes, she starts to become more efficacious.

An aspect of Katie's development that I have not commented on as yet is her capacity to reflect, which allowed her to assimilate efficacy-building experiences. I will discuss reflection under implications for teacher training in a later section. First, though, I turn from Mulholland & Wallace's (2001) 'interpretive' research (a research paradigm discussed in 4.3.2, below) to survey the teacher efficacy literature for studies that have explicitly sought to encourage TSE growth.

2.12 Research into interventions encouraging TSE growth

Very little research has been conducted into interventions encouraging growth in teachers' self-efficacy, and much of that has been disappointing. Ross (1994, p. 382), having reviewed 64 studies, reports that most of the investigations he looked at measured the construct (which was then understood in largely GSE terms) only once, treating it "as if it were an immutable trait". In contrast, TSE, due to its temporal and contextual elements (2.8, above), can be perceived as being in a state of flux, and open to continual ongoing development, as new experiences are encountered (Fives, 2003), assuming that we ourselves are open to these experiences. Bandura (1997, p. 82) contends that "compelling feedback that forcefully disrupts the pre-existing disbelief in one's capabilities" may lead to positive changes in TSE, while Henson (2001a, p. 12) argues that this growth is more likely to occur if teacher education activities "capitalize on teachers' critical thought and human agency".

In his own study, Ross (1994) investigated the effects of an in-service programme for 50 lower secondary school teachers designed to provide them with knowledge and skills to implement cooperative learning techniques. The 8-month programme involved plenary sessions as well as planning meetings for small groups; totalling approximately 24 hours' contact time. The plenary sessions provided input on teaching strategies and techniques through lectures and discussions, as well as personal testimonials from experienced teachers who had used these strategies successfully. Unfortunately, though, using GSE measures, Ross reports finding no significant increase in teachers' self-efficacy, ascribing this to several factors, including the lack of mastery experiences and absence of feedback on performance. The programme was "too weak", he says (*ibid*, p. 390). Indeed, he fears the vicarious experience of hearing teachers celebrating individual successes, a substantial segment of the programme, may have promoted unfavourable social comparisons.

If reflective practice is incorporated into teacher education programmes to provide these mastery experiences, there is evidence from a recent mixed methods study of 13 pre-service language teachers in Taiwan that growth in self-efficacy, measured in GSE terms, can occur. After incorporating fieldwork into a year-long EFL methodology course, so that the pre-service teachers observed a middle school English class on four occasions and then taught it once, Chiang (2008) administered a survey, based on Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001) TSES (2.5, above), which she developed for language teachers. Chiang (ibid) found statistically significant gains in the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy, particularly in terms of classroom management. Though they taught only once, reflective practice acted as a catalyst, Chiang reports, helping the teachers reconcile beliefs, understandings and experiences.

Henson (2001b) investigated the effects of participation in teacher research on teacher efficacy, following 11 experienced special needs' teachers for 8 months through team meetings and small group gatherings. The setting was an alternative school catering to children suffering from either excessive behavioural disruptions or severe learning / emotional disabilities. The teachers brainstormed and explored challenges, reviewed literature, (and then with the help of mentor researchers) developed, implemented and evaluated intervention studies. Topics focused on behavioural management issues as well as those more cognitively based. So, while some studies aimed at reducing disruption or facilitating on-task behaviour, another developed a peer tutoring system. Data were collected from numerous sources, including questionnaires using GSE items, semi-structured interviews and field notes. The qualitative data "allowing for a rich description of the teacher's perspectives" (Henson, ibid, para. 35) of the task within the context, and thus eliciting TSE, supported the quantitative data (eliciting GSE), which revealed large average gains in teachers' self-efficacy. The positive results of the intervention were tentatively ascribed to the power of teacher research as a means of professional development that can impact teachers' self-efficacy. Henson (ibid), too, felt that teacher research might have been particularly effective in this particular context, an alternative school where teachers were hungry for success.

It is clear to see why ‘significant gains’ in teachers’ self-efficacy may have occurred. The teachers reflected on problems they faced and then engaged in tackling them through action research. Their context allowed sufficient autonomy for this. Their reflections were enriched by external sources of input, including peers they not only shared reflections with, but also the work of designing, implementing and evaluating the interventions. Mentor teacher researchers and research literature also provided support. Thus, verbal persuasion, vicarious and mastery experiences (2.7, above) all contributed to development in the teachers’ PK and TSE. There are implications arising from this for in-service teacher education.

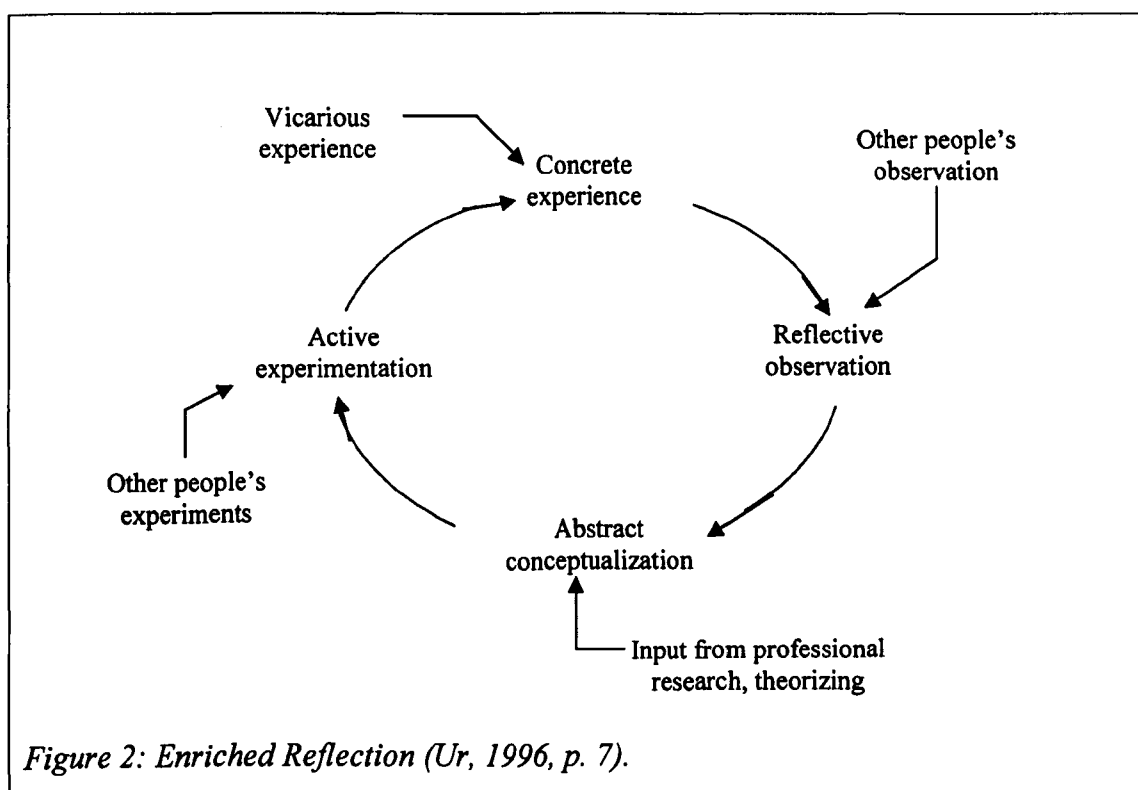
2.13 The implications for developing TSE through in-service teacher education

If teachers, “apparently adapted to the typical isolation of their work lives”, gain professional support only through “the perfunctory twice-a-year visit from administrators with a pre-printed evaluation form” (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2007, p. 14), then the growth of their TSE is left unsupported. When, however, teachers are given the opportunity to “exercise human agency towards self-determined goals”, then, as Henson (2001b, para. 67) argues, “an environment is created that can be very fertile for efficacy growth”. I believe that constructivist teacher education (Williams & Burden, 1997), by focusing on context-specific needs, can help teachers navigate and transform the unique and changing social landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987) they, morally, affectively, aesthetically pass through.

Important strategies for in-service language teacher education include the encouragement of reflection through mentoring (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999). According to Ur (1996), whose cycle of ‘Enriched Reflection’ I present in Figure 2, overleaf, to return to later when discussing my own model of TSE growth, “reflection is the first and most important basis for professional progress” (ibid, p. 319). From the perspective of educational psychology, too, Pajares (2002, para. 13) argues that: “through reflection, people make sense of their experiences, explore their own cognitions and self-beliefs, engage in self-evaluation, [and begin the processes which] alter their thinking and behaviour accordingly”.

Reflecting deeply is not a straightforward matter, though, requiring of the practitioner qualities of open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and a sense of responsibility (Dewey,

1933), together with various skills. These include noticing, listening, analysing, problem-solving, hypothesizing, articulating arguments based on evidence and evaluating outcomes against objectives (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999, Galvez-Martin, Bowman & Morrison, 1998). As these skills are developed over time, the mentee may need encouragement to reflect at deeper levels, moving along a cline from the technical, when reflections concerned with the self are similar to those exhibited by beginning teachers (2.6, above), to the critical, when concerns are with the learners and learning (Van Manen, 1991). As Malderez & Bodóczy (1999) argue, this kind of mentoring support requires quality time in schools.



This focus on encouraging reflective practice through mentoring can be complemented by a second strategy for in-service language teacher education, off-site courses that can be designed to integrate “experiential learning, theoretical input, reading, discussion, reflection, formal writing and experimentation” (Roberts, 1998, p. 274). I believe that, to promote the development of PK, such courses need to address knowledge of the subject matter and how it is transformed in the teaching process (Shulman, 1987) in a way that corresponds more to a reflective rather than to an applied science model of teacher education (Wallace, 1991). Through the provision of loop input (Woodward, 1992), practical assignments and support in conducting

action research, teachers can be encouraged to analyse, discuss, evaluate and reflect on the personal theories that provide a basis for their work. In relating these to public theory introduced as input on the course, they can develop as more analytical, context-sensitive practitioners (Calderhead & Gates, 1993).

Courses designed according to these principles can support teachers as they change in complex ways. Discussing language teachers' attempts to absorb new input, Lamb (1995) and Cabaroglu & Roberts (2000) identified a set of change process categories, such as re-labelling, re-ordering, reversal, linking up, that reinforce the need for the encouragement of deep learning. Freeman (1993) found that teachers on an in-service course experienced the tension of demands from different sources competing with each other, as they tried to adjust to factors, such as the context, subject matter, and students in their developing understanding. To develop their classroom practice, the teachers needed to recognize and refine these tensions through opportunities to articulate and reflect on them.

Reflection also informs a third strategy for in-service language teacher education; getting teachers involved in curriculum development projects, which offer them the opportunity to experiment creatively in engineering a syllabus suitable for their context (Roberts, 1998). In Henson's (2001b) teacher research project, described above, this strategy seems to have been the most dominant, though the others referred to above, mentoring and the provision of an off-site course, were also called upon. The teachers were focused throughout on intervention, on experimentation in design, while receiving input through literature and benefiting from experienced mentors. They were supported in believing they could change their practices and improve learning in their context, leading to TSE growth.

The teachers in Henson's study worked in a very challenging context. Indeed, encouraging TSE growth may be of paramount importance in contexts characterized by dynamic change, where the challenges are particularly high, where considerable multi-tasking is involved or where a wide range of methodological options is available. Contexts described by these features, which would seem likely to lead teachers to revise self-efficacy beliefs on a continual basis, include those inhabited by language teachers.

Language teachers working in schools and colleges around the world face considerable challenges in motivating learners who are not intrinsically motivated in the subject and see little purpose in learning it (see, for example, Chambers, 1999). This causes considerable stress, increasing the likelihood of burnout, with turnover in the profession very high (Dörnyei, 2001). Many teachers give up (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2007) without recourse to in-service teacher education that can provide vital support in developing PK and strengthening TSE beliefs. Yet, with support, I have argued above, growth can take place. I now present a conceptual model suggesting how.

2.14 A model illustrating the growth of TSE

Reflection is crucial for the development of PK and TSE, and a reflective cycle is at the heart of the ‘Growth in teachers’ self-efficacy’ model proposed (Figure 3, overleaf). Bandura (1997, p. 79) argues that only through reflective thought can information relevant for judging personal capabilities, “whether conveyed enactively, vicariously, persuasively or physiologically” be utilized.

As can be seen from the figure, this model owes something to that of Tschannen-Moran et al.’s (1998) (Figure 1, above), but there is space for the doubt, confusion and uncertainty driving reflection, experimentation and change that Wheatley (2001) writes of. Sources from language teaching have been influential, notably Ur’s (1996) cycle of ‘Enriched Reflection’ (Figure 2, above), which represents a development of Kolb’s (1984) ideas.

In design, each revolution corresponds to a teaching cycle that involves, at its most basic, planning a context-specific task, teaching and reflecting upon it. I have used Bandura’s (1986) terms from his list of human capabilities to name certain stages in the cycle (Self-reflection, Symbolizing, Planning alternative strategies), as well as Kolb’s (1984) term - Abstract conceptualisation. PK includes these reflective actions.

Regarding the sources of efficacy building information identified by Bandura (1986), I have used his terms ‘vicarious experience’ and ‘physiological arousal’. However, I

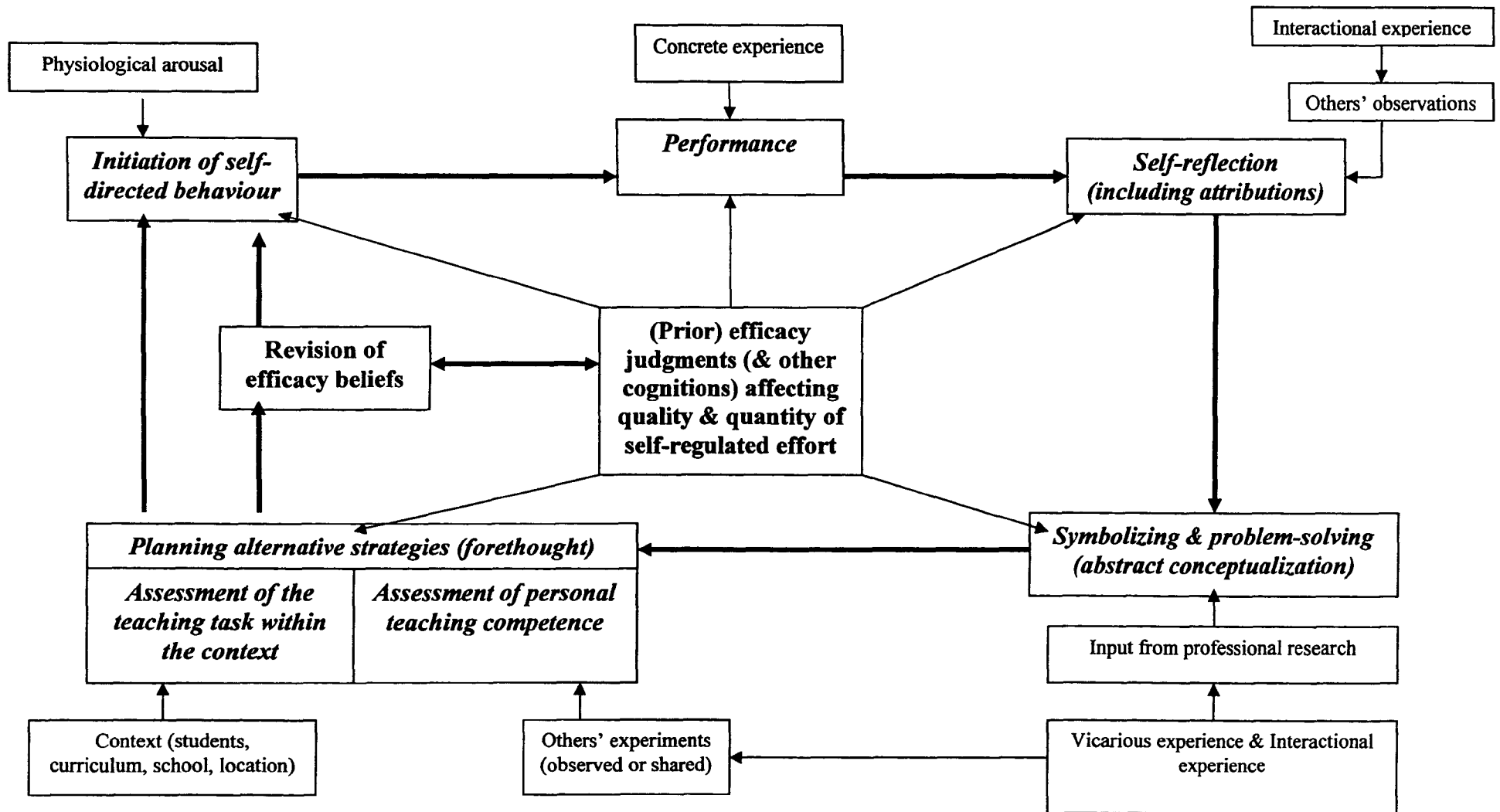


Figure 3: Growth in teachers' self-efficacy

have renamed 'verbal persuasion' 'interactional experience', while 'mastery experience' becomes 'concrete experience' for the following reasons: I prefer the term 'interactional experience' as the input we receive from others may be designed to help us reflect, conceptualise or plan for ourselves rather than to persuade us. The term 'concrete experience' refers to a direct performance act that may be positive or negative, while the term 'mastery experience' suggests just the former.

I have tried to show how these sources of efficacy information relate to different stages of the cycle, and to teacher education (others' observations, input from professional research). Thus, the model (Figure 3) indicates at which points interactional experience and vicarious experience are likely to act as external sources. The positioning of physiological arousal in the model indicates that it is likely to be felt most keenly at the point when self-directed behaviour is initiated. Concrete experiences, thought to be the most powerful source of self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986), "because direct experience is seen as the means to develop personal systems of knowing" (Roberts, 1998, p. 50), are given due prominence in the model.

What I have been most influenced by in Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) model, as indicated (in 2.4) above, is their focus on the relationship between an analysis of the teaching task within its context and an assessment of personal teaching competence. I suggest that it is during the dynamic interplay between these elements while planning, after teaching, reflecting, conceptualising, that TSE beliefs are re-examined. It is then, within any given cycle, and there are many of these, that either a revision of TSE beliefs takes place (likely when the teaching task is seen as posing a fresh challenge in some sense) or this is bypassed. The latter might occur, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998, p. 23) suggest, "when the task is seen as routine, one that has been handled successfully many times".

Vital to each stage of the process are prior self-efficacy judgements affecting the quality and quantity of self-regulated effort, which are positioned in the model (Figure 3) in such a way as to represent their dynamic influence. Our prior self-efficacy judgements, together with other cognitions, affect the way in which we engage with the teaching task, reflect on it, listen to others, read, observe, interact, conceptualise, solve our problems and use our imaginations and our creativity in planning. In turn,

how well and how much we do all these things while reflecting, conceptualising and planning between teaching experiences is influential in any TSE beliefs' revision that takes place. I hope the model shows this.

Wheatley (2005) is concerned that traditional teacher efficacy research has focused narrowly on teachers' beliefs regarding their skills and performances, while neglecting their beliefs about their own learning. In the conceptualisation of TSE growth that I propose (in Figure 3), learning about our own teaching through the reflective process is seen as central, with links between self-efficacy and other cognitions made explicit.

2.15 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to clarify the construct of TSE beliefs by building on the 'current conceptualisation' proposed by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998). I have highlighted the task and context-specific nature of these beliefs and explored their relationship with other cognitions, including PK. Examining previous research, I have focused on two qualitative case studies describing TSE, one for the insights it provides into the benefits of using methods such as observations and interviews for investigating these beliefs, and the other for insights it provides into the processes of a teacher's development, as PK and TSE beliefs grow longitudinally. I have also examined Henson's study (2001b) for implications with regard to efficacy building through teacher education.

Finally, at the end of the chapter I have provided a conceptual model (Figure 3) illustrating how TSE growth might occur. However, I believe that further research into this is required. None of the studies discussed above has tried to chart the growth of both PK and TSE beliefs longitudinally and qualitatively during an in-service teacher education programme that might be expected to influence this growth. Notwithstanding studies by Chacón (2005) and Chiang (2008), which have studied self-efficacy more globally, there is also a lack of research into the TSE beliefs of language teachers, with most research into the motivation of the latter group (e.g.; Pennington, 1995) focusing on issues such as stress and burnout. In my research, I plan to address this gap.

In the following chapter, I will outline the context in which my research is conducted, before moving on to research design and then qualitative case studies charting the growth of PK and TSE during an in-service language teacher education programme. To facilitate data analysis, I will then return to the conceptual model ‘Growth in teachers’ self-efficacy’ (Figure 3), and modify it, if it is necessary to do so.

Chapter 3: The Research Context

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that teachers' self-efficacy (TSE) beliefs are open to growth and can be influenced by in-service teacher education that promotes reflection. In this chapter, I describe a BA (TESOL) Project in the Sultanate of Oman, realized through a programme that seems to possess this characteristic. After first providing contextual information in the following pages, I discuss the project at length, drawing on independent evaluations conducted by O'Sullivan (2000, 2004), Richards & Rixon (2002) and particularly Freeman (2007) for reasons that will become apparent.

3.2 Background

The Sultanate of Oman is a young country that has made enormous progress since 1970 when His Majesty Sultan Qaboos made developing the education system a priority in his first public address on coming to power. At that time there were just three schools (all primary) in the whole country, educating approximately 900 pupils and employing fewer than 30 teachers. An important step as regards language learning was the establishment of an English Language Teaching (*later* Curriculum) Department (ELCD) within the Ministry of Education in 1974, and, 20 years later, there were approximately 2,000 teachers of English alone educating over 400,000 students in 800 schools throughout the Sultanate (Harrison, 1996).

Inevitably, a swift expansion in the number of schools required a large influx of teachers, and expatriates from other Arab countries, South Asia and Britain were brought in. With the development of teacher training colleges offering 2-year diplomas (three in 1984, six in 1987, nine in 1990), the first Omani teachers started to emerge. In the ensuing years, change was rapid, so that while Omanis accounted for just 16% of elementary school teachers of English in 1990, this figure had risen to 78% by 1995, by which time the teacher training colleges had produced just over a thousand new English teachers, most delegated to the elementary schools (Harrison, 1996). In recent years, there has been a steady growth in the number of Omanis teaching English in secondary schools too, with graduate entrants to the profession supplied by the Education faculty of Sultan Qaboos University.

Throughout the years there have been several waves of curriculum renewal. Initially, Harrison (1996, p. 284) reports; “materials based on a structural syllabus were used by expatriate teachers trained in grammar-translation or audiolingual methodology. Subsequently (from 1979) a set of specially developed materials (derived from a more skills-based and functionally organized syllabus) was introduced ...”. This was replaced in 1990 by the ‘Our World Through English’ (OWTE) curriculum, a further development along these lines, one emphasizing, at the elementary level, the language functions of descriptions, instructions and narratives, and those required for basic conversation, e.g.; greetings, as well as low level grammar and vocabulary (ELCD, 1999). This curriculum, with its topics rooted in Omani rural life, is still in use in the older General Education (GE) schools (see below). However, it is gradually being phased out (a process that will be completed by 2015) and replaced by ‘English For Me’ (EFM), as new Basic Education (BE) schools (see below) are established. In September 2004, all Grade 1 children throughout the Sultanate, including those in GE schools, were introduced to EFM.

The declared philosophy of EFM is that children learn best in a stress-free environment through discovery (ELCD, 2001). More broadly, the BE reforms aim to support children’s personal and social development through a learner-centred cross-curricular experience providing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for life (Ministry of Education, 2001).

The BE reform process has created very visible changes in the learning environment throughout the Sultanate. While the GE schools are characterized by chalk on blackboards and chairs and desks in rows, the high-tech modernization of the country is apparent in the BE schools, equipped with computer rooms and learning resource centres, spacious air-conditioned classrooms containing electronic equipment and whiteboards, with the children (and average class size is much lower) sitting in groups. Under the GE system, children started learning English in Grade 4, but under BE, as I have indicated, they do so from Grade 1.

In EFM, the development of receptive skills is emphasized, with the level of language input provided by listening texts higher than the level of language production expected. According to ELCD (2001), the content of lessons, based on the learners’

knowledge of the world, is tailored to their cognitive development, while socialization is encouraged through the use of pair and groupwork. Vocabulary is recycled to stimulate transfer to the long-term memory, while interest is maintained and greater concentration encouraged through the inclusion of a variety of activities. These, including Total Physical Response (TPR) activities, action songs and rhymes, games and craft activities, encourage children to play with the language and learn by doing.

As well as investing in waves of centrally organized curriculum renewal, the Ministry of Education, through ELCD, has made major investments in teacher development. These include the provision of very practical 150-hour PRIT (primary teachers) courses, preparing teachers for the transition to the new curriculum and work with younger learners. By far the most ambitious of the teacher education programmes initiated, though, is the BA Educational Studies (TESOL), offered by the University of Leeds (UOL), and developed for Oman in consultation with ELCD (O'Sullivan, 2000), to fulfil BA Project mission goals. These relate to supporting Omanization, capacity building to enable teachers to contribute effectively to educational reform, and implementing “a programme of academic study whose rationale is compatible with, and supportive of, the goals of the Education Reform programme” (ELCD, 2002).

To fulfil these aims, the Ministry planned 6 overlapping cohorts of the BA Programme between 1999 and 2008 for eligible teachers (see Appendix 1 for the schedule). Cohort 4 (with whom I conducted the research) studied between 2002 and 2005. I describe the programme at length (in 3.4, below), after first discussing the context of the teachers the course was designed for.

3.3 The context of the teachers joining the BA Programme

The Diploma-holding teachers who were eligible to join the BA programme at its inception could be found (and many still are) working in highly diverse environments around the Sultanate, some in busy urban schools, others in coastal villages, the mountains or the desert. Some teach in GE schools, in buildings shared between girls in the morning and boys in the afternoon, or vice versa. Those in BE, though, usually start at about 7.15am and finish at around 2pm, generally teaching between 20 and 25 periods a week in the four days they are not studying. Many have other

responsibilities in the school, too, such as supervising break times or acting as class teacher. This latter role involves considerable administrative work, particularly in recent years, as assessment records kept on each child have become more detailed.

Most of the teachers, having graduated from teacher training colleges between 1988 and 1996, came to the BA course in their late twenties or early thirties. A steadily decreasing number have taught with OWTE ever since their college days, while others, the majority now, have moved into EFM. Women tended to make this move first, as the mixed BE Cycle 1 schools (for Grades 1-4) are staffed predominantly by women. Men are usually first involved in BE in the single sex Cycle 2 schools (for Grades 5-10).

Since they started teaching, the social landscapes in which the teachers work have changed. Information technology, through reaching remote villages that 10 years ago did not have electricity, has transformed pupils' expectations, in making more affluent and technology-driven lifestyles seem more accessible. The population is expanding rapidly, though, and there are widespread concerns about limited employment opportunities that can have an adverse effect on motivation in secondary schools.

The composition of the inspectorate has also changed within the last decade, leading to different expectations from above. Many of the expatriate Arabic speakers from North African countries in the twilight of their careers who filled Regional Inspector posts during the Sultanate's rapid expansion of the education sector (3.2, above) have left now. Their role in conducting teacher development workshops, making advisory visits to classrooms and appraising teachers (Harrison, 1996) has been largely taken over, particularly in urban areas, by younger Omanis, whose own teacher education experiences, therefore, have been more recent. Anecdotal reports suggest that a consequence of this may be, in general, rather less directive feedback during post-observation discussions, with a correspondingly greater emphasis on reflection, and greater latitude in interpreting lesson materials, providing that aims related to the syllabus are achieved.

Some teachers currently on the BA programme have already moved into Senior English Teacher (SET) posts in their schools, and are thus contributing actively to the

professional development of others. Graduates from earlier cohorts (particularly 1 & 2) have already filled many Regional Inspector posts, though opportunities in the future are likely to become more limited.

3.4 An overview of the BA Educational Studies (TESOL) Programme

The BA Programme aims to develop teaching and English language skills, so that graduates “will be skilled in analysing their pupils’ needs and in planning and teaching English lessons” (UOL, 2004b). An understanding of how theory informs teaching and learning will have been developed, and teachers “will be able to describe and use English well enough to teach it and to read about teaching and learning in English” (ibid). Entry requirements from the outset were a Teacher Training College (TTC) Diploma, five years subsequent teaching experience, and a level of proficiency in English established through a University of Cambridge (UCLES) exam. Either a PET pass or an IELTS Overall Band Score of 4.5 was required, lower than the normal requirement for international students studying in the UK, but language work was built into the programme, particularly early on.

The three-year course has strands relating to language, methodology and research. The language component includes modules that aim to increase teachers’ competence as users of English in all four skills and help them analyse English for teaching purposes (UOL, 2004a). The methodology modules deal with both the teaching of young learners (e.g.; Tasks, Stories) and with the teaching of different aspects of language competence (e.g.; Teaching Speaking and Listening). “Other modules look at theories of language learning (Language Learning and Acquisition), at assessment issues (Assessing Child Language Learning), and at the changing role of technology (Technology in Language Learning)” (UOL, 2004b). Modules that encourage students to become researchers of their own practice include Researching TESOL and the Dissertation, which gives students a chance to carry out their own small-scale research project (ibid). See Appendix 2 for a full list of modules.

Methods include a “mix of lecture-style input, task-based seminar work and classroom activities” (UOL, 2004a, p. 25) to stimulate learning through reading, discussion and reflection. Integral use is made of teachers’ experience in the classroom, as they are invited to reflect on practice, and evaluate this in the light of

course input (ibid). To bring teachers' experiences to the forefront, day release sessions (see below) can often be adapted to include loop input activities.

For most of the year, the students follow the course through one of eight regional centres. They study for one full day a week, in day release classes, which are organized into two semester blocks (February-May and September-December), and have access to a library they can use in the evenings. There are also intensive Winter and Summer school courses (two weeks in January, six weeks in June-July), held at a training centre in the Sultanate, apart from the second summer school, when the students go to Leeds for eight weeks at the university. Class time in any given year totals approximately 200 hours during Winter and Summer schools, and 125 hours during day release. It is estimated that, including the time spent on assignments, approximately 600 hours needs to be devoted to the course each year by the average student (UOL, 2004b). In practice, many of the more ambitious ones do much more.

BA students, in regional cohorts of usually 30 to 35, are divided into two groups for teaching purposes, with each attending one day release session per week. They are supported throughout the course by a regional tutor (RT), their first point of contact with the university. The RT teaches on nearly every module, provides academic and pastoral support through tutorials, and manages the regional centre with its library of books and articles. A further key responsibility involves mentoring, visiting the teachers in their schools once a semester to help them make connections between the ideas they have studied on the course and their own classroom practice (UOL, 2004b). Relationships developed between RTs and their students over the three-year programme can become deep and strong.

RTs report to a project manager, who is based in Muscat and also employed by the Ministry of Education. His responsibilities include liaising with the university on a regular basis on administrative and academic issues, dealing primarily in this with the academic co-ordinator. This person is responsible for the work of a team of five TESOL specialists employed on the programme at the university as well as for a pool of part-time teaching fellows who teach on intensive schools and do much of the marking. Independent evaluations of the project have stressed the effectiveness of key personnel in the project's success, with the project manager, John Atkins, cited for his

‘organizational genius’ (Freeman, 2007) and the first academic co-ordinator, Dr Simon Borg, singled out for praise by Richards & Rixon (2002).

Lectures during Winter and Summer schools are delivered by staff from Leeds, including full-timers and part-time teaching fellows. RTs are paired with Leeds lecturers at these times, supporting them in lecture sessions with 40-50 students, and then taking a seminar group of 20-25 afterwards.

During the second year of the course, when students attend the Summer school in Leeds, they have the opportunity to sample British university life, meet TESOL staff at the university, and consult a wide range of resources, including extensive libraries. They also have a chance to interact with British people and absorb the local culture. This summer school experience tends to create a deep and lasting impression, anecdotal reports from graduates of earlier cohorts suggest.

3.5 Independent evaluations of the project

Of the four independent evaluations of the project (which I have studied in conjunction with locally-produced reports, e.g.; Atkins, 2006), two, those by O’Sullivan (2000, 2004) focused primarily on management issues, while the others focused more on methodology, syllabus design (Richards & Rixon, 2002) and the project’s impact on teaching and learning (Freeman, 2007). While the last of these considered implications for future educational projects, the first three showed a primary concern for improving the programme with a view to achieving project success. Thus, Richards & Rixon (2002), for example, after praising the quality of teaching demonstrated by Leeds staff & RTs, and the state-of-the-art coverage of the field of TESOL in the curriculum of the degree, recommended that more attention be given to the area of computers and technology in language education. This recommendation was acted upon, so that a new module, ‘Technology in Language Learning’, was added to the programme from Cohort 4. Richards & Rixon (2002) were also concerned that several modules were insufficiently practical. Efforts were made to act on this recommendation, but met with mixed success (Atkins, 2006). One module that remained problematic for some time was ‘Initial Literacy’, although this was improved for Cohort 6 (Atkins, 2007). Constraints relating to the initial project design, university regulations and contractual issues meant that some

recommendations, such as reducing the assessment load (Richards & Rixon, 2002), could not be fully addressed (O’Sullivan, 2004).

Of the four evaluations, the one that interests me most is the last (Freeman, 2007), partly as the terms of reference intersect with my own research. Freeman visited the Sultanate for two weeks in February 2007, and using data from five sources (documents, interviews with personnel, a beliefs and practices survey administered to 75 graduates, regional focus group meetings with 55 graduates, and 10 classroom observations with follow-up interviews of graduates and current students) sought to discover:

- Which BA Programme modules are considered most valuable/influential for (by) teachers and why?
- Which aspects of teachers’ practices have been influenced by the BA Project?
- To what extent do these developments in teachers’ practices appear to be reflected in pupils’ learning?
- Which aspects of the BA Project seem to be most influential in promoting teacher development and in generating teacher behaviour according to ‘best practices’ in second language learning? (Freeman, 2007).

I will discuss his findings below.

3.6 Freeman’s (2007) findings

With regard to the first of the above questions, Freeman (2007) found that the first methodology module studied, ‘Teaching English to Young Learners’ (TEYL), was most often cited as ‘most useful’ in the focus group meetings. Participants told him:

- “It gave me more pupil-centred activities and methods.”
- “It opened my eyes to the characteristics of young learners.”
- “It gives me ideas on context and communicative purpose in children’s learning” (Freeman, 2007, p. 10).

‘Stories’, another methodology module, was second most often cited, while third was ‘Language Acquisition and Learning’ (LAL). About this ‘theory’ module, participants reported:

- “It changed my thinking about how children really learn/acquire languages.”
- “We should know these basic things that we build our teaching on.”

- “Because it tells us how children learn and acquire languages, which was totally new to me” (Freeman, 2007, p. 11).

A range of other modules relating to English language development, as well as theory and classroom methodology, also featured in the lists of the ‘most useful’. Observed teachers, as well as focus group participants, reported that:

the theory modules provided a foundation for the teaching they had been doing and, perhaps more critically, for the demands of the BE reform and the EFM curriculum. In parallel, the methodology modules – TEYL, Tasks and Stories in particular – provided ways of enacting the theory in the classroom. These modules also emerged ... as key to the new instructional practices that participants reported taking on in their teaching (Freeman, 2007, p. 13).

Considering which aspects of teachers’ practices had been influenced by the BA Project (his second question, above), Freeman (2007, p. 22) operationalized the concept ‘teachers’ practices’ as the combination of beliefs about teaching, learning and content, as realized through activities frequently employed in the classroom and actions taken in specific lessons. He found that beliefs about instruction (including those specifically about teaching reading, writing, using communicative tasks and classroom management) “focused on flexibility in using content, materials and activities, while beliefs about learners focused on adaptation of these elements to meet learners’ interests and needs”, and noted a connection between these two groups of beliefs: “Flexibility in teaching helps the teacher to adjust instruction to pupils’ needs” (ibid). Classroom observations provided evidence of much adaptation and differentiation of instruction (a finding related to Freeman’s third question, above). However, in one particular area of instruction, specifically in the teaching of initial literacy and reading, Freeman found some uncertainty, and felt further research, as well as in-service training, was merited: “Arguably, if BA graduates are unclear about how to proceed in this important area, then other teachers are likely to be as well” (ibid, p. 46).

Examining aspects of the BA Programme that had been most influential in promoting change (in relation to his fourth question, above), Freeman (2007) invited focus group participants to rank features of the BA Project from ‘most’ to ‘least valuable’, explaining that it was a ‘forced choice’ situation, and acknowledging it may be difficult to choose if they found a number of features important. He elicited the participants’ rank order of the following features: the day release programme, the

dissertation, interaction with Leeds faculty, the Leeds Summer school in the UK, peers/cohort – fellow students, school visits by regional tutor, Summer/Winter schools in Oman, tutorials/consulting with your regional tutor. The day release programme (run by the RT) was most highly rated, while tutorials with the regional tutor came third, these together totalling 49% of the first choices. Summer and Winter schools in Oman and the UK (all led by Leeds staff) were also considered particularly valuable, together totalling a further 35% of first choices. School visits were less highly regarded, though, which Freeman found perplexing, attributing this to the RTs' fairly infrequent visits (two a year) being subsumed in the teachers' recollections by all the other visits they received from SETs, supervisors, trainers and head teachers. Nevertheless, despite these discrepant data, Freeman's (2007) findings emphasised that RTs were perceived as influential: "The regional tutors play a key role as the glue that binds the programme and the project. For many participants, they *are* the faculty of the BA experience" (Freeman, *ibid*, p. 36). The RTs, as the participants' first point of contact, represented both the university and the project. The project, led by committed administrators and realized through a programme praised by the independent evaluations of O'Sullivan (2000, 2004), Richards & Rixon (2002) and Freeman (2007), was geared towards change.

As to how teacher development had been influenced by the various aspects of the BA Programme, Freeman (2007) found that underlying the strong commitments to instruction and to learners was a foundation of confidence that was spoken about again and again. This confidence related to three interconnected areas. Firstly, it related to use of English. "It is not only my teaching, it is my English. I can explain what I do to you", one observed teacher reported (*ibid*, p. 40). Secondly, it related to classroom teaching practices. Many focus group participants and observed teachers informed Freeman that they felt 'they knew what they were doing', 'could find alternatives to the teachers' guide as needed' and 'knew why things worked in their teaching' (*ibid*). This gave them a sense of greater flexibility. The third area of confidence related to dealing with curricular materials. Rather than simply covering materials as they felt they had before the course, respondents reported being able to see them as part of a larger learning plan or strategy, and felt they could adapt them according to learners' needs. Summarizing these points, Freeman (2007) argued that professional confidence in using English itself, as well as professional confidence in

practice (leading to flexibility) and within lessons (leading to adaptability) had supported teachers in developing the capacity to articulate, explain and justify the changes they made, leading to autonomy in professional identity (ibid, p. 41). Freeman considered these findings the ‘most striking’ of his evaluation (ibid, p. 39).

3.7 Conclusion

Clearly, Freeman’s (2007) findings are of considerable interest to my research. Through mixed methods, including surveys, observations and focus group interviews, he identified considerable growth in professional confidence, which I would relate to global self-efficacy (GSE) (Chapter 2, above). Had his research been conducted earlier, it may have influenced the shape of mine. In fact, though, I was one of eight RTs Freeman elicited written opinions from and then interviewed through a focus group meeting. He also had access to my school visit and annual reports, and met one of the five teachers I wrote an in-depth case study about (in the context of focus group meetings through which he also met 54 other teachers.) There is thus a relationship between my work and Freeman’s (2007) report, though my influence on it may have been very slight. I have referred extensively to his report here for two reasons, firstly, as it illuminates the context of the teacher education programme in which my research was conducted. Secondly, it indicates that the programme fostered considerable autonomy in professional identity, including growth in professional confidence, which I relate to the development of GSE beliefs. Accordingly, I may wish to refer back to Freeman’s (2007) findings later, after I have presented data from my own study into self-efficacy, and specifically TSE growth, in the same context. First, though, I outline the methodology used in my research, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present my research questions, position the researcher through a conceptual framework and discuss the research setting and its participants. I will provide a natural history of the research, summarize the research design, then explain and justify my procedures for analysing and writing up the work. While so engaged, I will aim to establish ‘trustworthiness’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by demonstrating that the study was conducted rigorously.

4.2 Research questions

My research questions stem from the following hypothesis: an in-service language teacher education programme that contains a reflective element may support growth in practical knowledge (PK), which in turn may influence growth in teachers’ self-efficacy (TSE). I have argued (in 2.7, above) that experiences that lead to efficacy building are accommodated into teachers’ knowledge and belief structures. While these inter-relationships are very complex, I have also argued (in 2.8, above) that beliefs can be seen as influencing the way that knowledge is transformed into action. It follows that, if teachers develop PK in relation to teaching tasks they value through gaining concrete, vicarious and interactional experiences, their TSE in relation to undertaking such teaching tasks is likely to change. The resulting more developed TSE beliefs are then likely to influence the way these teachers approach such teaching tasks in the future, affecting the degree of effort and persistence expended as PK is transformed into action.

Although TSE therefore seems worth investigating, there has been a lack of research into the self-efficacy of language teachers. Indeed, only two published studies have addressed this group, Chiang (2008) and Chacón (2005), both of which draw entirely upon self-reported data. There is also a lack of research into the impact on self-efficacy of *in-service* language teacher education, although Chiang (2008) has considered education with regard to pre-service teachers. Furthermore, there is a need for qualitative, longitudinal research into TSE and its relationship with PK, as argued

(in 2.5-12) above. Accordingly, in the context of a three-year BA (TESOL) Programme, my overall research questions are as follows:

1. What changes do the teachers report in their TSE?
2. To what extent do changes in their TSE beliefs reflect changes in their PK?
3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in their PK and TSE, and how?

Five teachers will be studied (details below) and these questions will be applied to each in turn.

4.3 Positioning the researcher

Since I am an ideologically committed insider conducting research that I am necessarily an integral part of, I feel it is of utmost importance that I strive to be honest and trustworthy at all stages of planning, analysing and writing up the research. I need to examine my ideology, my assumptions, my ‘findings’ constantly and reflexively. With this in mind, I will explore my ‘ideological position in the research’, after Holliday (2002).

4.3.1 Ideologies implicit in the discussion of issues

Clearly, there are certain assumptions implicit in my choice of thesis. I believe that self-efficacy is both a powerful motivational construct affecting all types of achievement behaviour (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), as well as a ‘crucial’ dimension of intrinsic teacher motivation (Dörnyei, 2001). I further believe that TSE growth, together with PK growth, can be supported through in-service teacher education that provides opportunities “to make sense of theory by filtering it through experiential knowledge” (Golombek, 1998, p. 461). More generally, there is also a belief in the power of education “to unveil opportunities for hope” (Freire, 1998, p. 9).

4.3.2 Ideologies implicit in the researcher’s methodology

The methodology I adopted was ‘postmodernist bricolage’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), as should become apparent through the narratives, which are ‘personal stories’ (McDonough & McDonough, 1997), constructed with the help of ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973), ‘celebrating the particular’ (Stake, 1995), but leading to the making of

cross-case assertions (Stake, 2006). My work is reflexive in that it recognizes that research is an interactive process shaped by “personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 6).

The research methodology relates to both interpretive and critical paradigms. Firstly, it can be seen as interpretive evaluation case study research, in that I am exploring how growth in PK and TSE may have been influenced by an in-service teacher education project aiming to develop the capacity of Omani teachers of English to contribute to educational reform (Chapter 3, above). However, I do not believe that the research can be seen purely in interpretive terms. Despite the proviso that while the BA Project is a major undertaking over which I have little influence, so that my own role as an ‘agent of change’ (Kennedy, 1996) is relatively minor, I nevertheless believe that I need to acknowledge my commitment to it. An insider, thoroughly involved as teacher, mentor, sometime materials and activities designer (see Chapter 3, above, for the role of the RT), I hope that the BA Programme may be empowering. So, secondly, I believe this enquiry can be seen, to a certain extent, in terms of practitioner research, which has been defined as “qualitative research conducted by insiders in educational settings to improve their own practice” (Zeni, 2001, p. xiv). This practice can be seen as having personal, professional and political dimensions. If my research heightens awareness of the personal development that can take place through this particular teacher education programme, I believe it can be ‘validated’ both ‘pragmatically’ and ‘communicatively’ (Kvale, 1996). This links it to critical theory (Cohen et al., 2000), and to Holliday’s (2002) progressive qualitative paradigm.

4.3.3 The ‘I’ of the researcher

Since it is relevant to the way I think and write I need to tell you a little of myself. Who am I? What have I been? A few snapshots of my life might include the following details: a published poet sometimes using the personae of the disenfranchised, an EFL migrant with experience of living in Buddhist and Hindu countries before coming to the Middle East, an enthusiastic teacher of young learners focused on “the natural capacities and instincts children bring to the classroom” (Halliwell, 1992, p. 9), a non-directive supervisor aiming for trusting relationships that allow joint quests to find answers (Gebhard, 1990). I

am also British, Caucasian and male, about all of which I will endeavour to be reflexive.

4.3.4 How the research setting and its participants will be seen

When writing up the research, I will need to allow the reader into the thoughts of those represented (Borg, 1997), aiming for trustworthiness, as I draw on their reports. This is crucial, as issues of ‘credibility’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and ethics are at stake here. Not only must the research relate, as far as possible, to the sense of reality of those represented, however, but it must also configure, inevitably, with my own. Thus, the distinctive multiple voices of those represented will be refracted through my own consciousness, the male, Caucasian, Britishness mentioned in the last paragraph, and all that that implies. A complication in this regard is that some of those represented in the research are female, as well as being Muslim and Middle-Eastern. “Gender filters knowledge”, as Denzin (cited in Fontana and Frey, 2000, p. 658) reminds us.

There is a bond between those participating in the research and myself, entirely natural since “teacher-researchers are teachers first”, ideally nurturing the well being of others while seeking knowledge and understanding (Mohr, 2001, p. 9). My students will be portrayed sympathetically, as will their culture. This will be seen, though, through British eyes, and refracted through a consciousness aware of audience and searching for a voice to inhabit not just the “intellectual spaces between schools and universities” (Zeni, 2001, p. xviii), but between the Middle East and Europe, between the research setting and wider readership in distant places.

4.4 The research setting and its participants

In introducing the five teachers (pseudonyms used) who are the focus of this study, I would first like to provide some contextual information about them, relating to location, gender and type of school (see Table 4.1, below). Geographically, their region has an extensive coastline dotted with fishing villages, parallel to which is a long green belt of date palms and fields stretching inland. Sweeping along this is a major highway linking the largest town in the region with smaller towns and villages to the distant capital. Four of the five are based at schools just off this highway. Further inland are mountains, where the fifth, a man, teaches in a remote General

Education (GE) boys' school. His environment provides a very different setting to the state-of-the-art Basic Education (BE) Cycle 1 school in the centre of town, where one of the two women is Senior English Teacher (SET).

Table 4.1: Classification of the teachers according to location, gender and type of school; GE or BE. (BE schools: Cycle 1(C1) = Grades 1-4, Cycle 2 (C2) = Grades 5-9.) (All GE schools = Grades 1-9.)

<i>Gender/ Type of school</i>	<i>Male GE</i>	<i>Female GE</i>	<i>Male BE (C2)</i>	<i>Female BE (C1)</i>
<i>Location</i>				
<i>Major town centre (MTC)</i>				Mariyam
<i>Outskirts of a town (OT)</i>		Fawziya	Rashid	
<i>Rural village (RV)</i>	Waleed			
<i>Mountain village (MV)</i>	Omar			

The themes that will be the focus of the individual cases are as follows: developing speaking skills through communicative tasks (Fawziya), enhancing motivation through materials design (Waleed), overcoming difficulties in reading (Omar), helping teachers develop as reflective practitioners (Mariyam), supporting low achievers through groupwork (Rashid). These themes relate to the teachers' particular interests and mirror their choice of dissertation topics. (For a discussion of how these themes emerged and of the criteria used to select the teachers participating, see 4.5.4, below).

4.5 A natural history of the research

Though I do not have space to describe this in detail, I would now like to present a 'natural history of the research' (Silverman, 2000) to increase the 'dependability' of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), showing how it evolved and tracing developments in my thinking. I will then be in a better position to describe the research design and techniques used. Accordingly, in this section, I have constructed an account that draws upon the following sources of data (listed with dates in Appendix 3): initial research proposal (RP), progress reports written to supervisors in the early stages of the research (PR), emails received in reply (ER), and reports I produced of supervision meetings (RSM). The section will be organized around central themes in my developing understanding.

4.5.1 My developing understanding of self-efficacy, its relationship with other cognitions and methodology appropriate for investigating the construct

In my January 2003 research proposal, self-efficacy was prominent, but there was no mention of PK. I proposed to investigate self-efficacy growth in relation to course objectives, such as developing the ability “to evaluate, design and adapt materials and tasks for language learning” (UOL, 2003, p. 25), using interviews (unstructured post-lesson discussions) and questionnaires (but not observations?) (RP).

In my first supervision meeting with Dr Simon Borg in June 2003, I was asked to consider ways of defining and measuring self-efficacy (RSM.1). In response, I went to great lengths in August 2003 to identify a long list of pedagogical objectives that were sufficiently task-specific to relate to my conceptual understanding of self-efficacy (clearly much more TSE than GSE). One item, for example, read: ‘Within a familiar classroom, is the teacher able to adapt teaching materials so that sequences of activities constitute tasks, including preparation, core & follow-up elements (Cameron, 2001)?’ Developing this list of pedagogical objectives helped me focus on the sort of development I was looking for (analysing, adapting, designing tasks for particular learners and using them in the classroom, evaluating them and justifying their use). I reported I would make ‘indirect’ use of this list, and there was an inference that particular lessons would be used as points of reference (PR.1). Would observational data be triangulated with interview data? I did not address this issue, and am not sure how clearly I had thought about it.

Engaging in the research helped develop my ideas. Once I started interviewing teachers in October 2003, I realized I needed to elicit not just their self-efficacy, but broader aspects of their motivation, too; intrinsic motivation, autonomy, relatedness (considering both macro and micro contextual factors), initial motivation for entering the profession, ambition and goal orientation (Dörnyei, 2001). Accordingly I sought to elicit this deliberately in semi-structured interviews conducted in November 2003, starting with the question: ‘Why did you become an English teacher?’ Then, as I carried out preliminary analysis of this data, I became more conscious of the need to explore TSE growth in relation to growth in PK. There is evidence of this growing realization in a progress report, when I was writing about one of the teachers then part of the study:

He was quite convinced, for seven years, that what he was doing in the classroom was absolutely right, so convinced that he planned and taught without really thinking very much about what he was doing. Now there are doubts and questions in his mind, though he is very confident that he can *find* the right way, through making the right kind of on-the-spot decisions. Before he was very confident that he could *follow* the right path. The ideas about the teacher's role (in interpreting the course materials within the classroom context) are very different, though the self-confidence is fairly constant (PR.5).

My understanding of research methods appropriate to my study was also developing. In the same report, I articulated the need to triangulate an elicitation of TSE with observation of practice, and with elicitation of PK, as the following extract demonstrates:

If, for example, a teacher talks confidently about being able to adapt teaching material to include a task framework centred on a core activity (Cameron, 2001), then how am I to verify the accuracy of this TSE claim? One method would be through observation, focusing on behaviour, while a second would be through interview, exploring the teacher's understanding of the underlying concepts (PR.5).

In the first few months of engaging in the research, therefore, my understanding of what I needed to elicit developed (TSE plus other aspects of motivation, PK and related cognitions, contextual information) and how (using observations as well as interviews). During the same period, my understanding of ethical issues also developed considerably, as I explain in the next sub-section.

4.5.2 My developing understanding of my role as an insider researcher

In my research proposal, there was no hint of the dilemmas involved in conducting insider research (RP). Then, during the initial supervision meeting in June 2003, an objective I was set was to differentiate clearly between my roles as RT and PhD student (RSM.1). This led me to reflect on overlapping roles. While interviewing to collect data, I realized I might scaffold responses to promote learning or pick up ideas that indirectly led into a lesson plan. Clearly, conducting the research would affect my practice. Worryingly, too, it might also give an undue advantage (on an assessed course) to the teachers I was researching and disadvantage those not (PR.1). My supervisors, Simon and Gary (Dr Gary Chambers), advised me to read about practitioner research and list the potential benefits of participating as a first step in considering how to handle this ethical issue (ER.1).

Accordingly, I read Anderson & Herr (1998) on practitioner research, and then Holliday (2002) on the 'politics of dealing' (while designing an informed consent form to use when calling for volunteers). I then reflected on the possible motives for volunteering in my next report, producing the following list: interest in developing as teachers, students, researchers, (by gaining more time to reflect on classroom practice, the impact of the programme, ways of conducting research), interest in the subject of motivation, positive orientation towards the researcher (and thus interest in helping the researcher or getting to know the researcher better), a progressive attitude towards change and personal growth. Prerequisites for volunteering might have been sufficient time to share and sufficient self-confidence in self-expression in English. Possibly, too, a relatively liberal, partially Western outlook might also have made some more open to the research and thus more willing to volunteer, as the cultural barrier may, in such cases, have seemed lower. Reflecting on the above and the likelihood of possible motives being realized, I concluded that, though the extent of the growth would depend on numerous individual characteristics, participation would benefit those who volunteered and were chosen. Therefore, I would need to be scrupulously fair in my role as RT to ensure that those not participating were not neglected in any way nor had their learning negatively affected (PR.2).

4.5.3 The process of focusing the research

When I reflect on how the research grew from these beginnings, I think mostly in terms of how it expanded, in the type of information elicited through various methods, and then narrowed down, in terms of the number of cases and in the definition of themes. The numbers tell part of the story. In September 2003, all 37 teachers in my regional cohort were given the informed consent form, guaranteeing privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, and seeking voluntary participation in the study. I then started the research in October 2003 with all 16 who did volunteer, reducing this figure to 12 (May 2004), 10 (September 2004), 6 (December 2004), and then to 5 in November 2006, using purposive and theoretical sampling (Silverman, 2001), of which I say more (in 4.5.4) below, in making the final selection.

During this process of whittling down, I was plagued by ethical concerns, worried about being fair and transparent. Although all 37 teachers were given the opportunity to participate, I knew that eventually I would have to select. How would I tell those

that I was not going to write about that I no longer needed their help? They might feel disappointed.

My solution to the first of these problems, being fair to all, was the easier to solve. I simply worked harder. If I was spending longer in schools with teachers I was researching, inviting them to reflect, I also spent longer in schools with all teachers for the same purpose. In addition, I took naturally occurring opportunities, such as end of year tutorials, to give all the feel of taking part in research.

The second problem I found thornier. I noticed how, after the number of participants dropped from 16 to 10, several of those I had stopped interviewing seemed disappointed when I did not tape-record the post-lesson discussion when I next visited their school. I had not said anything about no longer needing their help, as I felt they might have been hurt by this. When I made further reductions, from 10 to 6, I decided to carry a tape-recorder with me on school visits so that I could record post-lesson discussions if teachers I was no longer researching showed obvious interest in me doing this; e.g.; by asking me if I wanted to speak to them afterwards in a quiet room. I felt that this might be the best way of not hurting feelings.

I do not feel at all easy about this misinformation, but can justify it in terms of balancing costs and benefits (Cohen et al., 2000). The costs were personal and professional, in having to live with not telling the whole truth, in not providing insights into the dilemmas that researchers face that may have been useful to these teachers (I was not sure if they would all understand), in disappointing them sometime later. Conversely, the benefits were in protecting them at the time from disappointment and from social comparisons (inevitably some of those I was still researching were their close friends), in protecting my relationships with them (being seen to be fair to all) and in protecting the research. I can further argue that I was not taking up any more of their time than I would have done anyway by recording the discussions.

4.5.4 Making the final selection of cases

In selecting which teachers to focus on, I decided to use first ‘purposive sampling’, which requires us to “think critically about the parameters of the population we are

interested in and choose our sample cases carefully on this basis” (Silverman (2001, p. 250). This would help me achieve balance and variety. However, I would also need to consider the ‘accessibility’ of the cases, as Stake (2000) reminds us, and the opportunities they provided me to learn from them. Reflecting on this last point in early 2004, I realized that some of the teachers made very good interviewees. They were relaxed and engaged throughout, had interesting and revealing stories to tell, listened carefully, and were able to expand fluently in clear voices (easily picked up by the tape recorder). Others, while not meeting all these criteria, seemed well worth persevering with.

When making initial selection decisions in moving from 16 participants to 12 to 10, I took into account a number of factors. Foremost amongst these were ethical concerns, accounting for three teachers. Two of these three seemed to be suffering from mild interview fatigue, one, in particular, clearly uncomfortable in the presence of the tape recorder, although she had given me permission to use it. A third teacher was in danger of failing, and it seemed frankly unethical to divert time away from his studies. Of the others, a fourth hardly did any teaching. I felt I could not learn that much from him or from the other two.

When selecting further, from 10 to 6, I wanted to consider balance and variety, both in terms of themes and other factors that seemed relevant; gender, location, and type of school (Table 4.1, above). I was also interested in the motivational forces shaping their behaviour, such as autonomy, relatedness (Dörnyei, 2001) as well as apparent enthusiasm for teaching. In terms of autonomy, for example, I had noted that some teachers spoke warmly of supervisors accepting their ideas, while others complained of restricted autonomy, leading to conflict. In terms of relatedness, a number reported close relationships with colleagues at school, while a few complained of other teachers’ behaviour. By October 2004, I had formed various impressions, based on observations and interviews, and then reduced these to tabular form for further analysis.

As can be seen (Table 4.2, overleaf), I did achieve balance and variety in the final selection, in many respects. This is true in terms of gender (2 women and 3 men), type of school (2 Basic, including first and second cycles, and 3 General), location

(teachers from the mountains, rural and urban areas) and motivational factors, such as autonomy, relatedness (to other teachers in the school) and community spirit. However, neither of the two teachers who appeared to have least enthusiasm for teaching was selected. Clearly, purposive sampling was not used alone. Theoretical sampling, “selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions, your theoretical position” (Mason, 1996, as cited in Silverman, 2000, p. 105) was also used to determine what and who to focus on.

One hypothesis stemming from my theoretical position is as follows: Teachers benefit more, in terms of PK and TSE growth, when focused on ‘self-directed goals’ (Henson, 2001b). Therefore, I realized that, on ethical grounds, the goals of the teachers, (who I perceived increasingly as ‘co-researchers and collaborators’, Mohr, 2001), should become my themes. The teachers were asked to articulate goals explicitly in September 2004 when choosing research topics for their dissertations. As I had started with a wide focus (Nisbet & Watt, 1984) in the first research interviews, these topics were well represented in the interview data. E.g.; Waleed identified his main research interests in September 2004 as: motivation, groupwork, adapting materials, and assessment (in no particular order). In the previous year, I had elicited data from him relating to three of these topics, and his choice of dissertation then combined two. It seemed ecologically valid (Cohen et al., 2000) to align my focus with his, to concentrate on themes he was most interested in exploring for himself.

A further hypothesis stemming from my theoretical position is as follows: Teachers benefit more from teacher education that contains a reflective element, in terms of PK and TSE growth, if they are fully engaged as educators; e.g.; by researching their own practice (as in Henson’s 2001b study). So action research, with its commitment to improving practice through experimentation and reflection, might support the types of personal growth (PK and TSE) that I was investigating. On this basis, I decided to focus on the seven teachers who had chosen to do action research for their dissertations (Table 4.2, above). This meant dropping Khalid and Mubarek, who had very interesting qualitative studies investigating other teachers’ use of technology and L1 respectively, and Salma, who had an experimental design.

Table 4.2: A synthesis of contextual information about the teachers in the study.

Name	Gender	School type	Location	Enjoyment	Community spirit	Relatedness	Autonomy	Theme	Research type
<i>Ahmed</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>RV</i>	<i>Low</i>				<i>Pairwork</i>	<i>Action research (AR)</i>
<i>Fawziya</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>OT</i>	<i>High</i>		<i>High</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Communicative tasks</i>	<i>AR</i>
<i>Khalid</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>OT</i>	<i>V High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Technology</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>
<i>Mariyam</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>BE C1</i>	<i>MTC</i>	<i>V High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Reflective practice</i>	<i>AR</i>
<i>Mubarek</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>OT</i>	<i>Low</i>			<i>No</i>	<i>L1</i>	<i>Qualitative</i>
<i>Omar</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>MV</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Reading skills</i>	<i>AR</i>
<i>Salma</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>BE C1</i>	<i>MTC</i>	<i>High</i>		<i>High</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Quantitative</i>
<i>Suleiman</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>BE C2</i>	<i>OT</i>			<i>High</i>		<i>Writing skills</i>	<i>AR</i>
<i>Rashid</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>BE C2</i>	<i>OT</i>			<i>Low</i>		<i>Groupwork</i>	<i>AR</i>
<i>Waleed</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>RV</i>	<i>V High</i>		<i>Low</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Materials design</i>	<i>AR</i>

Key: For the abbreviations in the columns 'school type' and 'location', see Table 4.1, above. An empty box indicates that no strong impression was made, this perhaps relating most closely to 'Medium'. The five teachers whose details are highlighted in **bold** were the ones selected.

Implicit in the above hypothesis is a further hypothesis, that change that does occur is positive, that the BA Programme supports teachers to become more learner-centred, more context-sensitive, with a somehow deeper “moral, affective and aesthetic way of knowing” (Golombek, 1998, p. 449). To test this theory, one might choose ‘a deviant case’ (Silverman, 2000), and I was pleased that Omar was amongst the seven for this reason. Omar was clearly influenced by ideas picked up on the course, but I was conscious from observations and interviews conducted during the second year of the programme that he was possibly adopting slightly more traditional methods, while not obviously considering learners’ feelings more deeply. I was interested in how he would develop as he researched his topic.

Seven cases still seemed too many, and the next consideration in editing was achieving distinctiveness. Core aspects of TESOL were covered by the seven cases:

- Skills: reading, writing, speaking
- Modes of interaction: groupwork, pairwork
- Course design: materials, communicative tasks
- Learner factors: motivation, achievement
- Teacher factors: motivation, reflective practice

There was, however, some overlapping. Both Fawziya and Ahmed were focused on developing speaking skills. Rashid and Ahmed were using similar modes of interaction. I felt the multi-case study would be tighter without Ahmed.

This selection of six case studies pleased me for a number of reasons. Firstly, the themes interacted with the BA Programme in different ways. E.g.; Rashid’s reflections might include those on groupwork during day release, Mariyam’s on the mentoring role of the RT. Secondly, the themes all represented real challenges for the teachers. E.g.; Waleed was very adept at transforming materials but had to contend with an unsupportive environment in which he felt his efforts were undervalued. Thirdly, there was some variety in the teachers’ work investigated, with mentoring a focus as well as teaching.

As I then developed the cases, though, I was concerned that one was less rich. In Suleiman's story, there seemed fewer strands of relevant data from early in the research period to draw upon, and the case, partially written up, seemed less interesting, even after much editing, reviewing of raw data, restructuring. Accordingly, I edited it out, conscious that, in any case, the most important points it raised could be addressed through the others.

Through providing a brief natural history, I have tried to show how the research developed. I would now like to summarize the research design that emerged from this.

4.6 Research design

4.6.1 The longitudinal, qualitative nature of the research

The longitudinal design emerged from my attempts to make best possible use of the context in which I could conduct it. This context invited longitudinal research of the panel study variety, which involves tracking the same participants over time (Cohen et al., 2000). Speaking of the meaningful insights that this form of research can generate, Dörnyei (2001, p. 195) argues: "only by collecting longitudinal data can we fully explore the dynamic nature of the mental processes underlying motivation". Nevertheless, there is a relative lack of such studies, due to the "major initial investment of time and energy" required while the growth data accumulates (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 176), and the challenges posed by sample mortality (Dörnyei, 2001). Fortunately, these were not issues in my own research. Advantages of longitudinal panel studies include the help they provide in the identification of patterns of human development and in the establishment of causal relationships (Cohen et al., 2000). In terms of methodology, too, they can enhance a study's credibility through the prolonged engagement and persistent observation they involve (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To facilitate the charting of longitudinal development, a cyclical approach to data collection and analysis is required, "with each successive stage of data collection being influenced by the analysis of the data already collected" (Borg, 1998, p. 12). The researcher thus has an ongoing interpretive role (Stake, 1995).

As well as being longitudinal, the research is qualitative, in contrast to most other research into teacher efficacy. This has been quantitative, “self-report, survey and correlational in nature” (Henson 2001a, p. 10), leaving qualitative studies of teacher efficacy “overwhelmingly neglected” (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 29). I have argued (in Chapter 2, above) that qualitative research is required to shed light on TSE, both to facilitate vicarious experience and provide a sufficiently clear picture of the phenomenon being studied to allow the reader to function as a coanalyst (Borg, 1997). ‘Credibility’ and ‘confirmability’, criteria for trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), can then be enhanced.

4.6.2 Qualitative cases studies

My aim was to produce individual case studies that were strong on reality, assisting readers, through experiential and contextual accounts, in the construction of knowledge (Stake, 2000). This is more likely to occur if the narratives are characterized by a rich, vivid description of events, blended with analysis, focusing on individual actors and seeking to understand their perspectives (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, as cited in Cohen et al., 2000). Though each case should be intrinsically interesting in its uniqueness (Stake, 1995), I use a ‘multi-case design’ to facilitate comparison across cases, allowing for a discussion of ‘binding concepts’ (Stake, 2006). There will thus be a cross-case analysis, highlighting PK and TSE growth, and facilitating programme evaluation. The purposive and theoretical sampling (Silverman, 2000) behind the selection of cases (4.5.4, above) should facilitate this analysis.

4.6.3 Methods of collecting data

My primary means of collecting data was through the qualitative semi-structured interview, which, as Kvale (1996, p. 42), outlining the postmodernist view, puts it: “is a construction site of knowledge”. When viewing the interview from this perspective, the interviewer is an active participant seeking to achieve “negotiated accomplishments ... that are shaped by the contexts and situations in which they take place” (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 663). Quality criteria for the interview, dependent on how well the interviewer establishes a good rapport, listens carefully and comments thoughtfully (Borg, 2006), might include “the extent of spontaneous, rich, specific and relevant answers from the interviewee”, and their relative expansiveness

after focused follow up questions (Kvale, 1996, p. 145). Ideally, what the interviewee says will have been interpreted and verified as far as possible during the interview process itself (ibid).

To complement and contrast the data gathered through interviews, I drew upon direct observational data, gained chiefly in the natural settings of classrooms, in which my role was as a 'non-participant observer' (Cohen et al., 2000). These observed lessons could not be videoed to satisfy a requirement of the committee in Oman that approved the research, but I found keeping a narrative record adequate (4.7, below). A major advantage of observations, as Robson (2002) argues, is that they provide direct access to real life, although there is a danger of reactivity in certain circumstances, if, for example, the teacher, trying to please the researcher, exhibits behaviour that she thinks he wants to see (Borg, 2006). This is a reason for explaining the purpose of the observation carefully, as I tried to do.

Observations are often used together with interviews to collect descriptions of teaching to compare to cognitions elicited beforehand or subsequently when the rationale behind the observed practices can be explored (Borg, 2006). In practice, as I explain below (in 4.7), I combined these methods through 'unstructured lesson observations' (Cohen et al., 2000), followed by interviews that started with a post-lesson discussion. In this phase of the interview, I used a version of the 'stimulated recall' technique discussed by Bailey & Nunan (1996), with my notes, however, rather than video, used to prompt teachers' interpretations of events. The interview then continued into a semi-structured phase, with topics identified prior to the interview explored at this time through the technique of top-down hierarchical focusing (Tomlinson, 1989). So, topics were covered through general and then more detailed questions, but not in any set order to allow the interview to flow.

Besides these methods, I also consulted documentary evidence (teachers' assignments for relevant modules, and feedback supplied on these by Leeds markers), and gathered evidence outside formal interview settings. The assignments, which can be seen as a form of naturally occurring data (Silverman, 2000), can be classified loosely as a form of reflective writing (Borg, 2006), as many provided scope for some reflection (Borg, personal correspondence). They could illuminate my understanding in various ways.

Firstly, they could help me gain a deeper understanding of the contexts the teachers worked in, and, secondly, assess their understanding of theoretical issues as expressed in an EAP genre. Thirdly, they could provide insights into classroom interventions; into the planning, implementation and evaluation of tasks, materials and activities. Although these accounts needed to be treated cautiously as they were written with a view to pleasing a discourse community of markers, data gleaned from an analysis of them could be triangulated with data gleaned from observations and interviews. Similarly, feedback on assignments written by Leeds markers could be used to triangulate my own analysis of the teachers' written work.

4.6.4 The various types of data I was working with

The various methods I was using produced the following forms of data: observation notes made during lessons, audio-recordings of interviews and transcripts of them, school visit reports written for the teacher after observing a lesson and discussing it, field notes and notes made while reading assignments and feedback, as well as the documents themselves. I also produced memos to myself, conceptual in intent, with the aim of tying together different pieces of data into recognizable clusters (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I have coded these forms of data in the following way, after Borg (1998): First is the name of the teacher the data relates to, second is the type of data, and third is the number. I have represented this information in Table 4.3, below:

Table 4.3: Means of coding data

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Type of data</i>	<i>Number</i>
Fawziya = F	Assignment = A	1-10
Mariyam = M	Feedback = F	
Omar = O	Interview = I	
Rashid = R	Notes = N	
Waleed = W	Observation = O	

So, for example, FA.1 is Fawziya's first assignment, WO.6, Waleed's sixth observation, MI.3, Mariyam's third interview (see Appendix 3 for details, including dates).

I will now explain the procedures I followed in collecting and analysing these various forms of data. During this account further aspects of the research design will become evident, including the use of 'member checking' (Stake, 1995) and a 'critical friend'

(Altrichter, Posch & Somekh, 1993) to 'validate' my work (Kvale, 1996). The critical friend was a colleague on the programme to whom I showed extracts of work.

4.7. Procedures for collecting and analysing data

4.7.1 The need to be explicit

To increase the 'dependability' of my work (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I wish to be explicit in describing analytic procedures, in showing how I pieced together data, making the invisible obvious, distinguishing the significant from the insignificant, relating ideas to one another and categorizing (Morse, 1994). This explicitness is necessary for, as Robson (2002) reminds us, as human analysts we are limited in our processing abilities despite our best efforts, biased, easily impressed, obstinate, over-confident, inconsistent and uncritical. Hence, there is a need for a systematic approach to data analysis, articulated in a spirit of openness (Constas, 1992) so that we can show others we have been thorough, careful and honest in carrying out the research (Robson, 2002). With this in mind, I outline my procedures for first collecting and then analysing data.

4.7.2 Procedures followed in collecting data

Most of my data were collected during visits to schools when I observed and gave feedback in my role as RT, helping teachers make links between classroom practice and input (Chapter 3, above). Data from lessons and ensuing discussions primarily supported my RT role, but also helped me as researcher.

On visiting schools and meeting the teacher, I first checked the focus of the observation (often established prior to my visit). Then, during the lesson, I kept an open narrative record, jotting down descriptive notes, relating to actions and reactions, movement, words spoken by teacher and learners, and written on the whiteboard, this commentary punctuated occasionally by exclamations and questions to remind me of key incidents later.

Post-observation discussions were held immediately afterwards in the quietest room we could find and audio taped on micro-cassette with the teacher's permission. I elicited feelings about the lesson, memories, reactions, highlighting key incidents and inviting reflection on them, teasing out evidence, encouraging links to public theory

and summarizing. While we talked, I added to observation notes, in different coloured ink, as exclamations and questions were dealt with.

Next, I had prepared questions relating specifically to my research to ask, these generally having arisen from data analysis, reading since the last interview, theorizing and reflection. I approached this semi-structured phase flexibly, in terms of the order in which questions were asked and the way in which topic areas were explored through follow-up questions.

Later, I listened to the full interview on audiotape, making notes while I did so. Then, focusing in my role as RT on the parts of the interview that dealt with the lesson, I produced a report for the teacher, describing the lesson and highlighting points raised in the discussion.

During the research period, there were five rounds of observations and interviews in schools, one per semester. I could also consult observation notes from the semester before the research started. There were also other interviews, the first when I was seeking fuller contextual information (4.5.1, above), the second when teachers were planning how to implement their research plans after getting feedback on their dissertation proposals, and the third (with three of the teachers), for member checking. See Table 4.4, below, for the data collection schedule.

Table 4.4: Data collection schedule – observations and interviews

<i>Date</i>	<i>Means of collecting data</i>
February/March 2003	Observations
October 2003	Observations & interviews
November/December 2003	Interviews
March/April 2004	Observations & interviews
October 2004	Observations & interviews
February 2005	Interviews
April 2005	Observations & interviews
September/October 2005	Observations & interviews
January & July 2006	Interviews

As to other data, in my role as RT I kept and filed copies of all relevant BA documents produced by/for the teachers, including assignments and feedback sheets, so that these were available when I sought permission to analyse them. Data relating

to each teacher, including field notes and interview transcripts, were stored in separate A4 files as well as electronically. These were copied for safekeeping, as were 37 audiotapes of interviews.

4.7.3 Analytical procedures

My analytical procedures were ‘interactive’ and ‘iterative’ (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997), with the data reviewed many times. After each round of data collection, I re-read observation notes and notes made while listening to audio-recordings of interviews in the light of prior objectives. What had I learned that contributed to my understanding of the case? What was new/surprising? What would I like to focus on next? I returned to research questions with a view to testing and revising them, wrote memos to myself and developed themes.

During 2004/5, I also transcribed increasingly larger segments of interviews to help me use the data to ‘think with’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) and to allow the data in due course “in all its richness, breadth and depth” to be the star (Chenail, 1995, para. 10). Later, when I wrote up the cases, I would present these ‘decontextualized conversations’ (Kvale, 1996) in a more literary style, remembering that transcribing involves translation “from an oral language, with its own set of rules, to a written language with another set of rules” (ibid, p. 165), but initially I aimed for simplicity in transcribing, using minimum punctuation, and leaving all language errors uncorrected.

After transcribing segments of data, I returned to my research questions, an avenue through which Coffey & Atkinson (1996) suggest approaching the coding process. I read and re-read the corpus of data, revised research questions to cover emerging patterns and themes, created categories, imposing my own “particular configuration of analytical preferences” on the data (Constas, 1992, p. 254). I adopted the ‘template approach’ (Robson, 2002) to data analysis. This involves key codes, in my case determined by research questions, serving as a template, into which coded text segments are placed, creating a matrix. Presenting data in this way allows it to be read easily, facilitating the move from coding to interpretation, as Coffey & Atkinson (1996) explain.

While analysing data, I was using some of the 13 tactics suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994) for generating meaning from displayed data; e.g.; noting patterns, comparing and contrasting. As the analytical work proceeded, their tactics for testing or confirming findings would also assume greater significance. Some of these, such as considering researcher effects, triangulating, weighting the evidence were already an integral part of my research methods, while others, e.g.; using a critical friend to look for negative evidence or getting feedback from informants, would assume more importance as the research progressed. In the next section, I will discuss how I took my analysis further when it came to writing up the research.

4.8 Procedures for writing up the research

I started the writing process while still collecting and analysing data, my emphasis shifting as I did so, from making sense of what I encountered in the field to ‘making sense to the reader of the total experience’ (Holliday, 2002). I was conscious of the need to establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) while working on a ‘construction site of knowledge’ (Kvale, 1996) with the text being written up assuming a life of its own (Geertz, 1993), thus not only representing but also constructing reality (Bruner, 1991). I wanted to be reflexive in producing narratives that facilitated vicarious experience without ‘straying into the land of imaginative literature’ (Borg, 1997), and will explain how I tried to achieve this in the next subsection. First, though, I provide a timeline of the case-writing process (Table 4.5), which I refer to subsequently.

Table 4.5 Timeline of the case-writing process (October 2005-January 2007)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity (by case)</i>
October/November 2005	Incomplete first drafts of Fawiya & Waleed
December/January 2006	First draft of Omar
January – March 2006	Omar – member checking, feedback from critical friend & supervisors.
February-June 2006	First drafts of Fawziya, Waleed, Suleiman, Mariyam & Rashid
July 2006	Waleed & Rashid – member checking. Feedback from supervisors on first & second drafts of Fawziya.
September-November 2006	Third draft of Fawziya, second drafts of Waleed & Omar
November 2006	Feedback from supervisors & critical friend on third draft of Fawziya. Feedback from critical friend on second draft of Omar
December/January 2007	Second drafts of Mariyam & Rashid

4.8.1 *Creating narratives*

Central to the writing process was the making of ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973), which involved selecting, organizing and presenting ‘interconnected data’ (Holliday, 2002), in a way that aimed to support vicarious experience. This would allow readers to “extend their memories of happenings” (Stake, 2000, p. 442), derive expectations from tacit knowledge (Kvale, 1996) and draw their own conclusions (Stake, 2000), facilitating ‘transferability’ if readers were able to make use of the research in their own context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

An early step in the writing process, as I tried to create thick description, was to transform binned data from matrix analyses (4.7.3, above) into narrative text, using ‘interconnected data’ (Holliday, 2002) of various kinds. This included talk (transcribed interviews), documents (assignments), accounts and descriptions of appearances, behaviour and events (observation & field notes). Though I periodically trawled the data for further evidence, much of what I needed (particularly with regard to talk) was already present in matrix analyses relating to each case, when I was ready to start drafting the first. This was in October 2005, two months before the end of the data collection period (see Table 4.5, above).

The first incomplete draft began as follows; ‘*Fawziya remembers, as a young girl, the house being full of foreign guests*’ (Appendix 4). Why did I start in this way? Firstly, I believe, with Connelly, Clandinin & He (1997) that we all live within stories, and that the images we choose illuminate these. Fawziya’s memory of the particular incident described in the first paragraph of this draft became a recurrent theme in her discourse, and one which I wanted to explore for the insights into her cognitions it provided. I tried to represent the recurrence of the theme through use of the present simple: ‘*remembers*’, and then tried to create an evocative picture throughout the first paragraph (Appendix 4). Through use of narrative in this way, I was trying to render the concrete particularities of experience immediate, employ verbal imagery that appealed to the senses and reproduce the temporal tensions of experience (in this case, bringing to life childhood memories that affected the present), characteristics of a successful story identified by Crites (1975), as cited in Clandinin & Connelly (1990). In addition to this, I was establishing an element of the plot, the situation. Though

Stake (1995) argues that cases are not generally characterized by the problem-solution structure of stories, I would argue that my cases (Chapters 5-9) are, and indeed need to be for the following reason: They are not simply charting longitudinal development. Centred on teachers engaged in action research, the cases are focused on developing TSE in relation to context-specific tasks. These tasks represent challenges to overcome. A problem-solution structure characteristic of stories, e.g.; situation-problem-solution-evaluation (Labov, 1972) would therefore seem appropriate.

As the drafting of Fawziya's story proceeded, I was aware of various challenges. I wanted to keep the writing emic in the way it represented her thoughts, wanted to add discursive commentary to description and wanted to blend the various sources of interconnected data, feeling I would increase the trustworthiness of the report if I was able to achieve these goals. At the start of the second paragraph, therefore, which began: '*Fawziya has often reflected on this experience in the last two years*', I revealed more of her thoughts, inviting the reader's memories, expectations, capacities for vicarious experience to be triggered. Through summarizing her reflections over time, I also wanted to emphasise the recurrent nature of these memories. This had been alluded to in the first paragraph through choice of the verb; '*remembers*', but now I used discursive commentary to support description.

As the writing progressed, developing through a succession of drafts, my skills in blending the various sources of data improved. So that, in June 2006, in revising the second paragraph, I triangulated Fawziya's interview talk with her written words (by quoting from one of her assignments) using different sources of the same information, as Lincoln & Guba (1985) describe this method. Triangulation, as Stake (1995) argues, can enrich a study, adding depth to the picture being painted, providing the possibility of additional interpretations. As the drafting progressed, I would also triangulate in other ways, juxtaposing reported thoughts (elicited through interviews) with actions (e.g.; tasks created and described in assignments or lessons taught). This would help me assess TSE beliefs.

4.8.2 Getting feedback on my work

Conspicuously absent from the first complete drafts of case studies produced between January and June 2006 was explicit argument. I aimed for an underlying coherence in the juxtaposition of elements, but shrank from imposing analytic commentary, preferring the data to speak for themselves. Accordingly, the text, at that stage, was all description and discursive commentary, and, as Holliday (2002, p. 112) points out; “it can be counter-productive to show the reader too long stretches of data without telling her its significance”. I presented complete drafts of the first accounts as 10,000 word stories, without dividing them in any way other than into paragraphs, without highlighting themes, coding sources of data, seeking to answer research questions explicitly or saying explicitly how the teacher had developed. My supervisors raised these points in feedback on the first draft of Omar’s story in early 2006 (Table 4.5, above), and my critical friend also commented on the lack of analytic commentary in this draft.

Using critical friends in insider research, who are familiar with the context, is one way of achieving greater trustworthiness, as Altrichter et al. (1993) argue, if they ask searching questions that probe biases, explore meanings, and encourage a testing of hypotheses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). “Description not interpretation - how did you interpret this at the time? What did you think of his assignment?” were some of the comments my critical friend scrawled on the first draft of Omar’s story (personal correspondence), prior to our discussion. Being an insider working in the same context, he was able to pinpoint a lack of coverage in certain areas, and criticized me for disappearing in places from the narrative, prompting reflection on how I represented myself contributing to Omar’s development.

Also in January 2006, I showed the draft to Omar and met him to discuss it. I had wanted to do this, as Stake (1995, p. 116) argues that the planned use of member checking, when it leads to “a thorough reading, a mutually respectful argument, and suggestions for improvement”, can be very beneficial. However, I also considered Silverman’s (2001) warning that the strategy can only succeed if respondents are interested in the report and able to understand it. On both counts, I hoped this might be the case, as the teachers read stories written about themselves, their interests and development. Silverman also argues, though, that, as well as care with language,

sensitivity in reporting is required, as respondents will only validate work if the analysis is compatible with their self-image. My initial aim had been to portray the teachers sympathetically (4.3.4, above), a goal I then did my best to adhere to.

With Omar, I found I need not have worried about his reaction to the text. He had gone through the manuscript very carefully, numbering points, highlighting, underlining. “It tells the story of the three years”, he told me at one stage. But at the end of the interview, he also asked me: “In general, what do you think?” (OI.8). So, while he had grasped some of the underlying ideas, the lack of explicit argument in the text may have masked some of my judgements, which, at that stage, very soon after the end of the course, I was grateful for, even though this may have weakened the quality of the process. I could have used the draft to re-teach for a degree of pragmatic validation (Kvale, 1996), with interpretations acted on, knowledge gained from the research transformed into behaviour. However, it did not seem a particularly appropriate time to re-teach, just after the course, with Omar waiting for the dissertation result.

I had been validating findings pragmatically through (re-) teaching (and therefore using tentative findings to modify instructional behaviour) while the research had been ongoing, as should become evident in places in Omar’s story (Chapter 7). I had been committed throughout to helping him develop, a reason I can use to justify locating my work within the critical paradigm (4.3.2, above). Moreover, I would argue, in fact, that showing him a draft that told the underlying story did, through his acknowledgement of its accuracy, achieve a degree of communicative validation (Kvale, 1996), as knowledge claims were tested through the dialogue. Meeting Omar was also useful for the opportunity it provided to fill in some of the gaps I had become aware of while writing up, and it gave me a chance to get an update on his development.

There was further member checking in July 2006, after I sent drafts to Fawziya, Waleed, Suleiman, Mariyam and Rashid in June, each with an accompanying explanatory note and list of research questions and sub-questions I was using at the time (see Appendix 5). Meetings were not easy to arrange, as I was now in a distant region, 1,000 kms away, and three of the teachers were either abroad or on maternity

leave at the only time I could visit. Nevertheless, I managed to meet both Rashid and Waleed, and Rashid told me that he had enjoyed reading the story, that it reminded him of the BA, that he felt it was a “true account”(RI.8). Most of the interview was spent filling in gaps in the data, and in this respect, the interview followed a similar pattern to the one I had conducted with Omar. With Waleed, though, the interview proceeded quite differently.

At the start, Waleed asked me about my research questions (Appendix 5). When had I chosen them? I explained how they had developed through progressive focusing. “Why do you call it a story?” I told him about the use of stories in qualitative research. He complimented me on the style, reporting: “It encouraged me to read until the end”. He was surprised that I had included so many details. Then, he addressed the hypothesis, checking with me; “there was a prediction before for change, positive change?” I affirmed that there was. He reported that he had tried to answer the research questions: “I have the answers here”, and then we went through his answers; “here on page 12... page 7... page 14”. He had gone through the text carefully, and quoted my words and his, answering sub-questions and commenting on them; reporting confusion at one point, as two sub-questions were too similar. For another there were insufficient data. There were also data he was unsure if a sub-question addressed. This gave me a chance to explain interpretations that would become explicit when I added argument to the text. Answers to other sub-questions, he reported, were very clear (WI.8). Reflecting on this interview afterwards, I felt satisfied. Here was member checking that seemed to validate the research, both pragmatically and communicatively (Kvale, 1996). Not only could Waleed confirm that the story was accurate, but in the way he engaged with it he assumed a kind of ownership for it. He developed, too, not just his understanding of research as he discussed the text with me, but the member checking process also seemed to heighten his awareness of his own development.

I was disappointed, though, that I could not meet the women to discuss their stories with them. Not only were there issues of maternity leave and very small children, but access was problematic anyway in July when the schools, which provided a setting they felt comfortable meeting in, were closed. I met the men in the foyer of a tourist

resort, but for cultural reasons could not have asked the women to meet me there or in a restaurant. So, unfortunately, gender issues interfered with member checking.

4.8.3 Developing the stories further

As I redrafted the stories, from July 2006 onwards (Table 4.5, above), I incorporated numerous suggestions from supervisors. Introductory paragraphs and sub-headings were added. Analytic commentary was developed, explicit links were made between different parts of the text signalling key information to the reader and summaries addressing research questions were added at the end. I was blending in another source of data now (feedback on assignments, 4.8.1, above), as well as ‘explicit argument’ (Holliday, 2002), to complement the presentations of data and discursive commentary.

As I re-wrote, I reviewed the narrative logic underlying the structure of the text. Juxtaposing with an eye to storytelling and making transitions from one exemplar to another, as Chenail (1995) describes this method of arranging text, I was also conscious of the diachronicity of the narrative (Bruner, 1991), the sequential patterns of events occurring over human time that can be represented through devices such as flashbacks and fast-forwards, as well as through the sequence of clauses and tenses embedded in the narrative discourse itself. Narrative logic had suggested I start Fawziya’s story with a flashback to childhood (4.8.1, above) before returning to provide a chronological account of her development over three years. However, not every story started in the same way. Waleed’s (Chapter 6), for example, began with the description of a lesson midway through the course, before summarizing, two pages later, lessons earlier seen, and then focusing on his cognitions prior to the course. Again, narrative logic dictated this. As with Fawziya’s story (4.8.1, above), I aimed at the outset to focus on the concrete particularities of experience (this time, Waleed’s) and engage the reader’s memories and expectations. However, I was starting this time *in medias res*, focusing on his work in the classroom to emphasise his considerable development up until that point. Later in the narrative, I would explore how he had got there, before I picked up the story again from the beginning of the course and continued chronologically, juxtaposing elements and developing relevant themes (e.g.; heightened awareness of the learners, heightened consciousness in designing and evaluating materials).

As I redrafted, I realized, too, that I needed to revise research questions. I refined them to address the relationship between PK and TSE beliefs (4.5.1, above). Accordingly, questions I had been working with (e.g.; Appendix 5) were replaced with those at the head of this chapter (4.2, above). I reflected on the fit between questions, methods and data. Question 1 required analysis of (predominantly) interview data, and tables presenting transcribed quotes could support this. Question 2 required use of triangulation, with observations triangulated with assignments or interviews. Question 3 required use of data from all sources.

As the redrafting continued, and I added more explicit argument to description and discursive commentary, I made judgements that were more 'contestable' (Stake, 1995), as I was moving further away from the relatively safe ground of 'low inference' descriptors (Silverman, 2001) into interpretation. Reading a second draft of Omar's story in November 2006 (Table 4.5, above), my critical friend warned that Omar might be trying to please me or appear knowledgeable in interviews. "I think you put too much weight in places on what he says as opposed to what he does", he wrote (personal correspondence). Such comments heightened again my awareness of potential threats to validity; researcher biases, respondent biases and reactivity, the way in which the researcher's presence interferes with the setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These threats need to be continually re-examined reflexively, as Stake (1995, p. 112) argues, in light of "the 'contestability' of the description or the criticality of the assertions". We can make our research more credible, Kvale (1996) suggests, by continually checking, questioning and theoretically re-interpreting the findings.

Omar had originally been selected as a deviant case (4.5.4, above), and I was glad of his inclusion when I came to developing the cross-case analysis. Were it not for him, this may have looked too much like a Hollywood plot (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), with nearly everything working out too well in the end, my analysis insufficiently critical. As Robson (2002) argues, by including a deviant case and thus playing 'devil's advocate', rather than ending up with a set of theories we have rejected, we usually develop a more elaborate version of the original. In exploring and telling Omar's story, I learned more about the development of PK and TSE beliefs during the

BA (TESOL) Programme. This would inform my cross-case analysis and discussion (Chapters 10 & 11, below).

4.9 Trustworthiness

Throughout this chapter, I have sought to establish the ‘trustworthiness’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of my research. I will now summarize my efforts in this regard, referring to criteria these authors use; credibility, dependability and transferability, terms developed from the corresponding normative concepts; validity, reliability and generalizability.

I have used various tactics to meet the first of these criteria, credibility, which involves producing believable findings that are “approved by the constructors of the multiple realities being studied” (Lincoln & Guba, p. 296). These include prolonged engagement and persistent observation (4.6.1, above), triangulation (4.5.1, 4.6.3, 4.8.1), the use of a critical friend (4.8.2-3), member checking (4.8.2) and deviant case analysis (4.5.4, 4.8.3). All of these tactics were successful to a certain extent, although there were also limitations with their use.

Triangulation, for example, strengthened and added depth to findings, but the use of this tactic depended on there being sufficient opportunities to triangulate or sufficient data of a certain type to work with. Sometimes there was. Analysing Fawziya’s development in designing communicative tasks, for example (5.6, below), I could compare interview data (FI.1) with that from an assignment (FA.2) to say with some confidence what she was capable of achieving in this regard by October 2003. However, sometimes deficiencies in other tactics limited the possibilities of triangulation, as I explain.

Engagement was certainly prolonged (over 27 months) but observation was not as persistent as I would have preferred, with lengthy gaps sometimes between data gathering opportunities (Table 4.4, above). Due to work schedules, I was only able to observe each teacher in the classroom once a semester (Chapter 3, above), and a consequence of this was that I did not have the opportunity to observe as much classroom behaviour as I would have liked to. I regretted, for example, being unable to see Omar use a shared story for reading or encourage learners in his English club

(Chapter 7, below), and I would have liked to see Rashid attempt a second reading race (Chapter 9, below). However, I did try to maximize the value of classroom observations by asking teachers to identify lessons related to their research interests (in the third year of the programme) for me to observe. This may have improved the quality of the data, and so increased the likelihood of triangulation, helping me deepen my understanding of the case. My critical friend and supervisors, who asked searching questions after reading drafts of my work that led me to question my interpretations and seek to triangulate further, supported me in this analytical process.

Deviant case analysis and member checking were also used to enhance credibility, as I have argued above (in 4.8.2-3), although there were limitations in my use of the latter. Firstly, as I have reported (in 4.8.2, above), I was unable to re-interview the women. Secondly, the drafts I showed Omar, Rashid and Waleed, while all substantial pieces of work of approximately 10,000 words each, were first drafts lacking explicit argument, so that I was not asking the teachers to validate interpretations. Nevertheless, all three confirmed the accuracy of the data presented, and Waleed, in particular, brought his own insightful interpretations to bear. These interpretations corresponded with and added to my own developing ideas, in the process validating my work 'pragmatically' (since it led to learning he could make use of) and 'communicatively' (Kvale, 1996).

To meet the second of Lincoln & Guba's (1985) criteria, 'dependability' (4.7.1, above), I took the following steps. I tried to be reflexive in positioning the researcher (4.3, above), open in discussing ethical concerns (4.3.4, 4.5.2-4, above), and as transparent as possible (given word limits) in showing how the research developed in design, was carried out and written up (4.5-8, above). At the same time, I am conscious of rigorous requirements not met. Yin (1994) suggests we should conduct research as if someone (such as an auditor) were always looking over one's shoulder, while Lincoln & Guba (1985) recommend use of an audit process that, if sufficiently thorough, might last a week to ten days. Unfortunately, though, I have not been able to have had such a process carried out for practical reasons, as I work alone, geographically isolated from other researchers (such as the critical friend, no longer in the country), who might have been able to do such an audit for me, in the way Lincoln & Guba (1985) recommend. I acknowledge this is a limitation of my research. I have

tried to increase dependability, though, by documenting all evidence carefully (so that an interested researcher could examine it) and by giving a detailed descriptive account of the research in this chapter, establishing an audit trail that could be followed.

I have tried to meet Lincoln & Guba's (1985) third criterion for trustworthiness, 'transferability' (4.8.1) by producing thick description relevant to an understanding of the case. Transferability may be a particularly elusive goal of my research, given the uniqueness of the teacher education programme under investigation (Chapter 3, above). All the researcher can do, Lincoln & Guba (1985, p. 316) argue, is "set out working hypotheses together with a description of the time and context in which they were found to hold". Whether they hold in another time or context, these authors continue, is an empirical issue, depending on the similarity of the sending and receiving contexts. By activating readers' vicarious experiences through the use of thick description, though, I believe I am at least offering the possibility of transferability.

The following five chapters consist of case studies relating to the five teachers, each constructed with the help of observation notes, transcripts of post-lesson discussions and other interviews, field notes, assignments and feedback on these. These narrative accounts follow a largely chronological order, though devices such as flashbacks and fast-forwards are occasionally employed to make the experience recounted more immediate. I discuss research questions at the end of each chapter. Thick description is used throughout to allow me to focus on the task and context-specific TSE in question and provide insights into broader aspects of the teachers' growth in PK that relate to this. I will recount the stories in the order in which I wrote them for the sake of the overall coherence of the work. These chapters will be followed by cross-case analysis and discussion.

Chapter 5: Fawziya’s story – using communicative tasks to develop speaking

5.1 Introduction

Fawziya was the Senior English Teacher (SET) of a girls’ school for Grades 1-9, on the outskirts of a small town far from the regional capital. I met her in December 2002. As I got to know her, she seemed strong, self-confident, with a clear voice and a quick mind; a careful listener who contributed vigorously to classroom discussions. Something of a leader amongst her friends, she built warm relationships with those around her, once describing me as “like a member of the family” (FI.4). Since completing her initial TTC diploma in 1990, all Fawziya’s teaching experience had been in the same General Education school teaching OWTE, though she had learned about EFM through attending the PRIT course five years before the BA Programme started.

I am interested in exploring Fawziya’s developing practical knowledge (PK) and self-efficacy (TSE) in the use of communicative tasks (CTs) to develop speaking skills, the dissertation topic she chose in September 2004, concerned that her Grade 7 & 9 learners had insufficient opportunities in class to improve their speaking. She believed she might be able to help them by incorporating CTs into her lessons (FA.5), although she had known nothing about CTs before the course (FI.7) and had initial difficulties in using them. I am interested in exploring changes she reported in her self-efficacy beliefs in using CTs during the research period, in discovering the extent to which these changes reflected changes in her PK, and in ascertaining which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced these changes, and how. I will tell Fawziya’s story according to the methodological principles outlined in Chapter 4 (above), addressing research questions at the end of the chapter.

5.2 Learning to speak – childhood experiences reflected on

Fawziya remembers, as a young girl, the house being full of foreign guests. Her father, who worked for the admiralty and had studied in England, had invited British naval officers and their families for the day. Fawziya was attracted by the laughter and the easy informal talk in this foreign language she was learning at school. She wanted

“to share with them”, to understand, but she listened and found she could not understand, and when she opened her mouth to speak she found she had no words (F1.2).

Fawziya has often reflected on this experience since, first telling me about it in November 2003 and then referring to it during interviews over the next two years. She recalls her initial feelings of disappointment and hopelessness, of frustration as she wondered what was the use of learning English if she could not use it to speak. She thinks back to school. “I remember the way that I learned English, without interest”, she wrote in March 2003, in her first piece of assessed written work on the course. “We focused on the new words and phrases, and the teacher asked us to memorize the language without understanding why we were doing this.” There had been “a focus on grammar rules... a focus on passing exams” (FA.1). She reflects that unfortunately at school she was never encouraged to use the language to talk about herself, her feelings, her likes and dislikes. She feels that is why, when she met native English speakers in her own house as a young girl, she had no language to use with them (FI.5).

5.3 Gaining a theoretical understanding of features of communicative methodology (December 2002 – March 2003)

These powerful childhood memories may have been triggered by input received at the start of the BA course. For, after learning about children’s capacity for indirect learning, their imagination, their instincts for play, fun, interaction and talk, creative use of limited language resources and ability to grasp meaning from the world around them (Halliwell, 1992), Fawziya complained that the OWTE curriculum “never considered” these characteristics (FA.1). She was impressed by Donaldson’s (1978) version of Piaget’s famous experiment into perceptions of sameness (FA.1), and was influenced by various authors, claiming in her first assignment (TEYL, March 2003) that children have an instinct for meaning (Moon, 2000), a desire to communicate (Harmer, 2001), and learn if they have a real purpose (Donaldson, 1978). They need meaningful topics (Williams, 1998) and varied activities (Lightbown & Spada, 1999) that appeal to their sense of fun (Halliwell, 1992) (FA.1). By March 2003, Fawziya had gained a theoretical understanding of features of communicative methodology, although her teaching to date had not been very communicative (FI.1).

Nor could she make practical use of all the above ideas. For her TEYL assignment, Fawziya described and analysed her planning and teaching of a language practice activity. This activity contained some game-like elements, but was criticized for not being very well described (FF.1) and was not very communicative. Looking at the activity now, I cannot find an information gap. The assignment was awarded only a 'D' ('Satisfactory') in June 2003, which disappointed Fawziya greatly. Indeed, she reported feeling "less confident" (FN.1) about designing such activities (and producing assignments), influenced by the grade and feedback, so appearing to suffer self-efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2001). Yet she did not give up, recovering from this setback, she later reported, helped by my "encouragement and kindness" (FI.2).

5.4 Growth in understanding of communicative methodology through the Tasks module (June – October 2003)

There were immediate opportunities for Fawziya to develop her PK and self-efficacy in designing communicative activities, through summer school 2003 input for the Tasks module, which built directly on TEYL. Communicative activities were presented in a more complex light now, in the context of CTs, including three elements; preparation, core and follow-up activities (Cameron, 2001). When designing CTs, each built around a core activity in which meaningful interaction took place, the teachers were invited to identify the various kinds of demands (cognitive, language, interactional, involvement and physical) they placed upon learners and to consider how these demands could be supported in a Vygotskian way (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Practical sessions, including loop input, during summer school and day release, helped teachers plan, teach and then reflect on their use of CTs.

For her assignment (October 2003), Fawziya designed a CT for Grade 7 after analysing a unit of the coursebook that contained exercises on the location of places; asking after and describing. She decided the preparation and follow-up activities could come from the book, but the core activity would have to be created to supply an information gap. This would give the learners a chance to think, Fawziya argued, "find information ... be creative and imaginative" (FA.2).

Fawziya's core activity was as follows: "Excuse me. Where is the clinic?", Pupil A would ask, looking at the simplified map of a town, and instructed to ask about the clinic, not marked on the version of the map she had. Pupil B, looking at a slightly different version of the same map, would answer: "It is on Suq Road. It is next to the fort." "Thank you very much", Pupil A would reply, before sketching the building on her map, hopefully in the right place. Then Pupil B would ask: "Excuse me. Where is the boy's school?" The learners would take turns, asking about two buildings each (FA.2).

So now Fawziya could design a simple CT containing an information gap. True, the context provided was not very realistic, as it is unlikely in the real world that two strangers would meet clasping incomplete maps of the same place. Nor did the CT appear to involve much speaking practice. Nevertheless, this design did represent growth in PK, and she later received positive feedback, which may have supported growth in her self-efficacy in designing CTs, given the influence that positive interactional experiences can have on this development. Would she actually be able to use CTs in the classroom, though?

5.5 Observing Fawziya trying to use communicative methodology in the classroom – October 2003

Fawziya planned to use a CT in an observed Grade 9 lesson in October 2003, with a large class of approximately 40 girls, sitting in rows. Today was the start of a new unit and Fawziya had asked the girls to prepare by bringing in holiday souvenirs (FO.1).

After starting the lesson by eliciting the names of cities in Oman, and distinguishing between cities and towns, towns and villages through the use of local examples, she produced two enlarged photographs, one of an area of Muscat and the other of a mountain village. A lot of questioning, whole class, followed. Where was the village? In the mountains, yes, perhaps in Rustaq, yes, or in Nizwa, yes. How did they know the second photograph was of Muscat? Shops? Yes, but there are shops in Sohar. Forts, yes, His Majesty's palace, yes, it was visible in the picture. Differences between the city and the village were elicited. Yes, there's a school, maybe there are many schools, houses, yes, what about their size? What are they made of? Mud, in the mountains, yes, sometimes. Hospitals, clinics, electricity, hotels, roads, transport,

what kinds of ... donkeys in the mountains, yes, maybe. A lot of questions and follow-up questions, building on learners' utterances, getting the girls to think and develop their powers of expression in the second language (FO.1).

Then, after consolidation activities in the book, souvenirs were produced by the class; pottery, frankincense, incense burners, souvenirs from Oman, related to the learners' culture, though they did not know the names in English until the teacher helped them. One girl, interestingly, had a toy from Spain. Afterwards Fawziya focused on the souvenirs pictured in the coursebook, inviting whole class discussion of them, before the lesson finished with the class writing (FO.1).

So there was no CT. Nor, indeed, was there any pairwork. She had gone to some trouble, though, to contextualize the language.

5.6 Fawziya's reflections on this lesson - October 2003

Afterwards, Fawziya reported she had not taught the lesson that way in previous years: "Before I didn't have the idea about how to make the context, any context, how to make it clear, how to start the unit." So she had not used the photos or the realia, but had followed the book. "Only you have to do the task, the children have to write, and that's it." The lesson had not gone according to plan, though. There had been no time for her CT. "I spent too much time discussing about the city and the village", she told me,

but I made a task really. There is interaction between learners and purpose. It involves reading. Each child has a text about a city and they go around asking each other. 'What is the capital of that country?' 'What is the population of that city?' and 'What languages do the people speak there?' but there was no time. But I made a paragraph. I cut it. Everything is ready in my bag (FI.1).

The CT she describes here is actually very similar to that described in her Tasks assignment (5.4, above), which suggests this is the level of development she had reached in CT design by October 2003. There is an information gap and communicative purpose, but the situation is not really clear. Why would the learners ask those questions? Given that they are closed questions, the amount of speaking would also be limited.

Nevertheless, Fawziya had strong reasons for designing her CT. “The problem here is that our children don’t have a chance to speak in English”, she told me. “Most of the time the teacher has to speak.” She criticized the coursebook, at one point describing it as ‘limited’. When I look at it, she continued,

I find, you know, for example, the pairwork or the core activity - all the information is there. They have the question and they have the answer at the same time, and this is not useful for learners. There must be an information gap (FI.1).

Fawziya seemed very positive about communicative methodology. “I think it’s better to use this method, you know, and I think the children, they must talk, they are Grade 9, they have to talk in English, they have to express their ideas.” In the lesson, though, her whole class eliciting had been the predominant mode of interaction, as she skilfully, sensitively and efficiently built on learners’ utterances. She acknowledged there had been no pairwork, no information gap, but hoped there had been some scaffolding in the writing activity at the end, with the ‘good students’ helping (FI.1).

Perhaps, it just takes time to adjust. Fawziya spoke enthusiastically about trying “to change everything”, since learning new ideas on the course and trying to use them in her teaching. “Sometimes I make core activities for students”, she told me then, talking about adapting and making new, but she also admitted: “ I know it’s hard for me also, very hard for me and I have to use a lot of papers and everything, but when I did this with my class, I feel they are really happy, they like English, not like before” (FI.1). Would it get easier?

5.7 The challenge of adapting to create CTs in her context - November 2003

A month later, Fawziya elaborated more on the difficulties she found in adapting to create CTs. Although, when planning, she thought carefully about demands and support now, she considered it very challenging, she reported, “to adapt an activity to find the communicative purpose, to find the meaningful context, and to apply this in the school. It is difficult. Maybe in theory it is OK, but in practice to do this is very hard” (FI.2).

As well as this cognitive challenge, there were practical issues of classroom management to contend with. To get the students involved in communicative interaction, they needed to be physically working together, which was difficult. “I

have 45 girls in the class”, she explained, “and to arrange the seating and to arrange the materials that I’m going to use is difficult, but I’m trying, I’m trying to use it” (FI.2).

Clearly, Fawziya found using CTs challenging on a range of levels, and was yet to develop strong self-efficacy beliefs in meeting these challenges. Nevertheless, despite her limited practical experience of CTs, she believed deeply in their value. To become more efficacious in using them, she needed to develop both her PK in planning CTs and her PK in organizing the class in a learner-centred way that would facilitate her use of them. The latter presented particular challenges in her context.

5.8 Growing awareness of the learners in her context

Fawziya had to think about exams. After Grade 9, the learners would move on to a significantly ‘harder’ Grade 10 curriculum in another school (FN.1), so speaking activities represented a “very expensive” use of time. She felt they were nevertheless needed, but the pressure of teaching to exams had made her “a little bit strict”, “a little bit hard in teaching them” (FI.2).

Now her approach to teaching was changing, as were her beliefs about her role. Before the course, she had seen herself as an instructor, there “to talk a lot” with the children there only to “receive”. She had expected learners to understand grammar rules as soon as they were taught. Now, though, she was more tolerant, accepting mistakes “not like before”, and trying to encourage learners to do more talking in the class than she did, to “express their ideas”, to say what they felt. If the grammar was wrong, now she thought “OK”, maybe “after one week or after one unit” they would get it (FI.2).

The Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL) module had influenced her. For the assignment she was working on in November 2003, Fawziya had given girls from different classes a questionnaire. One section of this elicited their views of English (Did they like it or not?) and the reasons they ascribed to this. When Fawziya analysed the results, she found that some of the reasons mentioned for not liking English were related to the teacher’s behaviour. “She always shouts at them, embarrasses them”. After discovering this, she was trying harder to create “a

supportive environment inside the class by changing ... the atmosphere... the treatment”, changing her way of dealing with them, trying to make herself “more friendly to them” (FI.2).

In trying to be more learner-centred, she was also trying to use more groupwork and pairwork, and felt their oral work was improving. “You know, they are answering many questions, they are sharing, they have also the confidence” (FI.2). This suggests her self-efficacy in adopting learner-centred practices to support learning was developing. There were external pressures, though, as well.

When I next visited, in March 2004, Fawziya was still upset by an incident that had occurred a few days earlier. After a writing activity, the girls had been correcting each other’s work in pairs, as Fawziya felt they would benefit from this responsibility. Unfortunately, though, a visiting observer was critical afterwards, describing the peer correction as a waste of time and rejecting counter-arguments. Fawziya had never had such a negative appraisal of her work. Indeed, usually, these were very positive. She felt disheartened, “really disappointed”, but said she would not give up (FI.3).

Perhaps, she had been sub-consciously affected, though, as in the Grade 9 lesson I observed that March 2004 day, I witnessed no learner-learner interaction; no pairwork, no peer checking, no groupwork. And yet I noticed considerable sensitivity to the learners, too (FO.2). Seeking contextually appropriate examples, Fawziya was obviously listening carefully to the students’ utterances, adjusting her input according to their needs and showing consideration for feelings while correcting efficiently (the focus was on grammatical forms). Despite remaining in whole class mode throughout, it was clear, too, that she was throwing questions widely around the room, to “encourage the class to participate”, she explained afterwards. As in the October 2003 lesson, there were numerous intelligent, probing questions asked whole class to “encourage thinking and speaking skills”, but there was no pairwork. Fawziya pointed out her focus was on developing accuracy rather than fluency (FI.3), but I was surprised. I would still have used pairwork.

5.9 Planning a CT for the Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L) assignment – Part 1 (May 2004)

To make use of CTs, Fawziya needed to develop not just her PK in organizing the class in a learner-centred way, but also her PK in planning CTs. She gained practice of the latter through preparing for the TS&L assignment (Part 1). This followed input on authentic speech (Carter & McCarthy, 1995), communication strategies (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991), the management of spoken discourse (Cook, 1989), Levelt's (1989) model of the speaking process (Scovel, 1998), affective factors involved in speaking (Arnold, 2003), Littlewood's (1991) rationale for the use of communicative activities to develop speaking, Harmer's (2001) communicative continuum, Parrot's (1993) task types, including ranking and problem-solving activities, Guariento & Morley's (2001) ideas for creating semi-authentic listening texts. The assignment would be in two parts, separated by the summer; involving firstly, planning a CT, and then, after receiving feedback in September, revising, teaching and evaluating it.

Fawziya demonstrated, in her May 2004 assignment, a solid grasp of the theory. She argued that if CTs incorporate “risk taking, guessing, problem-solving” elements, this brings them closer to real life communication, and if they encourage learners to focus on meaning rather than form, this offers them “freedom to use the language to express what they think or feel”. CTs develop listening and speaking skills, she argued, citing Thornbury (2000). Fluency improves as the ability to retrieve chunks of language at speed increases, while learners' accuracy develops “if we give them time to plan their work and monitor themselves during and after planning”. “Through practice”, she continued, “learners come up against situations that force them to re-organize their current knowledge, which helps them [to use] complex structures and vocabulary.” “Conversational strategies, such as opening and closing conversations, turn taking, interrupting, topic shift” and communication strategies, such as asking for repetition or summarizing are also called upon during this practice, she argued. Without these strategies, “learners who are familiar with the grammar of a language and know a vast amount of vocabulary may still fail in real conversational fluency” she maintained, citing Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) (FA.3).

Fawziya's new CT was more complex than the previous ones. It centred on the context of would be travellers in a travel agency seeking information. To set the task

up, she would first elicit places of interest from a map of the world, and then ask the Grade 9 learners which of these countries they would like to visit and what they would like to know about them. Brainstormed ideas would be written on the whiteboard. Then the learners would listen to a conversation in a travel agency (the tape made by Fawziya and a friend) with two questions to answer: Where are the speakers? What are they talking about? She would then ask them to recall language used; questions and expressions. These would be listed, elicited, written up. Then Fawziya would establish a context with the learners - she was a travel agent, they were travellers. "They want to travel to India. They work in groups and form questions they would like to ask me [and] also write expressions... to engage in the conversation" (FA.3).

The learners would ask questions about India, and Fawziya, as the travel agent, would answer them politely, using expressions such as; 'Yes, of course. What do you like to know?' She would show them how to open and close the conversation and check they could request information in a polite way, with expressions, such as 'Good morning', 'Excuse me. Can you help me?', 'I want some information about ...', 'I would like to know' (FA.3).

She would then organize the class in closed pairs, establish they understood the roles of travel agent and traveller, and distribute task sheets that contained both a set of information about one country and an empty grid. Pupil A had information about Mexico, for use when in the travel agent role, while Pupil B had information about Italy. They would complete the grid when it was their turn to be the traveller. Fawziya felt they might need communication strategies in order to achieve this, with one pupil perhaps asking for information to be repeated "to be able to write it in the table", the other perhaps summarizing information to check its correctness (FA.3).

Fawziya did not want to specify the language the learners would use. Although there were language structures embedded in the oral text and a secondary aim was to practise 'wh' questions, she wanted the class "to have the freedom to form any types of questions they like and [use] any strategies to complete their table, e.g.; they can ask, 'What is the population of Mexico?' or 'How many people live in Mexico?'" (FA.3).

She would monitor while they worked, checking they did not use L1, and making notes for feedback purposes afterwards. Fawziya saw her role as “a guide and catalyst for classroom communication”, encouraging the use of English while she monitored, but not intervening. She argued, quoting Willis (1996), that correcting learners’ mistakes each time would not help them develop their speaking because it would not change the order in which linguistic features began to occur accurately in the spontaneous speech they produced (FA.3).

Clear development is discernible when one compares this CT with ones Fawziya had earlier designed (5.4 & 5.6, above). Again, there is communicative purpose, but now the context is more realistic, though would one visit a travel agency to ask these questions of a country? Thought has gone into providing both input for acquisition and support for the use of conversational strategies. Also, though closed questions are embedded in the input, learners have been given more control over the language they use, possibly leading to more speaking practice.

Fawziya did very well in this assignment, gaining an ‘A’ (‘Excellent’). She was advised to make the worksheets more visually attractive, but the marker was generally very positive about both her understanding of the concepts and about the task description. “The procedure was so clearly described”, he wrote, “that I felt I could teach it myself” (FF.3). “I felt proud when I read this comment”, she told me (FN.1). One can infer from this, growth in her self-efficacy in designing CTs.

5.10 Observing and reflecting on her CT for the TS&L assignment – Part 2 (October 2004)

Fawziya used this CT with one of her new Grade 9 classes in September 2004 to write about in the second, evaluative, part of her TS&L assignment. To help her analyse the lesson, she arranged for two colleagues to observe it, armed with a tool she designed to help them focus on the following: the learners’ efforts to communicate, their use of interaction strategies, the speech they produced, their levels of motivation and interest (FA.4).

The preparation activity created surprise and interest, Fawziya reported, but after listening to the tape only a few students were able to volunteer expressions heard. Perhaps, Fawziya conjectured, this was because they had never learned the “special functions” these expressions had, and might have “repeated them without understanding when to use them” if they had met them before. Participation improved, though, when she explained the context of the travel agency, and asked the class to act as travellers wishing to visit India. Learners obviously enjoyed asking her questions (FA.4).

During the core activity, about 10 of the 20 pairs appeared to communicate purposefully, Fawziya noted, to judge “from their body language, e.g.; smiling, shaking hands, and the language when they asked their peers questions in order to write the information in the tables.” She continued:

The learners with the texts tried to listen carefully to the question to provide their friends with the right answer ... Although some of the learners produced wrong questions when they asked their peers to complete the table, e.g.; ‘what language people speak?’, ‘what weather like?’, their reason might be that they focused on the meaning first to complete the table and tended not to pay attention to the structure of the question that is used to express the meaning (FA.4).

The other pairs, though, simply appeared to read the tables and the texts to each other, appearing “bored and careless”, and doing the activity slowly. Why was this? Perhaps they did not have “a clear idea about the core activity”, or needed “more practice in forming questions and skimming texts to provide information”. Perhaps they did not feel comfortable talking to the partners they were working with, or would have preferred some “movement around the class”. Perhaps the topic itself was not that motivating, as it “related to geography and many children don’t like this subject because it is tough”. Perhaps the materials themselves, the learners’ handouts, on which she had added pictures to the texts, might nevertheless have appeared “dull and uninteresting” (FA.4).

Reflecting on all this, Fawziya identified implications that struck me as learner-centred and conducive to future growth. Chief amongst these, perhaps, was the need for further learner training in using communicative tasks, and heightening awareness of the value of pairwork, as a way of working independently, sometimes with the support of a more skilled other (FA.4). “Now I try to deal with them like they are

really adults and they are responsible for their learning”, Fawziya told me in the same month (October 2004). “When you give them that chance they really become adults” (FI.4). A further implication was that she “should spend more time raising awareness” of interaction strategies, and “demonstrating how to use” these. It was also important to create “a relaxed and supportive environment in the classroom” to increase learners’ “willingness to experiment with the language” in private, spontaneous speech, which would help their development. Materials design could help too, she felt, by focusing on meeting needs and interests to give greater purpose to the learners’ efforts, so increasing their motivation (FA.4). If CTs were used in this way, Fawziya argued (in conversation, with feeling), the learners would benefit, as then they would not just

depend on the teacher, the teacher’s role in the classroom, the old role in the classroom. She is only speaking and doing everything. But let the children be the centre of learning. They have to ask, they have to talk, they have to express their ideas, everything (FI.4).

Evidently, Fawziya’s PK in using CTs had developed considerably. She seemed aware not just of the benefits of using CTs to develop speaking skills, but was conscious too of the challenges inherent in their use and had identified ways of overcoming them. Her PK seemed deeper and stronger. For this to grow further, though, she would need additional opportunities to put her ideas into practice, practice that would provide the concrete experiences needed to foster stronger self-efficacy beliefs.

5.11 Planning to research CTs further

As well as developing PK in evaluating her use of CTs, it is also evident from an analysis of the above assignment that Fawziya had developed PK in researching her own practice, through using observers and observation tools to facilitate task evaluation. She decided to research her use of CTs further through her dissertation, the final piece of assessed work on the course.

In her Researching TESOL assignment, which doubled as a dissertation proposal (November 2004), Fawziya argued that CTs were motivating. When she had used them in earlier modules, her learners had tried to express their feelings as fluently as they could in new situations. This was important, as the OWTE coursebook was

“based on drilling and repetition”, and learners did not have a chance to practise English outside the school (FA.5).

Accordingly, she would design CTs to supplement different units of the coursebook in the following semester. She would use these with her classes and then evaluate their effectiveness, helped by audio and video recordings she could transcribe, as well as observation tools completed by an observer. She hoped this action research might inspire other teachers to adapt the OWTE materials they worked with (FA.5).

I asked her to elaborate on her research design in February 2005, first putting to her a question raised in the assignment feedback: ‘How would she assess the ‘effectiveness’ of her CTs?’ (FF.5). The aim, she said, was that through CTs the learners would “speak automatically, without thinking, without consciously thinking that they are using this bit of language, as we learned about grammar”, she continued, referring to the proceduralization stage in the development of grammatical knowledge (Batstone, 1994), introduced through the Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary (TG&V) module (January 2005). “They have to speak the language as a native speaker”, Fawziya continued, “able to use the words” learned “in different situations”. This would help them “acquire new language and this will expand their knowledge of the language”. However, “if we focus only on the coursebook”, she argued, “there are limited vocabularies, limited structures” and the learners’ development would be limited. So Fawziya planned to use CTs of various kinds, including information gaps and problem-solving tasks, while watching how the learners interacted, dealt with each other, talked, focusing on the message not the form (FI.5). She seemed efficacious in outlining her plans.

5.12 The challenges of creating CTs – February 2005

However, Fawziya reported that she still faced difficulties in adapting materials to create CTs. “I am not an expert”, she told me. Sometimes she had an idea, but was unsure if it would work. Perhaps the challenge level would be too high. Sometimes she looked at the lesson materials provided, and found it hard to think of a motivating task that somehow related to them, and would have liked more thinking time. Then there were difficulties in actually producing the materials. She was now much more proficient in using the computer than she had been at the beginning of the course, but

still required her husband's help sometimes when she wanted to produce graphics. And then, when she did produce worksheets for her learners, the school's photocopier was often out of order (F1.5).

There were also classroom organization issues. The 41 or 42 learners now sat in groups, which was the new school policy, but some teachers of other subjects preferred the girls in rows, and then Fawziya had to move them back into groups at the start of her lesson, not always easy in the confines of a small classroom. Partly for reasons of space and to facilitate her own manoeuvrability, the groups tended to be of six or seven, which was too large for many activities, so she would sub-divide them into smaller groups for discussions (F1.5).

Fawziya sounded more efficacious than she had 15 months earlier when discussing the cognitive and practical challenges of using CTs (5.7, above). However, she still sounded cautious, conscious of the demanding context. I was really looking forward to seeing Fawziya actually use a CT. I had read her assignments and reflected on our discussions. Gaining observational evidence of her practical use of CTs to develop speaking skills would help me ascertain the fit between her beliefs and practices.

5.13 Observing Fawziya use a CT in the classroom – April 2005

Fawziya used a CT when I next observed her. She was conducting research for her dissertation, and had an observation tool for me to use. The context of the Grade 7 lesson was as follows: the learners had already had past tense questions with 'did' and the conjunction 'because'. The context provided by the coursebook, Fawziya explained, was that "Mubarek went on a trip and he had some problems there". In the coursebook were pictures illustrating problems, sentences supplying reasons for them, with a model dialogue for the learners to follow. "What happens here in the book", Fawziya told me, "is that the children have got the pictures, the children have got the information, the children have got everything". "So", she continued, "there is no information gap, nothing, and it does not encourage them to think, it does not encourage them to create ... only they have to read what is there in the coursebook. So what did I think? I decided to create a task with the same language" (F1.6).

Fawziya began the lesson by telling the class they would be focusing on giving reasons using 'because'. She elicited a few examples, nominating individual learners. "Yesterday I didn't buy books because I didn't have money" one girl said. Fawziya held up a flashcard, which showed a sketch of a girl's face (perhaps she was a teenage girl and she was crying - the eyes had been coloured in red, and there was a touch of blue about them, and tears), and put it on the whiteboard. "She had red and watery eyes. Why? Discuss in groups." First, one group got quite animated, and then all the other groups started talking in a lively way, as girls searched for ideas and then tried to express them. Fawziya then asked each group to select from amongst their ideas and present a possible reason to the class. "She had red and watery eyes because she was ill", one group said. "She had red and watery eyes because she was sick ... because she was tired ... because she was late for school" were other answers. One group suggested, "She had red and watery eyes because she didn't buy a beautiful dress", while another said "She had red and watery eyes because her father died" (FO.3).

Fawziya then asked the girls to imagine they had been absent from school the day before, and to think of a reason. They should do this individually. She invited a girl to come to the front, greeted her informally and enquired, "Did you come to school yesterday?" "Why were you absent?" She turned to the rest of the class, "What questions did I ask her?" She wrote up a skeleton of these questions and the answers she had received on the board ('Did you ...?' 'No, I ...' 'Why ...?' 'Because ...'), and elicited possible greetings for such a situation. A pair came forward to demonstrate the teacher-student role-play, and giggled through it, initially both wanting to be the teacher (FO.3).

Fawziya then set up a closed pairwork activity, telling each pair to choose a situation from a list of missed events written on the board; 'eat your breakfast', 'do your homework', 'sleep early', 'visit Rustaq Fort'. Their choice would form the topic of their conversation. After the pairs had chosen, one girl had to think of a reason, while the other thought of conversational openings, and they did so with the teacher monitoring (FO.3).

When they were ready (Fawziya had just told several pairs not to start the main speaking activity yet), the role-play was demonstrated at the front of the class through open pairs: “Did you go to Rustaq Fort yesterday?” asked one girl, after greeting her friend. “No, I didn’t.” “Why not?” “Because the bus was punctured.” The learners worked in closed pairs, and there was a busy hubbub around the room. They then switched roles to get more practice, and most appeared to be very much on-task, obviously enjoying the freedom to express themselves. Fawziya was tape-recording conversations, passing the machine from one group to another, which seemed a further source of motivation. One girl, in particular, at the table where the tape-recorder ended up, looked very excited (FO.3).

Fawziya gave feedback and then focused on a matching exercise with pictures and phrases, for consolidation from the coursebook. The girls formed sentences, e.g.; “She didn’t eat an orange because she wasn’t hungry.” Some struggled, but they checked their ideas quickly in pairs, before Fawziya elicited answers whole class (FO.3).

I was impressed by Fawziya’s use of this CT, her involvement of the class in meaningful, learner-centred and varied interaction, her provision of increased opportunities for speaking practice. Clearly, Fawziya had developed PK in using CTs in the classroom. Assuming she was aware of this, her self-efficacy would have grown too, given the relationship between the two earlier established.

5.14 Fawziya’s reflections on this CT, step by step – April 2005

After the lesson, Fawziya reflected at length. For the first activity, she had taken a flashcard from another coursebook, one the learners would not meet for another two years, so the picture was completely new. She had coloured the eyes red and “a little bit blue for tears”. The class saw the girl had a problem, she continued, “and I told them to give me some reasons.” So they had to “imagine what happened, maybe relate it to their experience.” Some of the reasons were unexpected. One told her “she dried her eyes and they were red and watery because her father died.” As to the beautiful dress, “maybe they cried when they didn’t get a nice dress or something” (FI.6).

Next was the familiar context of explaining absence from school. Fawziya had started by asking: “who was absent yesterday?” She had then reassured the class that nobody

had been, “but I told them to imagine ... and to create and think about the reasons” (FI.6)

She had then introduced conversational strategies during the open pairwork, as she felt they should use them “while they are talking. They’re not going to straightaway do the conversation without them”. She felt conversational strategies were absent from their coursebooks, and had “tried hard”, she reported, “to specify when they are speaking to use them” (FI.6).

Then she had written a list of missed events on the board for the girls to choose from. She had not given them complete freedom “to create their own events because lots of students will not be able to think about events and reasons at the same time”. If the context was clear in advance, then “the purpose of the talk will be clear for the person who will ask and the person who will answer, but if it is not on the board, I mean, it is difficult.” Some of the ‘advanced students’, though, had not used the events written up. They had checked with Fawziya while she was monitoring, she reported, and “used their own events, and they asked about it and they had their own reasons, and that’s excellent” (FI.6).

While the learners were supposed to be thinking, deciding and preparing, there had been some confusion, though, with some pairs thinking they should start the conversation immediately. Fawziya ascribed this to the coursebook, for not encouraging them “to think and prepare themselves” (FI.6).

I asked her about the open pairwork before the speaking activity following. One of the girls had given as a reason ‘the bus was punctured’. Fawziya explained that this language came from the previous lesson, the story about Mubarek’s trip, “so, good, they tried to retrieve the vocabulary that they used already in their coursebook and they tried to put it in another context” (FI.6).

Talking about the last activity, when Fawziya had focused on the coursebook for a matching activity, she said some learners found it difficult to talk about the picture, because they could not “understand what’s behind the picture”. One picture showed a boy putting his leg in the water, but only a few could interpret it. “They could say that

the child wanted to swim but he couldn't because the water was cold, but others, they tried but found it difficult" (FI.6).

If one examines the above discussion for evidence of her capacity to reflect deeply on her teaching, a number of processes are evident. First, she describes the flashcard, explains her purpose in using it, reports on something a learner had said and speculates why. She later justifies her introduction of conversational strategies, explaining a deficiency in the course materials, and underlines her determination to overcome this. She then explains a decision made in planning to reduce task demands by writing a list of missed events on the board to be chosen from and a decision made 'in-action' (Schön, 1983) to allow better students to choose their own, and then comments on momentary confusion. Next, she evaluates a learner's utterance, using a concept, 'retrieval', from the recently studied TG&V module (5.10, above), before interpreting learner behaviour in relation to conceptual demands created by the materials. The presence of these processes suggests reflective thought conducive to personal growth.

5.15 Fawziya's evaluation of this CT

I invited Fawziya to evaluate the lesson using her own criteria. Were the learners interested in the lesson? Yes, she thought so. They were "happy", "more interested", in such tasks. "They recorded together", she continued, "shared ideas", and were happy taking part in the research, thinking that maybe their voices would "go to Britain or something like that" (FI.6).

When were they most motivated during the lesson? Fawziya felt they were most interested when discussing the reasons for the girl's tears at the beginning, when using their imagination to think about why they had been absent, when discussing the missed events. Only at the end had their attention wavered, and this was because interpreting some of the pictures was difficult. Agreeing with her assessment here, I asked her about the observable behaviour she had based these judgements on, as there are different ways of showing interest, and she talked about noticing their concentration and seeing their satisfaction when they felt able to do something, as well as observing their participation in oral interaction (FI.6).

Had they focused on the form of the language or the meaning? Fawziya felt they focused on the meaning, “but also they tried to use correct English, correct language. They have to use it because I told them you have to use the past tense, you have to use did”. There had been language errors, though, with the present tense often used instead of the past. This was perhaps because, focused on conveying meaning, the learners sometimes found it ‘difficult’ to express. Other language errors she had noticed included missing out words, which she thought was sometimes due to learners changing their intonation, trying to speak faster, trying to “speak like native speakers”. When she analysed the tape, she thought she would find some features of authentic speech, such as hesitation and repetition, but not others, due to the learners’ limited prior exposure to discourse in natural settings. In seeking to convey meaning, she suspected the girls had utilized vocabulary learned in earlier lessons, and perhaps in classes lower down the school, “from outside, from the television” (FI.6).

When she did listen to the tape and analyse it for her dissertation, she produced the following annotated transcript of one of the pairs’ conversations:

Line	Speaker	
1	PA	Hello Wafa. Good afternoon. Opening conv
2	PB	Good afternoon. Opening conv
3	PA	Did you go ... did you have a good trip? Turn taking
4	PB	No, the trip was bad. Turn taking
5	PA	Why not?
6	PB	run-ons hesitation device false start Because we didn't ... er because the bus didn't leave on
7		repetition pause repetition time and I ... I was in the I was in the trip ... I was
8		pause hesitation
9		thirsty and hungry because I ... forgot the bottle of water and my money

Writing about the above, Fawziya noted that Pupil B used “a lot of repetition, pauses, hesitation, false starts and run-ons because her role in the conversation was more demanding” than that of the first speaker. “For example, pauses in lines 7 & 8” Fawziya argued, showed she was thinking about her words carefully, “while hesitation device such as ‘er’ in line 6” showed she was attempting “to keep the floor” while formulating her next utterance. “The false start in line 6” showed she had changed her mind about what to say. “Instead of saying ‘we didn’t’ she said ‘the bus didn’t’ because she recognized that the problem was on the bus, as they were waiting

but the bus didn't come in time." In addition, there was a lot of repetition, as she tried to convey meaning clearly, perhaps recalling a trip she had been on and searching for words and phrases to express this. Her language production consisted of "incomplete sentences and phrases", similar to that of a native speaker processing "information under pressure of time" (FA.7).

In this transcript, Fawziya also found evidence of conversational strategies; for opening a conversation and turn taking. Evidence of other strategies, including topic shift, adjacency pairs and closing conversations was provided in her dissertation by another transcript, this of a task to do with holidays. "I saw the high mountains and many boats", said one learner, describing a trip to the beach. "Did you catch some fish?" was the next question, shifting the topic. "Yes, I catch a big hamour" (FA.7).

Fawziya had clearly gained a sound grasp of concepts from the TS&L module and was able to make practical use of them to analyse her learners' oral interaction. This suggests that her PK as a teacher of speaking was growing, growth that was supported by ability she had developed as a researcher. For not only could Fawziya plan and use a CT in the classroom in a learner-centred way, but she could also observe, analyse and reflect upon what took place, reflective actions that can lead to improved practice and are conducive (I have argued above) to self-efficacy growth.

5.16 Taking CT design a step further

I did not observe Fawziya use another CT during the BA Programme. However, I do have a further one to analyse, as for the Materials Design and Development (MDD) assignment (November 2005) Fawziya produced another CT for Grade 9. This was similar in many respects to the May 2004 CT (5.9, above), although, after MDD input, there was a greater emphasis on meeting authentic communicative needs (Tomlinson, 1998). I summarize the preparation and core activities, in the table below, together with materials used.

Table 5.1 A summary of Fawziya's preparation and core activities for the MDD CT

Step	Materials	Activity
Preparation 1	Picture cut from a magazine, showing a kitchen with food. Food items are masked with stickers.	T (teacher) shows picture. In pairs, learners guess the food behind the stickers. T asks questions whole class; e.g.; 'Are there any eggs?', 'Is there a bag of sugar?'. T removes the stickers and learners check. New vocabulary items are explained.
Preparation 2	Worksheet from the coursebook - a gap-fill exercise	Learners focus on grammar, producing 8 sentences after looking at a picture, and the choices 'a lot of', 'some' and 'any'. E.g.; 'There is <u>some</u> water in the bottle', T checks, eliciting reasons for choices.
Preparation 3	Tape recording of a dialogue, made by Fawziya and a friend (excerpt below): M (mother): Yes, Darling. What's happening? D (daughter): Mummy. My friends will come tomorrow? M: Yah. D: I want to make fish curry for them. M: Yes, that's a delicious dish. D: Are there any onions in the kitchen? M: Yes, we have a lot of them.	Learners listen to discover who the speakers are, what they are doing and talking about. Learners check answers in pairs, before whole class feedback. T asks 'Has a similar situation ever happened to you, and if so, what do you remember?', inviting reflection on personal experience. Learners listen again to identify expressions used for opening and closing the conversation, and any other useful expressions.
Core activity	Role cards for Pupil A and Pupil B. Pupil A has a shopping list and Pupil B has a photo of a kitchen.	T explains situation. Pupil B is the mother in the kitchen. Pupil A is her daughter, out shopping with her father, when she remembers she has invited friends to the house and wants to prepare an orange cake for them. T distributes role cards and explains: Pupil A should ask about food items on the shopping list and put a tick if the food in the kitchen, a cross if it is not. Pupil B has to look carefully at the photo, try to give correct information, and ask questions to check if Pupil A has enough; e.g.; 'How many eggs do you want?'

		<p>T reminds learners to use some conversational strategies. Learners engage in back-to-back pairwork, imagining they are talking on the phone (FA.6).</p>
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In justifying her CT design, Fawziya explained she would start with a colourful magazine picture, as this might be motivating in its authenticity. Next was the listening text. While made for a teaching purpose, this might help her class “bridge the gap between classroom knowledge” and the real world, as it contained “some typical features of authentic spoken text, such as ellipsis, deixis, repetition” and expressions used for managing a discourse. The context provided of shopping, kitchens, and preparing dishes for friends would be familiar to the girls, considering their age and culture, and this might encourage them to speak. The role cards designed for Pupils A & B would create an information gap, and their pairwork, back-to-back to simulate a telephone conversation, would involve communicative purpose as the daughter tried to identify what she needed to buy (FA.6).

Comparing this CT with that designed for the TS&L assignment (5.9, above), there are clear similarities. However, the context provided here of a daughter phoning her mother while out shopping to check ingredients is perhaps closer to the learners’ life experiences. Also, this CT seems to imitate real life activities rather more believably, in the way it involves the second participant, the mother, in looking at the photo of a kitchen to see if she has the items requested or not before answering her daughter’s questions. Additionally, there is a greater variety of question forms embedded in the input, and more speaking might result. In CT design, there is thus evidence of growth.

5.17 Fawziya’s reflections on this MDD CT

After she taught the lesson, making notes and passing a tape-recorder around, Fawziya evaluated it. Some pairs did not do that well, she reported, appearing “frustrated, confused and demotivated”. Perhaps, the cognitive demands provided by the materials were too high. It was the first time, too, that these learners had been involved in back-to-back pairwork, and Fawziya suspected that not seeing the facial expressions of the friend they were talking to may have caused difficulties. She reported, too, that some learners did not use communication strategies, focusing

instead directly on the target language of yes/no questions, while others used expressions that were too formal for the context of a daughter talking to her mother. She overheard one girl say: “Excuse me. I would like to ask about the food” (FA.6).

Nevertheless, many learners did perform as she hoped, focusing on meaning, achieving task outcomes, developing fluency in the process. Evaluating the materials, she felt they did encourage the use of natural speech, as, when she listened to the tape to transcribe it, she noticed “repetition, hesitation, false starts, ellipsis and back channelling”. Language errors, e.g.; ‘How many eggs you want?’, was evidence, she thought, that they were focusing on the meaning rather than the form. The dialogue of the pair she transcribed concluded as follows:

Line	Speaker	
13	PA	Are there ... (hesitation) is there butter? false starts
14	PB	No I have oil. Buy butter.
15	PA	Yes, mother. Are there five oranges in the kitchen?
16	PB	I don't know, maybe five or seven. ellipsis
17	PA	Goodbye mother. closing conversation
18	PB	Goodbye Matecera.

Her learners needed greater exposure to authentic discourse and greater awareness of the social context in which language was used, Fawziya felt, so that they could use informal language when it was appropriate. They also needed more practice of back-to-back pairwork and more practice of interaction strategies. In this particular lesson, they might have benefited, too, she felt, from more freedom. Perhaps, rather than specifying that the learners would make a cake, she could have invited them “to write their own shopping lists and ask about any food they liked” (FA.6). “You reflect in an interesting and intelligent way”, the marker told her, in awarding her a high ‘B’ (FF.6), providing a positive efficacy-building experience.

5.18 Towards the future; trying to overcome the challenges and grow

When you create a task, you cannot do it “like magic”, Fawziya told me when I last visited her school, in October 2005. “It requires hard work and concentration. The process of analysing and reviewing needs a clear mind.” Now, when planning, she could identify in the materials provided “which part, which step” was suitable for the learners, “which part might be difficult”, and she could see how she was “going to

adapt or create something new”. However, it was not easy. There were the same problems she had always faced; photocopying worksheets for large classes of 45 and with other teachers who did not want the learners seated in groups. There were also other pressures. She had many responsibilities, as a teacher, mother, wife and SET. Fawziya needed space and time to plan, she reported, and sometimes did this at home when the children were sleeping. She had “a lot of ideas now”, and when she could put them into practice, they made “teaching more exciting”. Learners liked CTs “very much”, but contextual factors meant that it was still “difficult” to make use of them (FI.7). She nevertheless sounded more efficacious in meeting the challenges than she had 8 months earlier (5.12, above).

CTs were well worth using. They provided opportunities “for learners to practise their English in a funny and interesting way”, they increased motivation by encouraging a focus on meaning, they could be based on topics relating to learners’ life experiences, which made “learners willing to express their feelings and ideas”, and they “activated all parts of knowledge”, including language knowledge and schematic knowledge. They provided meaningful contexts that helped learners “try out hypotheses and repair communication breakdowns by using communication strategies”, they developed listening and comprehension skills and their use resulted in learner-centred classroom interaction. “Communicative tasks are very essential in developing Omani learners’ speaking skills”, Fawziya concluded (FA.7).

“Before I didn’t have any idea about communicative tasks”, she reflected at the end of the course, “and I didn’t imagine that teaching would be in this way, that one day in Oman teaching would be like this and learning would be like this, and we would have this opportunity to communicate, to talk in English”. Fawziya would continue to create CTs to compensate for the deficiencies of the course materials, she told me, and continue conducting research with her learners. This had been “very hard work”, but it had been a “wonderful experience, doing something” for her students, watching them, observing them, identifying their difficulties and trying to find solutions. She would share research methods she had learned on the course with other teachers (FI.7). This positive language suggests she had developed strong self-efficacy beliefs in researching her use of CTs.

5.19 Discussion

I will now address my research questions with specific reference to this case.

RQ1. What changes does she report in her self-efficacy in using CTs?

I turn to statements Fawziya made in interviews about designing, and, physically, practically, making use of CTs at different points in the course to address this question. In Table 5.2, overleaf, I have placed these statements in the context of both the drive she expressed to use CTs, and her memories of using them.

As can be seen, Fawziya's drive to use CTs was a powerful one, as the modals she uses when she discusses the learners' need to develop their speaking skills, 'must' and 'have to', suggest. Her memories of using CTs were positive, with affective factors stressed; the learners 'happy', liking English, 'interested'. CTs appeared to help achieve goals. Compare the drive; "they have to express their ideas" (10/03) with the memory; "they tried to express their own ideas" (10/05).

There is evidence that her self-efficacy in planning CTs developed. Initially, it was "very hard" to adapt an activity so that it included the basic elements (11/03). Later, the difficulty was expressed more in terms of fine-tuning; challenging and motivating learners at the same time (02/05). Fawziya does not claim expertise (02/05), but indicates that with "hard work and concentration" she can draw upon ideas to create "something new" (10/05).

Fawziya remains quite pessimistic, though, about the challenge of using CTs in her context. Throughout the research period, she emphasizes the difficulties she faces in preparing materials, notwithstanding development in her design skills on the computer, which she acknowledges (02/05). However, her focus on the problem shifts more to a factor outside her control, the school's photocopier (10/05). Fawziya also emphasizes the difficulties involved in organizing large classes for groupwork and pairwork, pinpointing as problematic arrangements she has to make for seating learners (11/03). The problem remains, but her focus shifts to a factor outside her control, teachers of other subjects (10/05). This shift might suggest that, while she

Table 5.2 Fawziya's self-efficacy statements about using CTs

Date	Drive to use CTs	Self-efficacy statements about using CTs			Memories of using CTs
		Conceptual demands (planning)	Physical demands (preparation of materials)	Practical demands (classroom management)	
10/03	The children, they must talk ...they have to talk in English, they have to express their ideas.		It's very hard for me and I have to use a lot of papers and everything.		When I did this with my class, I feel they are really happy. They like English, not like before.
11/03		It's very hard you know to adapt an activity, to find the communicative purpose, to find the meaningful context...	To arrange the materials that I'm going to use is also difficult.	You need the students to work all together in pairwork or in groupwork and we find it difficult. I have 45 girls in the class and to arrange the seating is difficult.	
02/05	At the end, they have to speak the language as a native speaker without thinking...	I am not an expert. I try to think of something, but I think maybe it will not work. Maybe it will be difficult for them ... Sometimes you find it difficult to create something which challenges children and motivates them at the same time.	I have to do this on the computer (which she could not use before the course) and then print it out and sometimes I don't have time and am giving the work to my husband... and there are problems with the photocopier.	I have 41 in each class so it is very difficult while they are moving around... I want my class to be in groups and the teachers, teachers of other subjects, want them to sit in rows, so I find it difficult.	
10/05		When I plan I can see which part, which step is suitable for them, which part might be difficult and how I'm going to adapt it or create something new. I mean, I have some new ideas, which make teaching more exciting... When you are adapting something, you are not adapting it at once like magic and suddenly it will perfect. It requires hard work and concentration. The process of analyzing and reviewing needs a clear mind, but I have a lot of ideas now.	We have a photocopier. It is not always available, sometimes it is not working, most of the time it is not working. Maybe it will work once or twice a month, then it will stop. Maybe they don't have ink or they need money. It's a problem...	In this situation, we have 45 students. I mean all the teachers don't have the same ideas. If I want to keep my students in a group, other teachers say 'No please, we don't want them in groups!'	My learners became more interested in English, they like English more and they like to talk about themselves because before they're talking only about characters in the book. They're not relating things to their lives. After using these kinds of communicative tasks they tried to express their own ideas, tried to speak about their experience and shared with their friends...

was still pessimistic (defensively so?, Wolters, 2003), she may have become more efficacious about the aspects of preparing and teaching she had control over.

RQ2. To what extent do changes in her self-efficacy beliefs reflect changes in her PK?

If we look, first, for changes in her PK, it is clear Fawziya learned a great deal, so that from knowing nothing about CTs, she was later able to present a sound rationale for their use (5.9, 5.18, above). She argued for meaningful contexts and topics, communicative purpose, varied activities catering to young learners' characteristics (5.3, above) and information gap activities (5.4, above) early in the course. How well did she then learn to incorporate these and other features of communicative activities she had been introduced to (5.9, above) into her design of CTs?

To explore this, I decided to evaluate CTs she described in assignments for evidence of growth. In Table 5.3, below, we can see, for example, that the contexts she created became progressively more realistic, as argued above (in 5.16, 5.9, 5.4).

Table 5.3 Fawziya's core activities and CTs evaluated for communicativeness

	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>TEYL Mar 03</i>	<i>Tasks Oct 03</i>	<i>TS&L May 04</i>	<i>MDD Nov 05</i>
1	There is an information gap.	X	√√	√√	√√
2	A clear, realistic context is created in which language is needed to perform the task.	X	-	√	√√
3	The learners are likely to have a desire to interact as the context is related to their authentic communicative needs.	X	-	-	√
4	Input for language acquisition is provided in the way that receptive skills are activated in the setting up.	-	-	√√	√√
5	Conversational strategies are explicitly supported in the setting up.	X	-	√√	√√
6	Learners are given control over the language they use to achieve their purpose.	X	X	√	√
7	Plenty of speaking practice is provided for all learners.	X	X	-	√

Key: X = *The feature is absent.*
 - = *The feature appears to be present but only to a limited extent.*
 √ = *The feature is in evidence.*
 √√ = *The feature is very much in evidence.*

As Table 5.3 confirms, Fawziya got better at designing CTs. In order to make practical use of them, though, she needed to be able to set up the classroom in a learner-centred way consistent with a communicative approach to teaching. Before the course, an instructor with the children there to “receive” (5.8, above), she learned to see the teacher’s role as a “guide and catalyst for classroom communication” (5.9, above), showing sensitivity to learners’ feelings, providing opportunities for pairwork and groupwork in a supportive environment, encouraging learners to speak as much as possible (5.8, above). How well did Fawziya then manage to incorporate these features of learner-centredness into her own teaching, together with other practical aspects of organizing communicative activities introduced on the course?

Using criteria loosely based on Harmer (2001) and Ur (1996), sources referred to in the first methodology module, TEYL, I will evaluate the three observed lessons described above (in 5.5, 5.8, 5.13) to address this question (see Table 5.4, below).

Table 5.4 Fawziya’s observed lessons evaluated for learner-centredness and communicativeness

	<i>Criteria: Does the teacher ...?</i>	<i>10/03</i>	<i>03/04</i>	<i>04/05</i>
1	Ask probing, focusing questions?	√	√	√
2	Listen carefully and adjust input according to the learners’ needs?	√	√	√
3	Provide contextually appropriate examples of the language?	√	√	√
4	Show consideration for learners’ feelings in terms of error correction?	√	√	√
5	Provide for a variety of interaction opportunities, in whole class, closed and open pairwork settings?	X	X	√
6	Use activities that contain an information gap?	X	X	√
7	Give learners control over the language they use to achieve their goals?	X	X	√
8	Provide plenty of speaking practice for all learners?	X	X	√

As can be seen from the table, notwithstanding Fawziya’s strong pronouncements about the need to provide meaningful speaking practice in pairs and groups (5.6, 5.8, above), there was no evidence of this in the first two lessons. However, in the third

lesson, as I have argued (in 5.13, above), there was clear evidence she could teach in a learner-centred and communicative way.

Fawziya reflected deeply on this lesson (5.14-15, above), and “in an interesting way” on her use of a CT in an assignment (5.17, above). Learning how to research her own practice had supported her efforts to do this (5.11, 5.15, 5.18, above).

In every aspect I have examined of Fawziya’s PK in relation to CTs there is evidence of growth; in her identification of learners’ communicative needs, in her design and use of CTs, as well as in her reflections. Accordingly, I expected more positive statements when I sought to elicit her self-efficacy beliefs (Table 5.2), but Fawziya hedges frequently (with academic caution?), complaining of the difficulties, perhaps sometimes almost overwhelmed by the challenges imposed by the context, but with the drive to continue and the memories of students ‘happy’ and developing through CTs. When one examines her statements for content, as I have done in answering RQ1, growth in her reported self-efficacy is discernible.

Clearly Fawziya was justified in claiming that she had a lot of ideas to facilitate the planning process (FI.7). Of areas in which she initially indicated lower self-efficacy (Table 5.2), documentary analysis and observational data suggest that she learned to make the materials she produced more physically attractive (cf. FA.4 and FA.6) and could overcome the challenges of using groupwork to develop speaking skills (FO.3).

RQ3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in her PK and self-efficacy in using CTs, and how?

As a student, Fawziya had characteristics that made her open to learning. She listened, participated actively, built co-operative relationships (5.1, above) read widely and tried to put ideas she had picked up on the course into practice to transform her teaching (5.6, above). She was supported in doing this by the practical elements of the course; loop input during day release sessions (5.4, above), observed teaching practice (5.5, 5.13, above), and practical assignments that encouraged her to create and evaluate CTs (5.3-4, 5.9, 5.16, above). She received feedback on lessons (5.6, 5.14-15, above), on assignments (5.9, above) and had tutorials that mediated this (5.11, above).

Some of the course content was very influential. Input on children's characteristics and the communicative approach triggered powerful childhood memories, reshaping her beliefs (5.2-3, above). Subsequent teaching experiences and her first attempts to research her own practice reinforced this. So, learning girls did not like English because of the teacher's behaviour (5.8, above) and seeing they enjoyed English when engaged in communicative activities (5.6, above) affected her deeply.

Fawziya's knowledge of CTs, speaking and listening processes, materials design increased throughout the course with the help of a succession of modules (5.3-4, 5.9, 5.11, 5.16, above). Her ideas about CTs were initially quite simple, focusing on the key concepts of information gap and communicative purpose (5.4, 5.6, above). By May 2004, though, her understanding, drawing on fresh input related to processes of development, was deeper (5.9, above), and she learned to use concepts from the TS&L module to construct more complex CTs (5.9, 5.13, above) and analyse the learners' speech produced (5.15, 5.17, above). In February 2005, she could draw on input, too, from the TG&V module to justify CTs (5.11, above), while the MDD module, particularly for input on authenticity, seems to have further helped her understanding of this topic (5.16, above). These modules built on one another, deepening her understanding, supported in this by the research strand of the programme, which gave her the tools to observe and evaluate her practice (5.11, above).

All these aspects of the course contributed to the growth of Fawziya's PK and self-efficacy in using CTs. The processes involved were quite complex, though. Crucial to the growth of her self-efficacy was the resolution of tensions (Freeman, 1993) that were created by her new beliefs, driving her to use communicative methodology, colliding with her established practices. After teaching English for 12 years, Fawziya was confronted, early in the course, by the realization that the methods she had been using were not conducive to the development of speaking skills. She therefore felt she needed to reinvent herself as a teacher, which plunged her into an uncertain world in which she wanted to involve the learners in speaking freely, but found it difficult to think of information gap activities and difficult even to organize the learners to work in pairs (Table 5.2). The self-efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2001) that she experienced in

using CTs were stimulated by input from early methodology modules that made her aware of new possibilities and by the encouragement to reflect on learning experiences embedded in the course design. She was sustained through these doubts by her belief in the value of CTs, positive memories of using them (Table 5.2), moral responsibility orientations (Ames & Ames, 1984), including her concern for the welfare of the learners, affective factors such as my encouragement (5.3, above) and a general level of self-confidence in her teaching ability that was supported by positive appraisals over many years (5.8, above).

The course then provided her with many opportunities to revisit CTs through which her self-efficacy grew. Positive teaching experiences, encouraging feedback, a growing understanding of theory and a deepening ability to research her own practice all supported this.

Chapter 6: Waleed's story – enhancing motivation through materials design

6.1 Introduction

Waleed was a bright, ambitious English teacher in his late twenties when I met him in December 2002. He had qualified to join Cohort 4 of the BA Programme by securing a good score in IELTS, which brought his studies forward by three years. He was really keen to start (WI.1). His career to date had been spent in a rural backwater, a rather shabby boys' school surrounded by farms, far from the regional capital, where he taught a limited range of Grades 4-6 of OWTE. Waleed had been educated at the school and still lived in a local village.

Though fairly quiet initially, he was insightful when he contributed to whole-class discussions, and gradually I asked Waleed to take on more responsibility, e.g.; in presenting a group's ideas, which he did well. As the course progressed, he grew in confidence, perhaps influenced by success, as he obtained high grades. Though naturally shy (WA.1), Waleed helped others, often advising friends on course content and study strategies, as I learned while asking students about cooperation within the group (WN.1). In private discussions, I found him expansive.

The first time I saw Waleed teach, I was struck by his use of materials (WO.1), and afterwards by his concern about motivating learners (WI.1), a concern accentuated by input he had received through the Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL) module. Later, he decided to focus in his dissertation on enhancing motivation through materials design, arguing that motivation was essential for learning (WA.6). He felt he could fulfil his "responsibility to motivate" (WI.2) through an appropriate use of materials (WA.6). I became interested in investigating changes he reported in his self-efficacy (TSE) beliefs in enhancing motivation through materials design, in discovering the extent to which these changes reflected changes in his practical knowledge (PK), and in ascertaining which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced these changes, and how.

I will tell Waleed's story according to the methodological principles outlined in Chapter 4 (above), addressing research questions at the end of the chapter. I start by describing one of his lessons to provide insights into Waleed's use of materials to enhance motivation and learning.

6.2 A snapshot of Waleed using materials creatively – October 2004

“Good morning, Class 6! What topic did we study yesterday? Ani ... yes, animals.” Waleed had their attention and focused it on the poster of a dinosaur, on the wall at the back of the classroom. This looked as if it had been produced by one of the learners, as homework perhaps, in recent weeks. From the poster, he elicited parts of the body; “legs, tail, yes, a short or a long tail? Very good, and what's this? The neck, yes, a short or a long neck?” He was eliciting quickly, holding their attention. “What do we have here? Horns. Yes.” It was a triceratops. “Two long horns.” The focus then switched to the front of the classroom, as Waleed produced a colourful page of animal stickers and elicited names; tiger, horse, camel. “Tell me some other animals.” They brainstormed another 10 or 15 (WO.3).

Waleed then set up a word search activity, holding up an A3 sheet at the front of the class, instructing and demonstrating. “In your groups I want you to find animals' names and circle them.” Hidden amongst the letters were the names of animals learned in the previous lesson and the previous year. “There is one word in each line.” The learners worked in groups, each group with a large A3 sheet so that they could do it together. ‘Were the groups a little large for the activity?’, I wondered at the time, but then noted a widespread eagerness to participate, with no evidence of off-task behaviour. On the contrary, even those who found it difficult to do so looked as if they were trying to see, “all huddled over task”, I wrote. After sufficient time, Waleed brought the activity to a close, and feedback was done on the whiteboard. The group that found most words was rewarded with the page of animal stickers to share between them (WO.3).

Waleed then held up a flashcard showing an oryx in the wild. (This flashcard, which would have come with the course materials on plain white card, had been partially coloured in with pencil.) He elicited features, “Yes, it's got short horns and small ears”, demonstrating the difference in meaning between ‘small’ and ‘short’, as he did

so. “This is an oryx”, he told them, recapping and starting to build up a description. Through eliciting, prompting, providing support and writing up sentences on the whiteboard as he got the information, he then established: “It is black and white. It has long legs. It has a long tail.” Waleed then described a few animals orally, without naming them, “it has long ears and a short tail, it is ...”, inviting the class to guess. “A goat?” (WO.3).

There followed, to consolidate this oral activity, a second groupwork activity, this involving one learner, with the others’ help, in filling in gaps to complete sentences in the description of an animal on an A3 worksheet. Waleed had created this worksheet by adapting a students’ book page from the previous semester, tippexing information out to encourage thinking. Interest did not seem as high from the outset, though, and towards the end, as the time limit Waleed had set was exceeded, attention flagged further, with only a few learners in each group involved (WO.3).

After organizing feedback on this, Waleed picked the lesson up again. The focus shifted back to the front of the classroom, as he returned to the oryx, eliciting its habitat, and writing ‘It lives in the desert’ on the whiteboard. Next, he asked which animals live in the desert, in rivers, on farms and in the mountains, eliciting camels, snakes, fish, cows, goats. This information provided the last input required for a guessing game, involving a learner describing a picture on an activity card drawn at random, and a peer guessing which animal was being described; giraffe, elephant, hippo, fox. Several sets of open pairs did this at the front of the class. One boy could not guess ‘crocodile’, and the answer was thrown open, to one of the raised hands. Waleed gave homework, reading about the animals, as preparation for a development of the game in the next lesson (WO.3).

6.3 Thinking over this use of materials: What did he do differently?

October 2004, twenty-one months into the BA Programme - I marvelled afterwards at the extent to which this OWTE Grade 6 lesson had differed from that suggested in the teachers’ book. In the recommended procedures, the oryx flashcard was prominent, together with extended drills designed to help the learners internalise the grammatical structures.

Waleed had used the oryx and had taught the structures, but had also provided substantially more variation. He had used learners' work (a poster, part of the classroom environment) to elicit from, and had brought in a page of animal stickers purchased cheaply (for 100 baises) from a nearby shop. He had used his computer to design a word search activity, produced a worksheet that was an adaptation of a students' book page from the previous semester, and enlarged both onto A3 paper for groupwork activities that were his idea. Old discarded copies of students' books had been cut up, with their pictures used as activity cards in the open pairwork at the end of the lesson (WI.4).

While this use of materials had generally been motivating, not everything succeeded. The second groupwork activity disappointed Waleed, as the solitary learner writing in each group tended to dominate. To increase participation, could he have switched roles during the activity, so that other learners in each group also had a chance to write, I suggested, or could the worksheets have been cut up so that they had a sentence or two each? (WI.4). If the latter, this would also have saved time for more speaking practice later in the lesson.

Despite this, there were many positives, and together we identified learning outcomes. The first groupwork activity had encouraged learners to scan quickly, with their eyes moving from left to right searching for meaning. It had also revised vocabulary, heightened awareness of spelling and been good for social skills, encouraging cooperation. The game with activity cards, which could be done in closed pairs or groups, set up for the next lesson through open pairwork in this, appeared to promise a motivating chance to interact communicatively (WI.4).

I was impressed by the materials, both those Waleed had designed (the word search) and those he otherwise made use of (the learner's poster, the animal stickers). This was the third lesson I had seen him teach, and, in materials design, was the most adventurous so far. Yet it also seemed to follow a pattern in the way he used materials.

In the first observed lesson, in October 2003, he had made his own word cards, cut out pictures from an old book to make activity cards for open pairwork, and created

an A3 worksheet for groupwork by taking a coursebook consolidation exercise from later in the unit and editing out a structure the learners had not yet covered. He had also taken flashcards from later in the course, showing characters the learners had not met yet and did not have any information about, for a speaking activity in groups (WI.1). Waleed's self-efficacy in using materials already appeared high.

A year later, teaching the lesson on animals described (in 6.2) above, was he more efficacious? Perhaps his October 2004 lesson design was more creative, owing less to the teachers' book. Perhaps, it was also more memorable, influencing my decision to describe it at length. However, I cannot argue that outwardly his teaching had changed very much, as his use of materials in October 2004 was consistent with his use of them a year earlier. Waleed had clearly developed as a materials designer since the start of his career, but much of the development seemed to have occurred before the research period.

6.4 The role of experience in Waleed's development as a materials designer

Waleed's approach to materials design was rooted in his experience. "In the first year of my teaching" (1994/5), he told me, "I tried to follow the teachers' book and the procedures there. I tried to use the materials, follow the instructions, follow the procedures, but after two years I discovered that there is a problem with these materials" (WI.5). He had noticed that the children learned "very well" in Grade 4, during their first year of learning English, but when they moved to Grade 5 they "forgot everything" (WI.3). At the beginning, the pupils had "liked the materials", the flashcards and word cards, but then "disappointment" set in as the same materials were used "every year and with every lesson". Different pictures were used, but it was always: "flashcards, word cards, flashcards, word cards" (WI.5), and the activities were repetitive, "flashcards, word cards, making sentences, that's all for the story" or the teacher would introduce flashcards with word cards and students would "just match them and try to read what the teacher wrote on the board" (WI.3). So motivation and learning suffered.

Before attending the BA course, Waleed had sensed it would be "good to change", but why exactly, what, how? In retrospect, he did not have "enough knowledge" for what could be done to adapt lessons, what should be focused on, "what are the logical

procedures” (WI.1). On occasion, he had tried different techniques and activities, and some had “worked well”, which encouraged him to use them again and again. However, on encountering problems in materials design, he “gave up” because he “didn’t have another choice, another thing to do” (WI.8).

In several important ways, the BA Programme supported growth in his PK, helping Waleed develop awareness of young learners’ characteristics and needs, particularly in the first year (2003), and acquire analytical skills required for designing and evaluating materials that could be motivating. I explore these influences below.

6.5 Waleed’s heightened awareness of the learners

Waleed felt he had always been a caring teacher, building good relationships with learners:

Young children always like their teacher, if the teacher works hard and considers their abilities and needs, they like their teacher, and are always asking about the teacher, if the teacher’s absent; ‘where’s Mr Waleed?’, ‘where’s our teacher?’, ‘when he will come?’, ‘what’s happened to him?’ (WI.2).

If they had problems and became “demotivated”, he tried to change this. “Sometimes I sit with them and I tell them about their level, ‘you are good in English, what’s happened to you? Why you don’t participate in the class?’” If the learners responded well, he could help them, but some were too shy to talk and he called their fathers to the school, learning sometimes of social problems or health issues. By taking an interest in learners, he developed good relationships with the boys’ families, who appreciated his efforts. “This teacher’s a helpful teacher”, fathers told their children: “he can help you if you have any problem, talk to him” (WI.2).

However, although he believed he had always been a caring teacher, Waleed reported that his understanding of young learners before the course was limited:

We didn’t know that much how to care about our students in the class and to look for their instincts, what they need from us and also to focus on their abilities. Before that just we teach them and we deal them as children, but ... they have special needs and special abilities and they need special activities according to their needs and abilities (WI.2).

As a result, he had found the first methodology module, TEYL, “the most interesting”. Children “need TPR activities, they need fun activities, enjoyable

activities. They want to come out to say something even if they use their Arabic.” The module “opened up many things in our minds about the children” (WI.1).

Other modules were influential too, including LAL. This provided input on motivation, “a very important aspect of learning” he had not known that much about before (WI.6). “Now I know”, he told me,

how children, how people acquire language and learn language, what they need to do this ... what kind of strategies they use ... also the stages they go through to learn and to acquire the language, but before we think that learning comes from the teacher and comes from the books (WI.2).

He scaffolded learners’ efforts in different ways now, influenced by Tasks and LAL. Before, he had over-supported learners, but now knew how to balance demands and support (WI.1). There were changes, too, in the comprehensible input he provided, influenced by TEYL. He had used too much Arabic before, but now knew “that using English 90% or 95%” would actually help students more (WI.1).

For his LAL assignment, submitted in December 2003, Waleed focused on the affective filter (Krashen, 1982), investigating how it affected learners and trying to help them. He focused on strategies, such as encouraging learners with praise, rewarding them as “young pupils do not yet have powerful intrinsic motivation to learn”, and caring, creating “an environment of trust”, as he established good relationships. Reflecting on his efforts to lower the affective filter, Waleed concluded:

It is my opinion that this hypothesis has a merit [in] directing teachers’ attention to the need for varied and interesting input, to the need to take care over ... error-correction, [provide] meaningful communication and ... a learner-centred classroom that encourages learning, rather than punishes failure (WA.2).

The marker, in awarding him a high ‘B’, liked his focus on care, saying: “far too few teachers are aware of their pupils’ backgrounds”, and praised his “wise decision to focus on the things the teacher can do to help” (WF.2). This was Waleed; caring, practical, positive and trying to motivate learners through creating trust. Learner-sensitive methods were a means of enhancing motivation.

6.6 Waleed’s heightened consciousness in designing and evaluating materials

Learning more about appropriate methods for teaching young learners increased Waleed’s dissatisfaction with the coursebook. “There are no motivating activities and

no fun in the lessons”, he told me in April 2004. “There is no need to use the language because it’s in the textbook, it’s already from the teacher, from the textbook, taught by the teacher, so... so now, we understand the benefits of adapting and changing”, he concluded (WI.3). As well as understanding this, he felt he could justify his adaptations if he was asked to explain them. “Now I can change and I can also tell why I changed ... and the inspectors can’t, I mean, force me to follow the teachers’ book procedures as before” (WI.1).

From where had growth in his PK come? “We have the two things” now to draw upon, Waleed reported in November 2003, not just experience in the classroom but also the BA. Using these together, he had developed his ideas and knowledge “about children’s needs and abilities and also about the curriculums and how to adapt them”. In the process, his self-confidence had increased (WI.2). A month earlier, in October 2003, he told me:

Of course, now I can apply different techniques from BA programme, the activities which have been done on the BA course during summer school, day release. I learned many things from that, how I can adapt my activity, how I can focus on preparing my students for the core activity and what’s the suitable follow up for my students, according to the task and the level. So I learned many things, especially from the day release, how I can adapt activities, not just focusing on the textbook (WI.1).

Clearly, the Tasks module, in particular, had been influential. In the same interview, though, Waleed also told me that while he could “increase the procedures”, and therefore had new ideas he could apply, he could not evaluate himself (WI.1). By October 2004, just one year later, this had changed. He told me then:

I am a teacher but also I am an observer. I can assess myself, if I do well or not. Sometimes, after some lessons, I think today it’s a very bad lesson, before I feel it’s OK, no problem, valid or not. It’s OK for me, I completed the lesson and all pupils behaved well. But now I can assess myself. Yes, I completed the exercises or the activities in the coursebook and I finished, I covered all the objectives and lesson plan but I feel it’s not a good lesson. I didn’t do well in that lesson. I know why, I know the reason sometimes. I didn’t, I mean, prepare well, I didn’t put some clear objectives for my lesson and sometimes the materials were not useful really in the lesson. So I can assess myself now. So when you assess yourself, you can see if you are changed or not (WI.4).

In Waleed’s language here, I can detect influences of both the Researching TESOL and Assessing Children’s Language Learning (ACLL) modules, both of which he had received input on in the 2004 summer school in Leeds.

6.7 The challenges of adapting materials in his context – October 2004

Waleed felt more autonomous in planning and evaluating his use of learning materials. At the same time, however, contextual factors made the process of adapting materials challenging. “Teaching is not easy, not an easy job for anyone”, Waleed told me after we had discussed the lesson on animals described (in 6.2) above. “All the teachers say it’s very hard, very difficult, especially when you find yourself doing very complicated assessment sheets and many things which you have to do.” There were many responsibilities in the school that caused stress and sometimes he felt like giving up.

We feel tired. We don’t want to do more. This is the coursebook. We have to teach the students from the coursebook. It’s not our fault, not our, I mean, I am not the one who made this coursebook, who designed this coursebook. If it’s OK, the pupils will learn, if it’s not, it’s not my fault. I will try my best, but to adapt and to bring some materials from outside, I mean to spend my money on teaching, and also you won’t find good response from the school and from the inspectors, even from the pupils, some pupils (WI.4).

Some pupils compared him to other teachers, who had

another style, I mean just completing the course and the exercises, so they will feel something unfamiliar, but sometimes when they see the exercises, the activities are enjoyable and good, I mean, sometimes they are motivated but not always (WI.4).

About the other teachers in the school he told me that many did not like teaching anymore:

They gave up for many reasons, for salaries, for the coursebooks, the designed coursebooks, very old coursebooks... they taught these coursebooks more than 14 years, nothing changed, and also for the school situation. Many teachers also say that it’s not suitable to teach in this kind of situation, I mean more than 40 pupils in one class, difficult to control them, difficult to teach them well, difficult to check homework, many tests you have to do at your home (WI.4).

Sometimes he felt despondent, “when I see the other classes beside me, no-one teaching, they are just working to complete their plan and I am the only one who works hard.” Nevertheless, he went on, “for me, still I can do something good, but sometimes, I mean, I don’t know about these teachers, what’s happening in our school” (WI.4).

He was also critical of the school, which he described as “not organized well, not managed well” (WI.4), with the administration focused more on paperwork than people. When I had arrived that morning in October 2004, the headmaster had been

talking at length to the boys at assembly. He had looked quite serious, sombre. Waleed explained afterwards that a Grade 2 boy had been run over the day before, rushing out from behind a bus, killed by a car coming the other way. The young learners must be in shock, feeling “very frightened”, Waleed told me. There would be no counselling for them, though, and no one would speak to their class or visit their homes (WN.1). Waleed was concerned about their feelings.

Professional support also left something to be desired. Waleed reported a conflict with an inspector six months earlier. He had been planning a reading lesson around a narrative, and tried to use some ideas from the Stories module. The teachers’ book frustrated him, “just focusing on how to make sentences. Even they don’t read the sentences, just see the picture and the verbs, match the picture with the verbs. I tried to make it better for my students.” He wanted his learners “to predict and to imagine” what would happen in the story. This was difficult, though, because it was written in the coursebook. “So how to make it a story?”, he went on. “It’s not a story, but the coursebook says it’s a story” (WI.4). He created and taught his own story to increase motivation and learning, but the inspector, who was observing, refused to accept this.

He said, ‘it is not a good technique in teaching reading,’ and we had an argument for more than 30 minutes. I told him that I studied this and someone said this. He said, ‘this is something from the past. Please!’ He told me to see what the procedures said in the teachers’ book (WI.4).

Waleed did not give up, though, firmly believing that “teaching young learners involves more than only teaching the language”. By providing suitable materials that stimulated learners in visual, auditory and kinaesthetic ways as they processed input, he felt he might be increasing their motivation. He had noticed that when he had been creative in designing materials, pupils seemed to participate better, and were more “attracted and engaged” (WA.4). Was this due to the materials? If so, could he help the other teachers in his school use materials more effectively, I asked him? (WI.4). He had noticed that the materials provided for English teaching, the flashcards and the word cards, were often left lying around in the staff room, sometimes “thrown” in the corner, unused apparently by some English teachers, but picked up by other subject teachers and used for other purposes (WA.4). What use did other English teachers make of materials, in fact? If their use of them was inadequate, as they had lacked training, could he help them use materials more effectively, in the process, perhaps,

improving their motivation? (WI.4). Waleed decided, after this October 2004 discussion, to research these questions for his dissertation, due in December the following year, and prepared a proposal accordingly (WA.4).

6.8 Planning his research: How to motivate teachers and learners? – February 2005

When we discussed his research again, at the beginning of the next semester (February 2005), I suggested that some of the sources of the teachers' demotivation, relating to the school and curriculum, were outside his control. Waleed agreed, but argued that although it was not possible to change things completely,

you can do something, make something new, make using materials maybe easy for teachers, make the materials motivating for teachers to use. Even if they don't like teaching, when they find the materials facilitate teaching and make teaching easier, they will start to use (them) ... we can change something (WI.5).

For his research, Waleed planned to observe three teachers in his school and afterwards invite them to observe his action research, when he would "use different methods ... different techniques" in showing how materials could be used easily and creatively in a motivating way. After that, perhaps higher authorities could disseminate the research. "Maybe they can do a workshop and try to train the teachers and tell them the methods that some teachers find in their schools and how to use them." Could not he do some teacher training himself, I asked him? Waleed explained he would need a special course to allow him to advise teachers. He was not a SET and lacked training and experience in doing workshops. However, by inviting the three teachers to observe his lesson, he conceded he was helping them "indirectly" (WI.5), although he sounded cautious.

'How could materials be used easily and creatively?', I asked. Each year, he reported, teachers received supplies, including flashcards and word cards in black ink on plain white card. These could be organized and stored safely, with accompanying activity cards cut up and flashcards coloured in. Then, realia could be used to supplement course materials, to "add interest" and encourage connections "with real life". Pupils' creations could be used, especially when learners needed to make things such as "a fort or a house". Pupils' posters on display, making "a rich environment", could be referred to when teaching vocabulary or verbs. Materials from other coursebooks,

such as flashcards from EFM, could encourage imagination. Technology could help, with the teacher creating exercises electronically or taking learners to the library to use computers there. There were also tape recorders (WI.5).

What else had he told me about his use of materials? I went through observation notes of the three lessons observed since October 2003, and transcripts of post-lesson discussions. He had used materials for games to “encourage” and “motivate”, as information gaps to help learners “imagine”, “speak”, “gain confidence”, as word searches, as ordering and matching activities in groups to help learners “participate”, “share”, “correct each other”, “work quickly”, “use their eyes”, “think”, “find”, “read”, “remember”, “sequence”(WO.1-3, WI.1-4). His easy and creative use of materials to stimulate his students seemed principled, knowledgeable, and he spoke about it efficaciously, although he sounded less sure about supporting other teachers.

6.9 Carrying out his research: teaching and reflecting - April 2005

Two months later, I visited Waleed’s school to see at firsthand his action research into his use of materials to enhance motivation. The Grade 6 lesson would be observed by two teachers, besides myself, as well as a ‘cameraman’ equipped with a video-recorder. I was asked to focus on the learners’ levels of participation, engagement and motivation, and was given an observation tool for this purpose.

The lesson objectives were to revise prepositions of place and give learners practice in both listening to identify location and practice in describing this. Further objectives were to help them structure descriptions using ‘there is’ and ‘there are’, and retrieve vocabulary items to do with the kitchen. To support these objectives, Waleed had prepared various materials. These included

- a hand-drawn poster of a bedroom (coloured on white card)
- A3 sheets depicting a half-empty fishing village, with envelopes containing pictures of buildings to be stuck to these with blu-tack
- a self-recorded taped description of the village
- a yellow poster depicting hand-drawn kitchen objects, together with handwritten word cards
- A3 sheets of a kitchen, with boxed labels

- a hand-drawn poster of a kitchen
- coursebook pictures of a kitchen

Students had made the word cards and the posters. Producing the A3 sheets and pictures in envelopes had involved Waleed in copying, cutting and pasting (WI.6).

How would he use these materials and why? To facilitate an analysis, I present my description side by side with his reflections, in the table below.

Table 6.1: My description of Waleed's use of materials in this April 2005 lesson and his reflections afterwards

Step	My description	Waleed's reflections
1	Many students were eager to contribute as Waleed revised recently learned prepositions of place. Numerous hands went up as he pointed to the poster of the bedroom on the whiteboard. "Where's the picture?" he asked. "It's above the bed" came the accurate answer.	He used a poster rather than the book, which had a similar picture, to make sure that everyone was paying attention, looking at the picture rather than somewhere else, focusing so that "they know where exactly the object is" when they hear another child describe it.
2	Waleed held up an A3 sheet of a half-empty fishing village (with buildings and boats washed away?), and asked; "What happened to my village?" sadly.	Waleed described this as: "a creative idea, a new idea. I didn't do this before." He had adapted a page from the Grade 5 coursebook, removing nearly everything from the village except the mosque, but leaving the beach and the sea. By asking sadly what had happened to the village, he might have given them the idea that "maybe a tsunami or something" had hit it.
3	Next, he distributed envelopes, containing pictures depicting different buildings and objects such as boats one would expect to find in a fishing village, and got the learners to name them in groups. He then elicited what they could see, checking vocabulary.	This was in preparation for the listening, when they would find out "where to put these objects in the village". Waleed had made the tape himself, scripting the sentences and recording his voice.
4	He introduced the listening activity, which would involve the learners in reconstructing the village, affixing objects to the right place. The learners' levels of participation, engagement and interest seemed high, to judge from the way they responded	He had demonstrated the listening activity, Waleed recalled, by putting an A3 sheet of the village on the whiteboard, playing a segment of the tape for a sentence telling him where something was and putting the picture of the object in the right place. Several

	<p>to him and worked with each other. Body language was generally very positive. The learners cooperated well together, listening and checking their answers, very focused on the task as he monitored, helping. They were using a lot of English. 'Behind the school, behind the school', I heard one boy sitting near me say urgently to his group.</p>	<p>examples had helped the learners "understand the task". The sticking on of pictures had been easy, as Waleed had prepared this, quickly putting blu-tack on each picture "to save time." During the activity, he had repeated some sentences while monitoring to reduce the level of difficulty, he reported, and to give learners more exposure to the phrases 'there is' and 'there are', and to the prepositions.</p>
5	<p>Waleed checked answers by getting group representatives to come forward one by one to present their A3 sheet to the class. To help focus them here, he contributed utterances such as the following; "There is a fort in the middle of the village, yes or no?" There was clapping, but he insisted they listen, look and evaluate carefully.</p>	<p>Waleed said he had been concerned that while checking some pupils were not looking carefully. "So, I told them 'Please look carefully at the pictures. Are they in the correct positions?' I tried, I mean, to help them see the pictures."</p>
6	<p>The focus then switched to the kitchen. Waleed used the yellow poster of hand-drawn kitchen objects to elicit from, and then word cards to help the learners retrieve the written forms. Then a groupwork activity involved the learners in labelling kitchen objects on an A3 picture, taking words from a box. Engagement and motivation seemed high, although, as throughout the lesson, there were very few smiles, perhaps as a result of the presence of the video camera.</p>	<p>Learners had produced the poster and the word cards, as project work the week before. Waleed invariably encouraged them "to try to do something" outside the lesson to practise or consolidate their English. The A3 sheet of the kitchen for the labelling activity was from a practice unit in the book. He had enlarged it for groupwork use so that "the good students in the group" would help the weaker ones.</p>
7	<p>Waleed checked answers to the labelling activity briefly, and then focused on a hand-drawn poster of a kitchen he fixed to the whiteboard. He recycled high frequency and familiar vocabulary in the poster, such as the fruit on the table, did pronunciation work on the /p/ of the pen also in the picture, wrote the structures 'there is / are' on the board, and encouraged descriptions such as; "There is an orange on the table".</p>	<p>After using this poster (also made by students) to elicit familiar vocabulary items quickly, Waleed had worked on the pronunciation of /p/ and /b/, "because, as you know, Arabic students have difficulties" distinguishing between them, and revised grammar, checking their understanding. "So pupils told me that we use 'there is' with the singular, and we use 'there are' with the plural."</p>
8	<p>The learners then opened their books and described the picture in front of</p>	<p>He had asked them to talk about the pictures in groups, as with 43 students</p>

	them in pairs and groups. Only at this point, when the bell rang, did attention start to waver (WO.4).	in the class, it would have been difficult to bring them all to the front. Using groupwork gave them more chance to speak and learn from each other (WI.6).
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I was impressed by this lesson, clearly structured as a task containing preparation, ‘core’ and follow-up elements (Cameron, 2001), and designed to overcome deficiencies in the course materials. In the coursebook, controlled practice describing the location of objects in a bedroom (Step 1) led directly into controlled practice describing a kitchen (Step 8). It lacked ‘core’ communicative activities, Waleed argued, and so, in this instance, he supplied a core listening (Steps 2-5), influenced by the modules; Tasks, and Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), which emphasised the need for such activities. This task provided a familiar context, given that, post-Asian tsunami, Waleed’s school was not that far from the sea. It also supplied an information gap, provided input for acquisition, and involved the learners in an interesting ‘while listening’ activity, reconstructing a village. It was organized in an appropriate way, with clear instructions, careful monitoring and checking, and varied interaction, including groupwork. The materials created for the listening and for the lesson as a whole were attractive, easy to prepare (with the help of the learners, who may have felt more involved as a result), easy to use, and seemed to facilitate motivation and learning at every step. I would have liked to see the follow-up (Step 8) include a more meaningful speaking activity, but could see the value of drawing the attention of the learners to the coursebook. In design, this was the most adventurous of the four lessons I had seen. I thought it brave, too, to try out a new idea, the core listening activity, in the presence of so many observers. This was an efficacious act.

6.10 Carrying out his research: observing and reflecting further - April 2005

What about the criteria he had asked me to focus on while observing; the learners’ levels of participation, engagement and motivation? What did he think? Their participation was “fine”, he told me, despite the presence of three observers and a video camera. He suggested several reasons for this. Firstly, I had observed the same class the previous year, and was therefore not a total stranger to them. Secondly, the teachers observing were from the same school and were thus familiar figures. Thirdly, the video had been used on a previous occasion to help the boys adjust. Waleed was

pleased with the participation, noting the learners were able to use English as they worked in groups, and responded well. “If they don’t understand, they won’t participate.” Furthermore, they had been engaged throughout, focusing on the task rather than “shouting at each other, looking at their books, drawing” (WI.6).

As regards ascertaining their levels of motivation, Waleed argued that in not all lessons can pupils “smile and laugh about the lesson because not all lessons are fun”, but nevertheless “you can see” if they like the materials, if they want to “answer the teacher’s questions”, if they are interested in “asking each other, ‘What does this mean?’, ‘How should we write?’ or ‘How should we complete the task?’.” “So pupils’ attention will be on the teacher, if they like the task, if they are motivated to answer the teacher’s questions. You can see from their eyes, if they feel bored or they are interested in the posters”. If they feel motivated, “they will focus on the task, they will pay attention with the teacher, they will try to answer, they will try to complete, they will try to imagine something different, they want also to finish before the others” (WI.6).

Judging from these criteria, Waleed felt that the learners’ motivation had been high, and was pleased with the materials. They had captured attention, added variety and interest, were well sequenced, and supported understanding. I agreed with him here (WI.6).

6.11 Carrying out his research: Trying to motivate the other teachers

What had the other observers thought of the lesson (these teachers who Waleed had suspected a few months earlier did not use materials much at all)? How had his observations of their lessons been? One had been teaching a grammar lesson, Waleed told me. He had not used any materials; no flashcards, no word cards, “even he didn’t use any realia” apart from classroom objects “maybe once or twice”. The learners had not understood the grammar. It was difficult for them “to guess even the rule or the structure at the beginning”, and they were asked to complete the exercise without having had enough practice, enough explanation. Motivation in the class seemed low, Waleed reported, and the teacher also seemed dispirited. Afterwards, though, he told Waleed that he liked materials. They were very useful. “So, why didn’t you use

them?” Waleed asked. “He said, ‘it’s not necessary today. Today, it’s about teaching grammar, so it’s not necessary’. So”, Waleed continued,

I wondered why teachers don’t use materials during the class, and yet they have the idea that materials are useful for their lessons, for supporting learning. Maybe ... it’s not easy for teachers to make materials... and they don’t know how to use the materials, how to produce the materials, what kind of techniques they should follow with these materials (WI.6).

One had indicated that the problem was that they had not had any training in using materials. They did not even know very much about the kinds of materials that pupils liked and found interesting (WI.6).

Observing Waleed’s lesson was beneficial to them. One said there were “many good ideas he could try by himself”. They had liked the materials he had used, and seen how “involved” the pupils were (WI.7). However, this was a modest intervention, Waleed felt (WI.8), and perhaps the influence he could have was limited, particularly given the contextual factors described (in 6.7) above. Nevertheless, this was the first time he had encouraged other teachers to learn from him through peer observation, and the lesson had gone very well. Given that successful concrete experiences can enhance self-efficacy, I felt this one would make him more efficacious in supporting other teachers in the same way in future.

He was also helped in this by promotion to SET a few months later. While before it had been difficult to set up observations as he had a crowded teaching schedule, now (from September 2005) it would be easier, easier, too, with his new authority, to “discuss many aspects of teaching... how to use materials, what kind of techniques” could be used “to improve materials.” “Of course this is a good chance for me”, he continued,

to present something for the teachers, something I have learned from my research, from my BA course. It will be easy to speak and to talk to them about what I have learned and what I think they should follow in their teaching (WI.7).

As well as observing lessons and organizing feedback on these, he did, in fact, present two workshops in the 2005/6 academic year, one on research and one on using materials; successful experiences, which again benefited his self-efficacy in supporting other teachers. Still, though, there was much to do (WI.8). Ideally, the

teachers needed training courses as well to support their development (WA.6). In December 2005, one of them joined the BA Programme with Cohort 6.

6.12 Influences of the BA Programme on Waleed's development in designing materials

What training in materials design had Waleed received on the course? “Many modules” had given him ideas, he told me in May 2005 (WN.1). Tasks was particularly influential (6.6, above), the “most useful”, he reported in November 2003. “It gave me a clear idea about how I should organize my teaching” (WI.2). Practical assignments helped, though he did not do that well in Tasks, getting a ‘C’, as his core activity was too “complicated” (WF.1). He did better for TS&L the following year, producing “a well-described communicative activity” (WF.3), in getting a ‘B’ (‘Very Good’). Ideas he had tried to implement in his school included “using communicative tasks, using games” (WI.4). There was not a module specifically devoted to materials, though, before the 2005 summer school when Waleed took the optional module, Materials Design and Development (MDD). He found this very useful, liking the way it built on others he had studied earlier in the course, such as Tasks and TS&L (WN.1).

The influence of these modules was very evident in the fifth of Waleed's lessons I observed, in September 2005. This was structured as a communicative task (CT). The aims were to get pupils to ask and answer questions about people; name, age, job, place of origin and place of residence. Materials central to the core activity were photos of family members the learners had brought in. After focusing questions asked whole-class, the preparation activity involved unscrambling jumbled up questions, such as ‘name is What his?’ in groups. There was a worksheet for this, and then, for checking, a poster giving the correct word order, on which he could highlight grammatical forms, if necessary. Then, for leading into the core activity, there was an enlarged photocopied picture from the activities' book, showing a character the learners were familiar with. This was for a rehearsal before the pupils' own photos were used. Follow-up was writing short descriptions, using a worksheet that provided sentence heads for support; e.g.; ‘His name is ...’ (WO.5).

Waleed was concerned about communicativeness. When reflecting on materials he had designed for this lesson, he pointed out that in the coursebook there was “just a picture and information and then some lines to get the pupils to write”, with a focus on producing grammatically correct sentences individually. There was therefore no indication as to how, where, why the learners should use the language. “So the first thing”, Waleed had considered, was “how to make it interesting for the pupils, how to create a purpose for the pupils to use the questions, to use the language inside the classroom, how to involve pupils to work together, to help each other.” Then they would be motivated. He wanted to develop not just their writing and their grammar, but also their speaking, which he felt was neglected. “Students need enough chances to talk and to interact with each other.” They already had “some knowledge about how to structure a question”, and in this lesson he wanted them to develop their speaking through using that knowledge “in a different situation, asking about” relatives. He had tried to create a meaningful context. “Pupils can imagine that they are sitting together, maybe at their homes or something like that, and one of them sees” a photo and asks questions. This was something that they might do in the real world, and he felt it was genuinely communicative and interesting (WI.7).

The language of the Tasks module was present in every one of the five post-lesson discussion interviews throughout the research period. Back in October 2003, Waleed described the first observed lesson as “just preparation activities” (6.3, above). His definition of a core activity then was fairly close to the language of the module;

communicative purpose and interaction, one or two way, between pupils or teacher and pupils, a clear beginning and end, and clear outcomes, which should ... get the students to relate to the social situation, social lives. A core should have usable language [that] can be used outside the class, not just classroom language (WI.1).

I thought at the time (October 2003) this definition a little inflexible. Waleed’s first lesson had included a groupwork activity calling on imagination, creativity and cooperation, which met the criteria of a core in many ways, though he did not seem to recognize this (WI.1). His definition may actually have limited his task design, for the first lesson could also have included closed pairwork to allow for more speaking practice. If this had incorporated a game-like information gap element, it could have usefully approximated a core without fully meeting all of Waleed’s criteria; specifically, without using real data from the learners’ social lives. Fortunately,

though, Waleed was soon using the term ‘core’ much more flexibly, after the second lesson to include a problem-solving cooperative groupwork activity that took place after preparation and before follow-up (WI.3).

Influenced by the Tasks module, the structuring of Waleed’s lessons seemed to develop. Like the first lesson, the third (6.3, above) involved mostly preparation activities and might have benefited from the inclusion of more speaking practice. The fourth and fifth lessons, though, were much better balanced. Waleed described the fourth in terms of the three-part structure of a CT (WI.6), and the fifth was also structured in this way.

Evidence of development in his structuring of lessons around CTs is also provided by his assignments. His TS&L task was criticized as “the main activity should really be longer than the setting-up; this is not the case here!” (WF.3). His MDD task, 18 months later, was much better balanced in this respect and the materials were praised. They “clearly demonstrate what you have learned from studying this module as they are carefully graded and sequenced and very well presented” (WF.5).

Other modules were clearly influential too, including Stories (6.7, above). Waleed’s design of a word search for the third lesson (6.2, above) had been influenced by the Technology in Language Learning (TILL) module studied in the 2004 Leeds summer school (WI.4), and his support for the writing follow-up in the fifth owed something to summer 2005 input on teaching this skill (WI.7). This latter activity was a good example, he felt, of the “effective but simple ideas the BA gave us”. These saved time and made it easier to overcome deficiencies in the course materials (WI.8). Finding “good techniques to go over the hard activities”, and so motivate learners to succeed, was a strength he identified in himself early in the course, one he felt the BA Programme developed (WI.2).

6.13 Waleed’s reflections on his personal development throughout the course

Analysing his own growth throughout the three years, Waleed reported, in September 2005, that one change was that he had developed a strong belief in the importance of providing enough opportunities for children to take on active roles in the classroom. If students were active, this would increase their motivation and their willingness to

learn (WI.7). I felt, though, this was evident in his practice early on. In the second lesson I observed, for example, there were four different groupwork activities (WO.2).

“The first time I came to your school”, I reminded Waleed, “I was struck by how active your lessons were”. “Maybe”, he said, “I tried by myself, but I couldn’t justify my work at that time.” Sometimes techniques worked, but he often was not sure what to do next and why. Now, he felt, he had a greater variety of choices available to him in the classroom, and he felt he could justify the decisions he made (WI.7).

I reminded him that, in a very early interview:

- I. You told me actually, you said I can’t evaluate myself and then in a more recent interview you said now I can.
- W. Things developed and changed throughout this course. Now I can evaluate myself, I mean, in terms of what I’m providing for my pupils, not evaluating my performance, how I’m doing in the classroom, but what I’m providing for the pupils, evaluating activities. Do the students like these activities, I mean, are they effective, do they relate to the pupils’ cultural context? So, I mean, my ideas developed about this. Before I think just evaluating myself, but now evaluating my teaching, and this is the point I think (WI.7).

Waleed also indicated that he could now examine the ideas of others more critically. Rather than just accepting ideas when processing academic text, now he had “some confidence to say that this is not completely true...not suitable or not related to our situation here” (WI.7).

From conducting research for his dissertation he had learned “many things...how to collect data, how to observe my students or myself and the other teachers, how to evaluate the materials, how to analyse them, how to interpret, how to make suggestions for the next cycle” (WI.7). “I learned that you have to put some criteria for observation. After that you can analyse very easily” (WI.8).

When collecting data for his LAL assignment in 2003, Waleed had observed a lesson “under false pretences – there are ethical rules that should be observed” (WF.2). He reminded me of this much later, in February 2005, when we were discussing his plan for observing the three teachers in his study. Waleed wanted to make sure his methods were ethical (WI.5). In the event, his dissertation was awarded a high ‘B’. “Your

research approach is appropriate for the questions and the research design and analysis are good”, the marker wrote (WF.6).

6.14 Towards the future

Waleed felt he had done many things to improve materials, but there were still technical problems in the schools that required teachers to be resourceful. “We try to make materials from what we have, because not all teachers can copy by themselves the papers for the students every time, every day. They need some support, they need some materials provided by the schools.” Limited school resources partly explained some of the decisions he made, such as his use of A3 sheets for groupwork (WI.7).

He felt optimistic that he could meet the challenges. “Of course, my knowledge about developing, about adapting, about producing materials has developed, from my research, from the modules that I studied, from my experience also with the pupils”, he continued (WI.7). His ability to design materials had developed very slowly, he felt, in the years before he joined the course, but then had accelerated very quickly in the first year of the programme (WI.8).

Waleed felt he had cause to be optimistic in September 2005. “Many inspectors think it’s better to just use what you have, follow the teachers’ book procedures”, but the Omani inspector who had been assigned to Waleed’s school for the past year, a Cohort 2 graduate, encouraged him to use materials creatively. Also, class sizes were getting smaller in preparation for the new Basic Education curriculum that would be phased in from the following year. And the school, itself, was being renovated, “with more facilities, materials, technology, extra rooms for the teachers” and more storage space. From that month, too, he had been promoted to SET, with all the possibilities that opened up for further supporting the school’s teachers (WI.7).

6.15 Discussion

I will now address my research questions with specific reference to this case.

RQ1. What changes does he report in his self-efficacy in enhancing motivation through materials design?

Waleed appeared efficacious in enhancing motivation through materials design at the start of the research period (6.3, above). Early on, he considered his strengths to be building good relationships with the learners and finding “good techniques to go over the hard activities” (WI.2). Physically preparing worksheets “was very easy” (WI.1), as later was making a tape for a listening activity (WI.6). He was skilful at this type of thing. Furthermore, practically getting learners to work cooperatively in groups in an “organized” way, “sharing” their ideas and “motivated” to engage in the task, was something he felt comfortable with (WI.1). In some of the more cognitive aspects, though, of designing and analysing materials and supporting other teachers to use materials in a motivating way, there is clear evidence of self-efficacy growth during the research period, as Table 6.2, overleaf, illustrates.

Before the course, Waleed had worried about what to focus on when adapting and how (WI.1). Sometimes the adaptations he tried did not work out, and then he “gave up” because he did not have an alternative strategy or clear criteria that could be used in materials analysis (WI.8). However, in the first year of the programme, his self-efficacy in adapting materials developed as he learned to follow logical steps in materials design, helped by the introduction of a self-questioning process in the Tasks module. Knowing how to follow “logical procedures” encouraged him to persevere, a quality indicative of higher self-efficacy.

Also before the course, Waleed felt he could not justify decisions made, so if he did adapt and was challenged, could not respond (WI.1). His self-efficacy in this respect developed in the first year of the course, though he still could not “evaluate himself” (WI.1). This had changed a year later when he felt he could assess his own teaching, having, in the meantime, vigorously defended an adaptation made to a coursebook narrative (WI.4). Waleed’s self-reported behaviour here, in arguing his case while citing ideas from the literature, is again clearly efficacious, unlike his earlier reported silence. A further change

Table 6.2 Waleed's self-efficacy statements related to enhancing motivation through materials design

<i>Self-efficacy in:</i>				
<i>Adapting materials</i>	<i>Assessing taught lessons</i>	<i>Justifying decisions made</i>	<i>Coping with contextual demands</i>	<i>Supporting teachers</i>
<p>Before we were worrying about how ... we didn't have enough knowledge for what can we do to adapt the lesson, and the activity knowledge, what we should focus on to adapt the lesson, what are the logical procedures ... (10/03)</p>	<p>I can't evaluate myself. (10/03)</p> <hr/> <p>I am a teacher but also I am an observer, I can assess myself, if I do well or not... when you assess yourself, you can see if you are changed or not. (10/04)</p>	<p>At the beginning the inspectors said you have to follow the teacher's book procedures and techniques to teach your lesson and we can't say anything ... now I can change and I can also tell why I changed ... and the inspectors can't, I mean, force me to follow the teacher's book procedures as before ... (10/03)</p>	<p>Teaching is not easy, not an easy job for anyone, all the teachers say it's very hard, very difficult, especially when you find yourself doing very complicated assessment sheets and many things which you have to do ... for me, still I can do something good but sometimes, I mean, I don't know about these teachers, what's happening in our school ... (10/04)</p>	<p>I mean you need special course to get trainer and I'm still a teacher... I need some advice, I need to know how should I train ... (2/05)</p>
<p>Before the BA programme, I tried to adapt some materials but when I found some problems with the use of these materials and these materials didn't work well with the pupils, sometimes I gave up because I didn't have another choice, another thing to do. (7/06)</p>	<p>Now I can evaluate myself, I mean, in terms of what I'm providing for my pupils, not evaluating my performance, how I'm doing in the classroom, but what I'm providing for the pupils, evaluating activities. Do the students like these activities, I mean, are they effective, do they relate to the pupils', I mean, cultural context? So, I mean, my ideas developed about this. Before I think just evaluating myself, but now evaluating my teaching, and this is the point I think. (9/05)</p>	<p>He said, 'it is not a good technique in teaching reading,' and we had an argument for more than 30 minutes. I told him that I studied this and someone said this. He said, 'this is something from the past. Please!' He told me to see what the procedures said in the teachers' book. (10/04)</p>	<p>Sometimes you can find some chance to change something. I mean, you are not going to, you can't do it 100% but you can do something, make something new, make using materials maybe easy for teachers, make the materials motivating for teachers to use. Even if they don't like teaching, when they find the materials facilitate teaching and make teaching easier, they will start to use (them)... (2/05)</p>	<p>Of course this is a good chance for me, as a senior teacher, to present something for the teachers, I mean something that I have learned from my research, from my BA course. It will be easy to speak and to talk to them about what I have learned and what I think they should follow in their teaching. (9/05)</p>

was that, by September 2005, he felt he could evaluate the learning opportunities provided through his lessons, as opposed to just assessing his own performance (WI.7). Focusing more purely on the learners, as he emphasized he was doing, rather than himself, is indicative of higher self-efficacy.

In terms of coping with contextual demands, Waleed expressed positive self-efficacy in October 2004, though he was pessimistic about his fellow teachers' abilities to cope (WI.4). A few months later, he was clearly efficacious about the prospect of showing them how materials could "facilitate teaching", making their lives easier, but seemed tentative at the notion of himself doing a workshop (WI.5). Later in the year, however, after his promotion to SET but before he had had any training in the new post, he had gained confidence in providing support (WI.7). Perhaps the promotion itself had been largely instrumental in his increased self-efficacy in supporting others, but I think it likely that positive experiences gained from involving the teachers in his research (6.11, above) would also have been influential.

RQ2. To what extent do changes in his self-efficacy beliefs reflect changes in his PK?

If we examine changes in his PK in enhancing motivation through materials design, it is clear, firstly, that Waleed learned a great deal about young learners and the learning process, including the role of motivation in this, during the first year of the course (6.5, above). This increased his awareness of the need to provide materials that avoided disappointing learners (6.4, above), were "fun", "enjoyable" (6.5, above) and "motivating" (6.6, above).

Were these reported changes in cognition realized by changes in practice? I was impressed by Waleed's use of materials from the outset (6.1, above) and soon noticed a pattern in this use (6.3, above). I sensed he was becoming more adventurous with materials (6.3, 6.9, above), but is there evidence of PK growth? I will evaluate materials used in four observed lessons discussed above (in 6.2-3, 6.8-10, 6.12) according to criteria extrapolated from the MDD module. This was taught in the 2005 summer school, but these criteria were

implicitly present in earlier modules, too, notably Tasks and TS&L (see Table 6.3, overleaf, for my analysis).

As can be seen, Waleed's use of materials met many of the criteria consistently throughout the research period. In respect of these, therefore, there is little or no evidence of growth. From the outset, he was proficient in identifying shortcomings in the course materials, and making adaptations to support language learning aims, in the process creating materials that were appropriate for the learners, physically attractive and easy to use. Employing these materials in a well-organized classroom, he was able to use them to motivate his class.

However, in several respects, development is discernible. There was a greater focus on communication in the last two lessons, as argued (in 6.12) above, with the last most obviously containing meaningful oral interaction. Waleed argued at the time that the first lesson was 'presentation' (WO.1), which might explain why the interaction lacked variety and there was little speaking. I nevertheless feel that all four lessons could have been structured as CTs. The last two clearly were, providing evidence, I think, of development in his ability to organize materials in this way, a finding from observations I can triangulate with evidence gained from analysing feedback he received on assignments (6.12, above). Furthermore, structuring lessons as CTs centred on meaningful oral interaction would seem consistent with the "strong belief" Waleed reported developing through the course, "in the importance of giving enough chances for pupils to take on active roles in the classroom to increase their motivation and willingness to learn" (WI.7) (6.13, above).

When I examine changes in Waleed's PK and relate these to changes in his reported self-efficacy beliefs (RQ1), I find a good degree of fit. At the start of the research period, Waleed was already both highly accomplished at making practical use of materials and efficacious in this. His development seems to have occurred chiefly in the more cognitive aspects of planning and structuring lessons, reflecting on these and justifying decisions made, as well as encouraging other teachers to use materials in a more motivating way.

Table 6.3: Waleed's lessons evaluated retrospectively according to various criteria for materials design

	Criteria	10/03 (WO.1)	10/04 (WO.3)	4/05 (WO.4)	9/05 (WO.5)
1	Are the materials focused on overcoming shortcomings in the coursebook?	√√	√√	√√	√√
2	Do they help learners achieve authentic language aims (in terms of developing speaking and listening skills, increasing lexical, grammatical and phonological knowledge, increasing awareness of discourse, functions, and socio-culturally appropriate language)?	√√	√√	√√	√√
3	Do they involve authentic communication (with a focus on meaning, turn-taking, risk-taking, developing fluency in a semi-authentic context)?	- Focus mostly on accuracy, but some imagination encouraged through groupwork.	- The word search encouraged co-operative groupwork, and there was guessing in open pairs.	√ Lots of semi-authentic listening and problem-solving groupwork.	√ There would have been more of this if more of the learners had brought photographs.
4	Do the materials seem appropriate for the context, given the learners' age, level, culture, previous knowledge?	√√	√√	√√	√√
5	Are the materials suitably graded and sequenced?	√ I would have used closed pair work for more speaking earlier.	√ The second groupwork activity distorted the balance of the lesson.	√√	√√
6	Does the staging of the materials incorporate variety of interaction and sufficient practice?	- Mostly whole class, with groupwork at the end.	√ Much variety, but there could have been more speaking practice.	√ Much variety of interaction, but there could have been more speaking at the end.	√√
7	Are the materials physically attractive and easy to use?	√√	√ One worksheet could have been divided up for pairs / individuals.	√√	√√
8	Is the classroom organization appropriate for the use of the materials (with clear instructions, grouping of learners, monitoring, feedback)?	√√ Very clear presentation.	√ One activity exceeded time limit.	√√	√√
9	Do the materials appear to motivate the learners?	√√	√ apart from during one activity.	√ apart from the last activity.	√√

Key: √√ = very much so √ = mostly - = to some extent x = no

RQ3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in his PK and self-efficacy in enhancing motivation through materials design, and how?

As a student, Waleed had many personal characteristics that enabled him to benefit from the course. He was eager to learn and his language ability helped him do so. During day release sessions, he listened carefully, made intelligent contributions and offered guidance and support to those who needed it (6.1, above). He had been experimenting with materials beforehand because he felt it was important, and was open to new ideas (6.4, above).

The format of the course helped him, providing a range of learning experiences, through summer and winter school and day release sessions, some of which were highly practical in nature (6.6, above). He received feedback on assignments for which he designed materials and conducted research, remembering advice given long afterwards (6.13, above). He also engaged in feedback sessions following observed lessons, gaining practical experience in reflecting, analysing, justifying.

Course content helped him in several important respects, as argued (in 6.4) above, in raising his awareness of young learners' characteristics and needs, and in developing the analytical skills required for designing and evaluating materials. TEYL and LAL were very influential for the insights they provided into learning processes (6.5, above), while Tasks and TS&L (6.5-6, 6.9, 6.12 above) influenced him most, he felt, with regard to materials design, though Stories, TILL, Teaching Reading and Writing (TR&W) and MDD also gave him ideas (6.12, above). Waleed was an active learner, carefully evaluating concepts he was introduced to, such as Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis (6.5, above), and seeking to apply in the classroom ideas learned on the course even in the face of disapproval (6.6-7, above). Numerous modules, such as ACLL (6.6, above), encouraged him to evaluate materials use according to different criteria, so developing his analytical abilities, while the research strand of the programme helped him acquire skills he needed to enquire systematically into his own practice (6.6, 6.13, above).

Sometimes, perhaps, it took time for concepts to be fully accommodated, such as the 'core' activity of a CT (6.12, above). Nevertheless, Waleed quickly absorbed much of

the course input and developed rapidly as a materials designer (6.14, above). He had the perseverance to succeed in a challenging context (6.7, above), perseverance related to self-efficacy growth in designing (6.4, above) and evaluating materials (6.6, 6.13, above). The course, by continually revisiting materials design through a succession of modules, helped him develop from strengths as a caring, organized, hard-working and reflective teacher to enhance motivation more fully.

Chapter 7: Omar's story - Overcoming difficulties in reading

7.1 Introduction

Omar was an English teacher from the mountains, affable but sensitive to criticism, hospitable but often solitary; hardworking and sincere. Omar cared about the reading difficulties of the Grade 4-9 OWTE learners in his village boys' school. This became important to him early in the course, and later the focus of his dissertation. I am interested in exploring changes he reported in his self-efficacy (TSE) beliefs in overcoming reading difficulties, in discovering the extent to which these changes reflected changes in his practical knowledge (PK), and in ascertaining which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced these changes, and how.

I will tell Omar's story according to the methodological principles outlined in Chapter 4 (above), addressing research questions at the end of the chapter. I first provide more information about his background.

7.2 Omar's geographical context and early literacy experiences

The village sits on a hill, the mountains above it, beyond it, the date gardens below irrigated by a falaj sloping gradually upwards for miles. The school is on the other side of a wadi that flows all year, wetting the tyres of cars as they ford it. After rain, the village is sometimes cut off for a few days and there is no school. The village feels remote now, but used to be much more so. Until recently, there was no paved road, and the dirt track to the town on the coast is remembered as a rough, bumpy, difficult drive. Until recently, too, there was no electricity in the village, and there were thus no electric lights, no fridges, no fans and no A/Cs. In the heat of the summer, the villagers used to retreat to the flat roofs of their houses or to the edge of the wadi to sleep, after sometimes pouring buckets of water over their cotton clothes all day in an effort to keep cool (ON.1).

In this environment, Omar grew up. In this environment, he learned to read. He was invited to reflect on this experience in the first session of the module Initial Literacy in English (IL), studied in the summer school of 2003. The BA students had first discussed how they had learned to read and write in their own L1, and had then

watched a video of children learning Arabic in a modern, state-of-the-art, Basic Education school, with a female teacher. Omar remembers an old man with a long beard teaching him, then a small boy, to read. Lessons took place in the shade of a big tree, with the children sitting in a circle. Once, when it was Omar's turn to read aloud, he came to a halt before a word he did not recognize. There was a nervous silence until the teacher angrily hit him with the branch of a palm tree. The old man did not tell him what the word was, though, or how to pronounce it, and it was another five days before Omar learned the word from his friend (OA.3).

In the same summer school session, the importance of a language-rich environment in developing literacy was emphasized, which led Omar to reflect on how there had been very little print around him in the village to read. There had been no shop signs or advertisements. He remembers once, though, when he was about five years old, making the long dusty, bumpy drive out of the mountains in his uncle's old battered pickup. As they got closer to the town, Omar noticed a brand new road sign at a wadi crossing. 'Stop if the water is at the red line', it said in Arabic. "What does it mean?" he asked in amazement, after reading the sign aloud. "I don't know", his uncle replied, "but I'd better check at the garage. Perhaps, it's something to do with the vehicle's temperature." How the mechanic had laughed as he had explained about the danger of cars being swept away, and preventative measures, signs and new posts, painted red and white, lining the route through wadis (OA.3).

Omar recalls learning English from Grade 4, starting with the alphabet. The teachers in the village school were from Arabic-speaking North African countries. There were "no materials, like word cards, flashcards, tape recorder", and teaching methods were "old, traditional". The lesson was "like a lecture" and, if you understood, it was "by luck" (OI.6).

Fortunately, Omar did well at English, well enough to go on to the nearest secondary school, which was then in the distant regional capital, where he stayed in a hostel, attending classes six days a week (OI.4). Then came teacher training college. Now, after ten years working in another village school in the mountains, from September 2003 he was back at the school in his own village.

Omar had succeeded against the odds, becoming an English teacher despite the more disappointing aspects of his own education; the stern methods, poor environment for literacy, lack of resources. Now he had the opportunity to give something back to his own community, which he was keen to do (OI.1).

7.3 Trying to get to grips with the learners' problems in difficult circumstances

Omar wanted to use ideas he had learned on the BA Programme in his new school. Prior to the course, opportunities for professional development were rare, limited in his previous post to peer observations with the only other English teacher, always an expatriate from India, Jordan or Egypt. Relationships with inspectors during this period were fraught. One expected him to recite the aims of his lesson when they met after the school assembly, and Omar reported he was expected to follow the teachers' book procedures "letter by letter". Now, though, in the new school, housed in a new building and attended by children from six surrounding villages, he was determined to try out new techniques introduced in practical sessions or discovered in books (OI.2).

In the new school, there were still frustrations, though. Omar told me after a Grade 4 OWTE lesson for ten learners I observed in October 2003 that the previous day he had wanted to ask the boys to bring in family photos to supply an information gap for a speaking activity, but had felt unable to do so. Some of the parents did not know him well enough, he said, and students would be too shy to ask for the photos of their sisters, mothers or fathers. If they went to their homes and asked: "Give me your picture, give me your photo" their fathers would punish them, shouting "Why? What do you want from this?" (OI.1).

He reported that he tried to use groupwork now to motivate the weak and the shy, with the leader of the group "a teacher for supporting his friends". However, groupwork was still new to his school and there were tensions. The class teacher of his Grade 4 learners preferred, rather than use mixed abilities as a guiding principle, to stream the boys, with one group containing the strongest students. "In every lesson", Omar told me, "I want to change them". Groupwork may also have been new to the expatriate inspector from a North African country nearing retirement who visited the school a few days before my November 2003 visit and described Omar's use of groupwork as "a waste of time". Omar was undeterred, though. He thought this

procedure had saved time, not wasted it. It was useful for the pupils. He wanted to immerse himself in teaching “without any looking from the headmaster, from the inspector”. “I’m working if they are here or not”, he said, ‘if the inspector comes or not, I’m working, I’m trying, it’s the same class, the same work I did” (OI.2).

Omar saw himself as a teacher who cared. “I enjoy teaching”, he told me. “I really am happy to join with my pupils. They are like my babies, my children. I feel that” (OI.2).

In some ways, the course had made him more efficacious. “Now I’m not following the teachers’ book”, he told me. “I can change anything I want to change”. When planning his lessons now, he concentrated on the demands he and his pupils would face so that he could work out how to support them. And he was focusing on weak pupils, trying to identify the areas in which they had problems and trying to pinpoint the reasons. “I’m trying to solve these problems”, he told me,

without the pupils knowing what I’m doing. I’m trying to improve them. I don’t tell any pupil, ‘you are not a good pupil, you are a weak pupil’, it’s not good for him. I’m trying to encourage every pupil in the class (OI.2).

He was not satisfied with the level of the learners in the new school. With the Grade 7 class of boys (the highest grade he had ever taught) with three years of English behind them, he told me, “I have difficulties ... many difficulties with them. They are weak, weak pupils ... so I make 5 minutes at the beginning of the lesson to revise everything in the previous lesson”, and he used extra lessons taken from other subjects; music and physical education, “to revise the basic information from Grades 4 and 5, the grammar points, the main grammar points” (OI.1). I was impressed by Omar’s dedication, and determination to help.

7.4 Focusing on their problems in reading (November – December 2003)

Omar felt that one of the areas the Grade 7 learners were weakest in was reading, and decided to investigate this through his Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL) journal. “What can I do?” he wrote in the first entry.

I sometimes feel I am banging my head against a stone wall. I try to give them a lot of silent reading practice, but they can’t read so this extra practice is no good... if they can’t recognize the words, they can’t understand them (OA.2).

Omar, searching for a way to help his Grade 7 learners overcome their problems in reading, was clearly lacking in self-efficacy, uncertain how to proceed. This was “the beginning”, he later reported (OI.8).

He tried to collect data to explore the extent of the problem in the second journal entry, by asking Grade 7 pupils to read sentences on the board aloud individually during the lesson while observing them and making notes. After getting the whole class to do this, he found that “six of them couldn’t read any word” at all. After the lesson, he spoke to them to ask why and one shyly told him they were “failures”. Some had been in the same class for three years. For a further entry, Omar interviewed one of these boys again, who reported having passed the end of year exams for Grades 5 & 6 by chance. Now, however, he could go no further without the ability to read, so, as Omar put it, his school days were “numbered” (OA.2).

In a final entry, Omar planned to help the learners by inviting their parents to the school. They could then discuss the problems together and Omar could advise them to read to their children, buy books, encourage older siblings to help them and “not waste their time” by making them work in the gardens, feeding the camels and goats (OA.2).

I consider Omar’s practices described here, in this December 2003 assignment, to be very much a mixed bag. I applaud him for the remedial work with Grade 7 and for the advice to parents to buy books and read to their children. However, I have misgivings about his data collection methods: using the procedure of ‘chain reading’, asking learners to stand in turn and read aloud. Chain reading was a traditional practice that may have been given added value in Omar’s eyes by summer school 2003 IL input that emphasised what a teacher could learn from listening to a child reading. Analysis could tell us if the child was using a ‘bottom-up approach’ (focusing first on the sound-symbol associations of English through the use of ‘phonics’), a ‘top-down approach’ (starting with experience of the world and then sampling text with the help of guesses and predictions to decode meaning), or ‘an interactive approach’ involving both. Perhaps, the child had memorized the shape of words, using ‘look and say’, and combined this approach with top-down strategies, involving lots of visual clues, or

bottom-up strategies that emphasized initial letter recognition (Cameron, 2001, Wray & Medwell, 1991).

Cameron (2001) recommends that children regularly read aloud individually to their teacher, but warns of problems if this is done in front of the whole class. I reinforced this message in a day release session in November 2003, arguing that chain reading could be stressful for the struggling reader and demotivating for learners listening to a text read badly. It would also produce inaccurate diagnostic results, as we often under-perform under pressure (ON.1). Omar had not appeared to have absorbed this, though, and I was concerned that his Grade 7 learners might feel even more daunted by the challenges of developing reading skills than they had been before. Rather than reforming his practice, input had been assimilated to support traditional methods (Lamb, 1995) that were not learner-centred.

7.5 Using shared reading - December 2003

Omar came much closer to providing learner-centred reading instruction while working on the Stories assignment. The task was to plan, teach and evaluate a 'shared story' reading and follow up activity from a home produced big book. Summer school 2003 input suggested stories extend children's experience of the world, develop imagination, emotions, thinking skills, support all aspects of language learning and provide entertaining, motivating experiences (Ellis & Brewster 1991, Cameron, 2001). Using a big book for 'shared reading' (Wells, 1986) might involve the children in joining in, predicting, guessing, discussing, repeating phrases, reading words and focusing on initial letters.

For his assignment, Omar adapted a fable about an ant and a grasshopper. While the former insect industriously collected food all summer, the latter idled away his hours, singing, in the adapted version, 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', until the winter came and he had no food. Omar prepared industriously, editing the story by simplifying vocabulary and shortening sentences, aiming to present only the key details in an attractive way. After creating a big book with illustrations, he practised many times, entertaining his sister's children with gestures, facial expressions, attention-holding eye contact and variations in voice, "giving different tones to different characters", altering speed and pitch, and throwing in animal noises. With

his class, the pupils would “sit on a carpet in a circle round the teacher”. He would “be the teller and the pupils should share and co-operate by answering questions, making sounds, miming or making actions.” Before he began, pictures would be used to arouse interest and draw on background knowledge. Then, as he “read the story aloud, pointing to the words and using pictorial or semantic clues to get the meaning across”, he would elicit “some of the key words” he had masked to help pupils guess the word using the “context of the whole sentence”. Sometimes, he would focus on “the first letter and get pupils to sound it out.” After finishing, he would elicit the story again from pictures and cues, encouraging pupils to make actions and noises and join in with the refrain. The pupils would act it out, taking turns to be ant and grasshopper (OA.1).

I was impressed with the plan and materials design. These distinguished the assignment, gaining Omar a borderline ‘B’. However, there was very little evaluation. Omar simply reported using the story with his Grade 6 class, who enjoyed it very much, seeing it as “a kind of treat” (OA.1). This lack of a fuller evaluation might bring into question how deeply he had reflected on the experience, and gained in PK and self-efficacy, given the links earlier established (Chapter 2). I nevertheless hoped Omar felt encouraged by the grade to engage further in innovative practice.

7.6 Using a coursebook narrative – April 2004

I saw Omar use an OWTE coursebook narrative, ‘Bader and the goats’ with Grade 4, several months later. Disappointingly, though, while materials were supplemented to include a paper maché model of a garden, replete with plastic animals and trees, techniques seemed fairly traditional. Omar introduced the narrative by sticking flashcards to the whiteboard, and word cards (all verbs) to the side, making a column. He asked learners to demonstrate the verbs; e.g.; ‘walk’, ‘stop’, by moving around the classroom, and then he shouted at a boy in Arabic, ‘Where’s your homework?’, afterwards telling him this was a joke. He had wanted to demonstrate ‘shout’ (OO.3, OI.3).

Omar then focused on the flashcards, eliciting Bader’s name. He used the model to demonstrate opening a gate, and then, with the help of mime and gesture, elicited the first part of the story, this corresponding to the pictures and verbs on the board.

‘Yesterday Bader walked to his garden. He opened the gate. He stopped. He listened. He looked.’ Creating as much suspense as possible, Omar then asked dramatically what they thought Bader saw in his garden, “maybe a snake, maybe something ... he was afraid of”, but the pupils, who had looked ahead in their books, told him “you are asking about goats”. “And what did he do? He shouted,” Omar continued, completing the first part of the story, all they would get that day (OO.3, OI.3).

There followed a matching exercise, with verbs on the whiteboard matched to pictures by individual learners coming forward. As they did this, Omar helped them read the verbs, getting them to focus on initial consonants: ‘sh... sh... shouted’. Then the class opened their books, listened and followed as Omar read the first part of the story again, stopping occasionally at some words, getting boys to complete them “to make sure they were following”. Special attention was paid to ‘g... g... garden’. In their books, the pupils then had to find verbs and circle them, and then, for homework, read them again, to be asked about in the next lesson (OO.3, OI.3).

Discussing this afterwards, Omar reported that this was the boys’ first lesson with the story, although some verbs were familiar. He had introduced ‘yesterday’ indirectly at the beginning of the lesson while focused on the day’s date. Pupils knew “the context of the story from the pictures”, and had known the outcome in advance when asked to predict what Bader found. Asked if had changed the teachers’ book procedures, Omar pointed out that he had supplemented the flashcards with “the realia on the table”. The story had been cut in two “because of the time of the lesson. The story’s too long.” In this, the first lesson with the story the focus had been on verbs, in the second it would be on reading, while in the third learners would get the remainder of the story: ‘Bader picked up a stick. He chased the goats. The goats jumped over the wall. Bader walked to his house. He talked to Hani.’ A total of 4 or 5 lessons would be based around the complete narrative (OI.3). I summarized the rest of our conversation later for Omar:

We contrasted the OWTE method of teaching a story in two halves on consecutive days, which you used, to the shared reading approach, with the story told right through before more detailed analysis. We also talked about ways of changing a story, when telling it orally, to add an element of unpredictability and fun to the lesson (ON.1).

I had liked the building up of suspense, and suggested using visual support to provide alternative endings that might stimulate the learners' imagination. Omar looked puzzled, though, and then rejected my suggestion, saying that the curriculum had to be followed (OI.3). (I had argued in a day release session that the OWTE curriculum he was following adopts a largely 'bottom-up' approach, focusing on 'look and say' and phonics, in contrast to the 'interactive' approach recommended by Cameron, 2001, and favoured by EFM.)

I was dismayed by Omar's reaction. Five months earlier he had told me he could change anything (7.3, above). However, during this interview, he emphasised the great difficulties involved in adapting materials to make them communicative. After initial enthusiasm, it seemed he had rejected the idea. If the inspector came, he told me, he would not change anything. He would teach the course material as it was (OI.3). He had retreated and I was unsure why. Did he feel threatened by ideas suggested or worry he was being criticized indirectly (7.1, above)? Had he experienced 'failure' in adapting, and been put off? His practices in using coursebook narratives had barely changed (except through using realia and making an attempt at encouraging prediction). The Stories module had not radicalised his PK. What about IL? Could he make practical use of ideas from this?

7.7 Trying to identify learners' weaknesses in reading through miscue analysis

Omar's IL assignment, submitted in April 2004, required him to investigate the reading strategies of a pupil through carrying out a miscue analysis (Arnold, 1982). This involved identifying research questions, selecting a text and then observing and recording a pupil reading it aloud. Errors would be identified and analysed in relation to the research questions, with substitutions perhaps of particular interest for their grapho-phonemic, syntactic or semantic fit. (So, did the substitute word share the same first letter as that replaced, fit grammatically into the same sentence or possess a similar meaning?)

Omar conducted the miscue analysis with a bright 15 year-old boy in his Grade 9 class, who was generally good at English but weak at reading, and disadvantaged in various ways. His father had died, his mother was illiterate, and, unlike city children who had English around them on road signs, "on shops, cars, people's clothes, and

mobile messages”, he had very little of this in the mountains. Omar’s research question focused on identifying the boy’s weaknesses in reading. He chose a text he thought would be challenging “but not too difficult”, and planned to make the learner “feel at ease” by selecting a quiet place for the research, simplifying instructions and using L1 (OA.3). In this, he was following advice.

Omar reported the boy read the text, about three fishermen getting lost at sea when the engine of their boat failed, “quite fast, in the first paragraph without hesitation.” In some places he corrected himself: ‘egg – engine’, ‘stopped – start’, ‘fisherman – fishermen’. “I think he was reading for meaning”, Omar continued. “He realized his mistake and that is a very positive sign”. In one place, the boy broke a word down to read it: ‘fam ... families’. He read ROP (Royal Oman Police) as ‘rop’, as he had “no knowledge of abbreviations”. However, some of his substitutions were a “very good” semantic fit. Omar classified one of these; ‘helped’ for ‘phoned’ in ‘they helped the police’ rather than ‘they phoned the police’, as a positive substitution (Arnold, 1982), as it fitted both semantically and syntactically (OA.3). Another substitution, ‘*their* fishermen’, he classified as negative, though, the marker pointed out, it “could make sense syntactically and semantically” (OF.3).

After the boy had read, Omar asked him a few comprehension questions about the text; e.g. ‘On which day did they leave Barka?’, ‘How many kilometers did they sail?’, ‘The word start – is it a noun or a verb?’, ‘Is it in the present or the past?’, reporting that the answers were correct. There was no request to tell the story again, though, to check global understanding (OA.3), a practice suggested by the day release materials he had been exposed to recently.

Omar concluded that the boy “used a bottom-up approach ... he started from the word ... but he didn’t use knowledge of the world and experience. According to Cameron’s (2001) diagram [he] moved from sight words to phonics” (OA.3). Reading this now, I wonder about the self-corrections and positive substitution, ‘helped’ for ‘phoned’, that seemed to indicate the boy was reading for meaning (and therefore using top-down strategies, too). This, at least partial, misinterpretation of the boy’s approach to the text was not picked up on by the marker, though she did note that one of the negative substitutions, ‘*their* fishermen’, had been wrongly classified. Overall, Omar was

praised. “The analysis of the pupil’s reading has been carried out effectively and a sound understanding of the concepts involved has been demonstrated.” For his “working knowledge of miscue analysis” (OF.3), Omar gained a high ‘B’, a positive experience likely to support self-efficacy growth in researching his learners’ reading difficulties. How well, though, had Omar identified the boy’s weaknesses in reading? I thought this was mixed, and was therefore concerned about his ability to diagnose learners’ difficulties when they read to him.

7.8 Planning to research learners’ difficulties in reading aloud (November 2004)

Omar decided to focus on problems in reading, more specifically on the “serious” problems in reading aloud faced by his Grade 7 learners, for his dissertation (OA.4). I was concerned about this as a) I was unsure if he could collect data in a learner-friendly way (7.4, above), b) make sense of it (7.7, above) and c) use it.

I was concerned about Omar’s teaching of reading, which I had now observed twice. Most recently, in an October 2004 lesson with Grade 9, he had provided excessive visual support for vocabulary items, so reducing the learners’ need to infer meaning and develop reading skills. Sound advice in the teachers’ book had not been followed, so that it had become more of a vocabulary than a reading lesson (OO.4). Could he teach reading? His use of the Grade 4 coursebook narrative ‘Bader and the goats’ was disappointing (7.6, above), but his reported shared story reading (7.5, above) and his willingness to tackle environmental literacy issues (7.4, above) showed potential. I hoped he would develop in that direction.

Omar planned, he wrote in his November 2004 dissertation proposal, to “choose four pupils as a case study... collect data by observing them in the class ... record their reading individually (to conduct a miscue analysis) ... and interview the pupils, their parents and some teachers...” Omar felt that by conducting this research, which would “sharpen” his thinking, he might better “understand how children learn to read”, which would allow him to “do something to help” (OA.4).

In investigating the biggest problems they faced in reading aloud, he was aware that these would be influenced by the pupils'

physical and psychological development and the possible effects of many factors such as low intelligence, emotional and personality problems, poor language development, absenteeism and poor school conditions. Pupils in the mountains ... have no libraries or Internet and most of their parents are not literate (OA.4).

The lack of a school library was important, as "students cannot develop a positive attitude towards reading if they cannot read". Without interesting materials, "the danger is that pupils read only for tests". Omar felt, moreover, that "techniques in the curriculum for reading aloud are old methods, such as 'look and say' ... based on the conception that pupils see words as whole-patterns ... memorize the look ... and associate the printed word with meaning". A lot of teachers supported the use of 'look and say' in class, he continued, by getting learners to repeat the words through drilling them. Omar felt, however, that the use of this technique caused boredom. Furthermore, he complained, 'look and say' "doesn't contain a technique for attempting unfamiliar words and so many pupils are unable to work on their own" (OA.4).

Omar had an alternative strategy he believed in, chain reading, as this involves giving "a chance to all pupils to read aloud and follow a text being read aloud." Using this technique, he continued, "we can help weaker pupils by saying the sound of the initial consonant of the difficult word. Also we can encourage and motivate them by getting them to read easier sentences and better pupils to read more difficult sentences". Omar reported using this technique as standard practice with Grade 6, but goes on to say: "unfortunately pupils in high grades (Grade 7 and above) have no chance to read aloud in the class because all the activities ask them to read silently only." He cited the OWTE Grade 7 teachers' book advice, "that reading aloud is done only by weaker classes or pupils" at that level (OA.4). I find, too, in the same OWTE source, reading aloud around the class described as potentially "a slow, difficult and thus demotivating process" from which, furthermore, we cannot necessarily infer understanding of the text. The OWTE policy stated in this document is that "the amount of reading aloud pupils are asked to do is reduced as they progress" through Grades 7 and 8, while sight vocabulary is developed (ELCD, 1998). Nevertheless,

Omar seemed to feel, in November 2004, that increasing the amount of chain reading in Grade 7 might help solve his learners' problems (OA.4).

7.9 Tackling some of the concepts (February 2005)

Omar would conduct research for his dissertation throughout the following semester, and prior to this, in February 2005, we met for a tutorial. One of the objectives was to discuss the feedback on his dissertation proposal. The marker had written in one place:

You say that reading is very important and this is true, but you are discussing reading aloud, which is not the same. We usually read silently to gain understanding (as I am when reading your assignment), so you need to justify reading aloud in a different way (OF.4).

The marker had also written: "It is interesting that the teacher's book discourages reading aloud – you need to produce a strong argument to state that reading aloud should be used" (OF.4).

While waiting to see me for this February 2005 tutorial, I asked Omar to think about two things; firstly, the advantages and disadvantages of chain reading, and secondly, the differences between chain reading and shared reading. I felt that shared reading could promote strategy development in a supportive environment, while chain reading provided public practice in a potentially less supportive environment, and was open to being misinterpreted as a way of conducting miscue analysis in public (7.4, above).

Assessing reading was one of the benefits of chain reading Omar identified. As to the disadvantages,

the first one is it is not possible to give a chance to all the pupils to read aloud in the lesson, especially with a large number of pupils. The second thing is some pupils will become afraid of reading, especially the weaker ones, and thus it might make the pupils hate the subject and hate the teacher (OI.5).

However, he felt the first of these disadvantages was minimized in his context, as he had 10-15 pupils per class rather than the 40-50 of busy urban schools, and one minute each would provide "enough time to give them all a chance to read."

Furthermore, in a small class, the experience was more "relaxing" for the learners, not just in reading, but also because "they can hear the teacher, they can hear their friends clearly". In a crowded class, on the other hand, it might be noisier, with the pupils at

the back not focusing on the lesson, the teacher struggling to control them, and all finding it harder to participate and concentrate. Even in his small classes, though, some students were afraid of reading aloud. They “make themselves sick and they can’t stand up and they can’t read.” He would discover indirectly that they had skipped lessons. “Teacher, teacher, Abdullah is not sick but he can’t read ...he’s afraid”, a boy would tell him (OI.5).

Omar reported using many strategies to

stop these complaints. For example, in the class when I use chain reading with weaker pupils, I don’t ask them to read the whole sentence. I’ll always motivate them, ask them to read; ‘OK, now start the sentence’. I give them many cues, ‘read the first word’ or ‘read the initial sounds’, ‘say the first sound’, ask his friend to read for him, then he’ll repeat. I will ask ‘OK, now you read it from your friend’, ‘you can sit down and I will ask you later’. It will be interesting, but not shouting at them, not ‘OK, Ahmed read sentence number 2!’ If he can’t, I’ll stop him. Shouting, no, not like that, he’ll not learn like this (OI.5).

He reported, though, that some teachers did not discriminate between learners, and went around the class in order, getting each student to stand and read a sentence, regardless of the level of difficulty of the text and the ability of the student (OI.5).

Omar seemed to believe his approach more enlightened; better attuned to the learners’ needs and more appropriate to his context. What I find rather paradoxical, though, is his determined use of chain reading despite his acknowledgement that it generated fear. He must have had a powerful belief in its value, given that he also perceived himself as a father figure (7.3, above).

I asked Omar about the differences between reading aloud and reading silently. “At its most basic, one is when you say the words, but is there anything else that’s different?”

I asked him.

- O. In terms of what?
- I. In terms of the eyes. What happens with the eyes?
- O. They follow the words.
- I. One at a time?
- O. No. Some people follow the words also with their finger.
- I. You’ve written about that in one of your assignments, ‘like old people’ you wrote. OK, but you’re a skilled reader. If you read a book, say a chapter of Cameron, do you read it in the same way, reading silently as reading aloud?
- O. No, when I read it silently, for example, looking for something for my assignment, I read it quickly. I don’t read everything. I’m searching for something. I don’t read every word that appears in the text, but when reading

aloud I must read everything. My eyes must come to every word, to every letter.

- I. So, what is the effect, then, of reading aloud?
- O. To read everything (OI.5).

When reading silently as an adult, if Omar came to an unfamiliar word, maybe he would “understand it through the context, maybe make use of the dictionary, ask the teacher, ask a friend, or maybe leave it.” However, a learner facing an unfamiliar word while reading aloud might be “stuck for a long time ... afraid of the teacher”, unable “to jump over it”. Different processes were involved. Getting learners to read aloud, though, Omar argued, was a means of supporting them to read silently (OI.5).

I had also asked Omar to think about the differences between chain reading and shared reading. In shared reading, he told me:

The teacher reads a story for pupils using a big book. The pupils sit around him, for example, on a mat, and the teacher sits on a chair, so he can see all the pupils and all the pupils can hear him clearly (OI.5).

The process, he continued, thus involves one person “telling the story to the whole class”, who would be “listening to the end”, when there could be a discussion, with the teacher asking questions. Perhaps, once they knew the story, a “fluent pupil” could read it as a whole, “not parts, maybe one or two pupils only, it can’t be cut”. The rest of the class “will speak. They will say their ideas, but it will not be reading. They will not read it from a book. They will say their ideas. They will imagine what is coming.” The teacher could use pictures to elicit “from the world to the word” (Cameron, 2001), using the learners’ background knowledge. What about bottom-up processing, I wondered.

- I. Can the teacher get the pupils to read the words in shared reading?
- O. Yes, after he elicits the ideas, the next idea from the pupils, then he can remove the paper covering the writing, and ask them to read that sentence to check. Is it a correct idea or not, or is it nearly only?
- I. So the teacher can get them to check their predictions?
- O. Yes, but he will not open the book and ask the pupils, ‘Read it, read it Salim, read this one!’, ‘Yes, Abdullah, read page number 3’ (OI.5).

I reminded Omar of a video he had seen of a primary school English teacher using various strategies with a big book. She had “covered initial letters” to help pupils to guess the word, which “helped them to read, concentrate”, and she had helped them “recognize the shape” of words, he recalled. Omar felt that shared reading could be motivating, if he changed the seating, with the class on a mat in a circle around him, if

he used realia and made animal noises if relevant, if he had a discussion with the learners afterwards, during which the shy pupils would “also talk”. Nevertheless, shared reading essentially involved “one person talking and the others listening” (OI.5).

I was surprised by this very narrow interpretation of shared reading. Perhaps he had not used the method much since treating his class to the story of the ant and the grasshopper 14 months earlier (7.6, above). In that case, perhaps shared reading had not been assimilated very deeply into his PK, and his memory of using it to develop reading interactively had faded. Perhaps, too, getting Salim or Abdullah to “read this one” through chain reading was so deeply ingrained in his teaching, as well as in his childhood memories (7.2, above) that shared reading practices, such as reading to check, seemed inconsequential to him, not ‘real’ reading.

7.10 Using chain reading and other strategies – April 2005

When I next visited Omar’s school, I saw him use chain reading with his Grade 7 class. At the beginning, he quietly indicated the four boys he was researching, and when eight pupils, apparently chosen randomly from around the class, were called upon to read short texts aloud, they included these four. Explaining to the class of 18 in advance that not all would read aloud in this lesson, Omar asked the others to follow carefully in their books, using their fingers to track the words while listening to their friends. “Ameer went to Sohar. He trifled by car. He stayed for three dies.” “Zamzan went to Salalah. She travelled by plan.” Whenever there was a mistake, Omar interrupted immediately, firmly but not aggressively: “Is it trifled or travelled?” “Is it plan or plane?” He tried to elicit the correct pronunciation from the reader, or from others if they could not say the word themselves. He then pronounced the word himself and got the class to repeat it (OO.5).

He seemed to be encouraging trial and error here, apparently assuming that the boys would learn the correct pronunciation through having their mistakes highlighted. I asked if there were any strategies he could teach them to help them achieve correctness in the future, e.g.; with regard to ‘plan – plane’. “I think I can ask them to look at the vowels inside the word”, he replied. I explained about the ‘magic e’, which he had not heard of, making short sounds long, e.g.; ‘fin – fine’, ‘hop – hope’, and

Omar immediately thought of another example, 'tap – tape'. He said, however, that learners were not explicitly introduced to this rule in OWTE. Nevertheless, "I think we have to teach them the rule and give them examples, so when they face any one of these words they will know", he said (OI.6). I agree with him here.

A strategy he had used, one that I had highlighted in day release, was 'breaking words down' (Cameron, 2001). This had helped the boys read the word, 'holiday'. Then, introducing lexis essential for a speaking activity; 'suq', 'mosque', 'turtle', he used attractive homemade flashcards, before focusing on initial letters and whole word shapes, with word cards he had also made. "We have lots of strategies to help our pupils now", he told me, sounding efficacious in saying this, "lots and lots" (OO.5, OI.6).

He had, indeed, used a variety of strategies in this lesson; supporting the introduction of lexis visually, drawing on learners' background knowledge and activating interest. Using simple homemade materials, he had focused on whole words, parts of words, initial letters. The approach was thus interactive (7.4, above).

I was concerned about the chain reading, but at least it was well organized and brief (4 minutes). It also had a purpose in reminding learners of the topic, 'holidays'. Furthermore, I observed no obvious distress, though two of the boys were reading mechanically (OO.5). Had not Omar told me they were afraid? "Yes", he confirmed.

They avoid reading aloud because they are afraid to make mistakes... pupils always think if they make mistakes they will lose marks. That's something in their mind, and they will be afraid of their teacher, but always I told them this is the wrong idea (OI.6).

Omar seemed to think he could convince learners not to be afraid, so that they could benefit from chain reading. He had used the method in a fairly traditional way in this lesson, though; each learner nominated to stand and read a short 3-sentence text, with immediate correction of pronunciation provided, which thus highlighted the mistakes they were afraid of making. He had not shouted at the boys (7.9, above) or told them they were bad (7.3, above), but he had interrupted them. And there had been no anonymous feedback afterwards, of the type he had been introduced to on the course through numerous modules; involving praise, the highlighting of common errors, and

the introduction of strategies to deal with these errors. Yet there were positive signs, too. Though he had never heard of the ‘magic e’, he was aware that he could get learners to focus on the vowels “inside the word”, which boded well for the future, and, to his credit, he did break down ‘holiday’ to support the reading of ‘day’, before encouraging whole word reading and phonics (OO.5, OI.6). I hoped for signs of further PK growth.

7.11 Innovation and tradition in his teaching (September 2005)

I observed some development a few months later. At the start of a Grade 9 OWTE lesson with 11 boys, Omar reminded them of two texts they had read. There were accompanying photographs, showing how Sidab, a fishing village near Muscat, had changed since His Majesty Sultan Qaboos acceded to the throne: “Were there hospitals in 1969?”, he asked, “Is there a big mosque?” (OO.6). He was “activating schemata”, he afterwards explained, to supply a context for the next activity, influenced by input from the recently studied Teaching Reading and Writing (TR&W) module on using pre-reading activities (OI.7). I was pleased that activating schemata, not suggested in the teachers’ book, had become part of his PK.

Next, to support a listening activity about the historical past (1969, when there were no clinics, doctors or nurses and people travelled by donkey), Omar focused on key words, getting learners to read them aloud around the class, using various strategies to deal with errors. He wrote up the word ‘illness’, for example, when it was not said clearly, covering the first and then the second half of the word, getting learners to read each part, so breaking it down. When ‘donkey’ was produced incorrectly, he wrote it on the board and circled the ‘n’. This was carelessness, he felt. Sometimes, pronunciation was faulty, as in ‘buses’, said with a long /a:/, which he corrected orally, and sometimes, Omar said, learners guessed from the initial letter, reading ‘petrol station’ as ‘police station’ (OO.6, OI.7).

Part of the problem, he reported, was that when they stood to read, the boys left their books on their desks, too far from their eyes. “Please, hold up the book”, he told them, “to read it well”. They did not “focus on the words, they just guessed” (OI.7).

This suggests that the inaccuracies were partly due to the way he used chain reading, though Omar did not seem aware of this. If he had let them answer from a seated position, they might have done better, but he wanted them to stand in the more traditional way he favoured.

It seemed that innovative methodology (activating schemata, breaking words down) co-existed in his teaching with traditional practices, which may have created their own problems for learners who already had difficulties. What had Omar learned about these difficulties from his research?

7.12 The problems learners faced in his context

Omar was aware of serious problems in reading soon after joining the school (7.3, above). He later explained that, after six years of learning English, pupils left “with nothing. They can’t read ... they can’t take anything in English, and that’s the problem” (OI.6). The environment (7.7, above) was partly to blame with no library and no signs on shops or buses or cars. There was “nothing here to read. What can they read? Nothing” (OI.6). He also blamed “many” other teachers for not caring about the pupils.

They don’t encourage them to read, they only concentrate on the book in the school. They want to finish the syllabus and that’s all. They don’t care about giving the pupils stories, newspapers to read. They don’t ask them if they have books in their house or not, they don’t meet their parents, their father, to ask him to help his child. It’s very important (OI.6).

Omar had written about the importance of meeting the parents nearly two years earlier (7.4, above). I asked if he now felt more confident, as a result of conducting the research, as to identifying learners’ problems.

- O. Yes, it’s easy to find those problems, because I have experience with them, the pupils, for 13 years now. So it’s easy.
- I. So this knowledge that you had before the BA, that’s built up over 13 years. Have you learned specific things from doing the research, though, from interviewing people, for example, or from doing your miscue analysis?
- O. Yes, how the pupils read and what strategies they use for reading.
- I. Did anything you discovered surprise you? Were you surprised by any of the strategies they used or were the ones you expected?
- O. Yes, when I asked them in that interview, one of them told me they are reading just to pass the exam, not to know vocabulary or to know the language or to learn, just to pass the exam.
- I. This surprised you?
- O. Yes (OI.7).

I checked this with him, as he had identified “the danger” of learners reading “only for tests” nearly a year earlier (7.8, above). So, what had he really learned from the research? Data from the miscue analysis indicated that the boys were “trying to read every word”, as there were “only five omissions” in relation to 14 self-corrections and 23 substitutions (OA.5); hardly surprising, given the research methodology used (7.9, above). A teacher he interviewed described the learners’ problems as ‘fear of the unknown language’, lack of background knowledge, lack of interest, inability to comprehend, lack of fluency and ‘failure in using phonics’ (OA.5). The learners, themselves, apparently, mentioned linguistic difficulties they faced, such as with the /p/ & /b/, the letters ‘c’ and ‘g’, single sounds that could be represented by more than one letter and clusters of consonants (OI.6).

7.13 Overcoming these problems

In his research proposal, Omar had argued against the over-use of ‘look and say’ in the development of reading skills and the need for phonics (OA.4). In his dissertation, he defines effective readers as those who actively “use a repertoire of comprehension strategies”, utilizing both bottom-up and top-down processing in an interactive way. Phonics teaching is “essential”, because this “provides pupils with capabilities that are simply not available through any other means”. In the process of learning through phonics, reading becomes easier and more enjoyable, so facilitating still wider reading and the expansion of knowledge. Various ways to approach phonics teaching include, he indicates, not just chain reading but also the shared reading of engaging stories with familiar language. If the teacher reads the story while pointing to the words, “this will demonstrate the reading process” and “establish the basis for the phonics lessons to come” (OA.5). Ten months earlier, while discussing shared reading (7.9, above), Omar had seemed exasperated at my argument that shared reading could support discrete reading skills. I had not subsequently seen him use the technique or ‘pushed’ it further. What had brought about this transformation? Was he trying to please me or had he reflected subsequently on our discussion and identified practical uses of shared reading for himself?

In September 2005, I asked Omar if he had found different ways of helping learners during the research. “Yes”, he replied, “such as using shared reading, using stories, using new techniques, using phonics”, developing different reading strategies for use

before, during and after interaction with the text, “also using Cameron’s diagram”, moving from the word to the world, from the initial letter, the sound, to the sentence, or vice versa, starting from the world and the pupils’ background knowledge (OI.7). In telling me this, he was drawing coherently on input from several modules, including IL and TR&W.

With stories, he varied his techniques, depending on whether he was using a coursebook story “essential to the curriculum” or a story he had either created himself or taken from outside the curriculum.

For example, if I’m teaching a story like this one (*pointing at an OWTE narrative in as coursebook he was holding up*) I may have the word cards, put them on the board and I may first introduce the new vocabulary and focus on the language, as it is in the preparation book. But if I’m teaching a story from outside the book, for example, I may change the seating of the class or I may bring them here in my room (*an English teachers’ room he shared with one colleague*), ask them to sit around and tell them the story and then we discuss together. If I feel that they need to use pictures or something like that, we will sit in the classroom, so we can use drawings or pictures on the board. So it depends on the story itself, if it’s short or long or if I want them to prepare it before. It depends (OI.7).

With coursebook stories, Omar emphasized: “I *can* change them, but, as I told you before, we should teach it as it’s here.” There would be “lots of questions to answer after they read”, and he had to think about the learners’ end of semester exams. “Are the coursebook stories real stories or are they vehicles for language learning?”, I asked him. “We can’t change them”, Omar assured me.

For example, if we have foreign names, we can’t put our names here, but if there’s a story from outside the curriculum, I can choose any names, I can choose any vocabulary, I can make it a story easily, but here we can’t change. We must teach all the things (OI.7).

He sounded very confident in making this distinction, more so than he had when I had raised the issue 17 months earlier. His practice in this regard seemed to have solidified, and he could articulate quite calmly the reasons for his actions (OI.7).

I asked him if he used chain reading much to help learners. “It depends”, he told me.

For example, if I’m teaching a lesson with instructions, ‘how to make an omelette’, for example, if I have many steps, I ask the pupils to read them using chain reading, and also I can use it with (coursebook) stories, start with the first pupil, ‘read the first sentence’, then the second pupil ‘complete’, yes (OI.7).

As to the stories from outside the curriculum, with which he used other techniques, telling them or sharing them with the learners, he managed to use these “about once a month, on average”, unless there was free time, allowing extra use (OI.7). Omar was focusing more on developing environmental literacy and encouraging extensive reading. “As you see here”, he told me earlier in the year, pointing to the wall behind him in the school, “we have these posters and cards. I’m trying to give them some books to read, stories, like that” (OI.6). Later, he made an ‘English Club’, stocking a spare room with “a lot of books, stories, dictionaries, audio and video cassettes and many other teaching aids”, purchased with his own money from some Indian travelling salesmen. He decorated the club with colourful posters and started using it in “free” lessons; music and art, subjects for which the school had no teacher. He also started to engage the learners in extra activities; in making posters and wall magazines, and in producing simple short stories, aiming “to change the poor environment of reading in the school” (OA.5). To find out if the boys read the books he encouraged them to borrow, Omar would “get a summary, vocabulary or verbs, something like that” from them, after telling them, they “must read” (OI.8).

Omar had been influenced by an April 2005 TR&W day release session on extensive reading. However, this had also emphasised the need to motivate students, and had argued for the use of ‘response’ activities that encourage a focus on overall meaning and reinforce the idea that reading is enjoyable. Omar, clearly surprised by one of these points, had checked his understanding with me. Was I saying that asking detailed comprehension questions was unhelpful? (ON.1). I explained, but evidence suggests Omar continued using comprehension questions in the same way. An inference is that concepts relating to extensive reading had been assimilated only partially into his PK.

In terms of helping learners develop reading skills, did he feel he was a better teacher now (September 2005) than he had been a year earlier? “Yes, sure”, he replied, “because, as I told you, I discovered their weaknesses and I discovered new techniques, so that I can help them” (OI.7). In his December 2005 dissertation, he recounted using the following practical strategies; familiarizing learners with the alphabet through games, songs, matching activities, using rhyming words “to build phonemic awareness”, using illustrations when storytelling to develop visual literacy,

encouraging learners to track words with their fingers, and ‘stretching’ words out to help them recognize ‘jail’ words (that “don’t follow phonetic rules”) such as ‘the’, ‘was’, ‘you’, (OA.5).

Solutions to the learners’ problems depended on co-operation between teacher and pupils, homework, extra lessons, libraries in house and home, gaining parents’ support “to provide a reading culture” in the house, basic vocabulary teaching, choral repetition, reading aloud for pronunciation, work on the relationships between sound and spelling, modelling by the teacher, repeated exposure to language and creative practice of it, carefully graded tasks, shared reading, silent reading, chain reading, “use of simple stories to encourage reading habits”, the encouragement of interactive processing and the use of questioning techniques to monitor and assess understanding at different stages of the task, guiding learners to become independent readers (OA.5). The range of these solutions suggests there was some justification for the growth of his self-efficacy in overcoming learners’ problems. Crucially, though, how many of these strategies could he make practical use of? Evidence from observations suggests that growth in his PK had occurred, but that this was limited (7.8, 7.10-11, above).

7.14 Omar’s dissertation evaluated

Omar’s literature review was praised for “discussing interactive processing quite well”, but the work, as a whole, was criticized for asking questions that were “far too broad and general to be researchable” (OF.5). He had carried out a miscue analysis, but then only referred, in a very limited way, to the findings, those I have reported (in 7.12) above. He had not said much about miscues “because of space”, but recalled pupils had mostly focused on bottom-up strategies. His comprehension questions had looked for answers “within one word or two” (OI.8), and he had not, therefore, elicited global understanding (7.7, above).

Apart from that, he had “simply talked” to another teacher, eliciting views on his very general questions (OF.5), and had interviewed Grade 7 learners, asking questions they would have found it very difficult to answer: “in Grade 4, you didn’t read English, ‘only small words’? What is the problem – with you or with your teacher? ... Now, how can we work together to solve these problems?” (OA.5).

As research, Omar's dissertation would have failed, but passed for the 'relative strength' of the literature review (OF.5). This can only have damaged Omar's self-efficacy in researching his learners' problems in reading, though there were indications he might recover from this. "If I finish my dissertation", he had told me in September 2005, "that doesn't mean that I will stop researching or looking at my pupils and for ways of how to improve them. I will try to find anything, because this is my work" (OI.7).

7.15 Discussion

I will now address my research questions with specific reference to this case.

RQ1. What changes does he report in his self-efficacy in helping learners overcome difficulties in reading?

I turn first to statements Omar made at different stages of the course, both in interviews and assignments (Table 7.1, overleaf), to address this question.

As is clear from the table, Omar emphasized a strong sense of self-determination at different points in the course. His hard work was focused on improving himself and his students, and, in these statements, he reveals qualities of determination and persistence. These are indicators of high global self-efficacy (GSE), which may have sustained him through the course, perhaps supporting self-efficacy in specific areas related to the development of reading skills.

In terms of helping learners overcome difficulties in reading, I have examined Omar's self-efficacy statements in relation to making methodological decisions and following the syllabus, the latter since OWTE is not very conducive to the interactive development of reading skills (7.9, above) and might benefit from adaptation.

In the first year of the course, Omar spoke efficaciously about changing anything he wanted to change. However, he also felt frustrated in dealing with reading difficulties in the new school. Teaching a higher level than he had before, he lacked self-efficacy initially in finding appropriate strategies (7.4, above). He found silent reading practice did not work.

Table 7.1: Omar's self-efficacy statements related to overcoming difficulties in reading

<i>Stage in the course</i>	<i>Omar's self-determination</i>	<i>Self-efficacy statements related to:</i>	
		<i>Following the syllabus</i>	<i>Making methodological decisions</i>
2003	I'm working if they are here or not. If the inspector comes or not, I'm working, I'm trying. It's the same class, the same work I did... I'm not working for the inspector. I'm working really to improve myself (OI.2).	<p>Many years before I was just following the teachers' book ... our inspectors told us you have to follow the teachers' book, letter by letter (OI.1).</p> <p>Now I'm not following the teachers' book. I can change anything I want to change (OI.2)</p>	I sometimes feel I am banging my head against a stone wall. I try to give them a lot of silent reading practice, but they can't read so this extra practice is no good... if they can't recognize the words, they can't understand them (OA.1).
2004		If the inspector comes, I wouldn't change anything. I would teach it as it is (OI.3).	Using chain reading, we can help weaker pupils by saying the sound of the initial consonant of the difficult word. Also we can encourage and motivate them by getting them to read easier sentences and better pupils to read more difficult sentences (OA.4).
2005	Even I finish my BA, I will not stop my progress, Inshallah. I will try to improve myself and my pupils ... if I finish my dissertation, that doesn't mean that I will stop researching or looking at my pupils and the ways how to improve them. I will try to find anything, because this is my work (OI.7).	I can change the (coursebook narrative) but, as I told you before, we should teach it as it is here ... we must teach all the things (OI.7).	<p>We have lots of strategies to help our pupils, lots and lots (OI.6).</p> <p>If there's a story outside the classroom, I can choose any names, I can choose any vocabulary, I can make it a story easily (OI.7).</p> <p>Sure (I am a better teacher) because, as I told you, I discovered their weaknesses and I discovered new techniques, so that I can help them (OI.7).</p>

The following year, he thought he had the answer, chain reading, and spoke efficaciously about the benefits of increasing the amount of this he used. Indeed, I was concerned about his high self-efficacy in using this one rather traditional, and potentially demotivating technique (7.4, above). I was also concerned by what I perceived as his increased conservatism with regard to the syllabus.

In the last year of the course, Omar seemed to have rationalized what he could and could not do with the syllabus. For external purposes, relating to learners' summative assessment and administrative requirements, he could argue confidently that he had to follow the coursebook. However, he had also found a place for stories, in extra lessons added to the curriculum. Omar indicated strongly that he felt more efficacious in helping learners develop reading skills as he had a broader range of strategies to use. With the coursebook narratives he felt he could not change the plot, but he could use a range of techniques, also true, he felt, of his use of extracurricular stories.

RQ2. To what extent do changes in his self-efficacy beliefs reflect changes in his PK?

In addressing this question, I first evaluate Omar's reported and observed practices against various criteria related to developing reading skills. I have extrapolated these criteria from the following modules; Stories (7.5, above), LAL (7.4, above), IL (7.4, 7.7, above), TR&W (7.11, 7.13, above). See Table 7.2, below.

Table 7.2: Omar's reported and observed practices evaluated against various criteria related to developing reading skills

Is there evidence of growth in his ability to:

A	<p><i>Use stories to develop knowledge of the world and of texts, imagination, motivation, predictive and social skills, knowledge of the word?</i> Yes, but this is uneven. For his December 2003 shared reading, he reported behaviour consistent with all of these (7.5, above). However, when interviewed in February 2005, he seemed to have forgotten, until prompted, that shared reading could develop knowledge of the word (7.9, above). Later, in his December 2005 dissertation, he articulated clearly that shared reading could support the teaching of phonics (7.13, above).</p>
B	<p><i>Consider the affective side of learning when planning reading activities in class?</i> This is perhaps the most disappointing aspect of Omar's development, as there was no obvious growth. Despite recognizing that chain reading created fear (7.9-10, above), he persisted in using it, even though he had been the victim of</p>

	<p>strict methods as a child (7.2, above) and saw himself as a father figure (7.3, above). I am not sure if I witnessed fear, although he did shout at a boy “as a joke” (7.6, above). He could have lowered the affective filter in a number of ways, by, for example, not insisting that learners stand to read (7.11, above). There was also an absence of obvious warmth or intimacy in the lessons I observed, even though class size was generally small.</p>
C	<p><i>Conduct miscue analysis to identify strategies used by learners?</i> To a certain extent, although the boy he conducted the miscue analysis with for IL (7.7, above) seemed to use more of an interactive than a bottom-up approach. Omar does not seem to have developed further in his use of this method, and, perhaps, given the paucity of information provided in his dissertation (7.14, above), lost interest in it. Not checking global understanding (7.7, 7.14, above) was a distinct flaw in his methodology.</p>
D	<p><i>Help learners decode print, using context and cotext, breaking words down, drawing on visual memory and knowledge of grapho-phonemic correspondence?</i> Yes, to some extent. He was able to help learners focus on initial letters and whole word shapes in April 2004 (7.6, above). I first saw him break words down a year later (7.10, above). I never saw him encourage learners to use cotextual clues, although it might have helped them (7.8, above).</p>
E	<p><i>Activate schemata before learners interact with a text?</i> Yes, and Omar was conscious of doing this (7.11, above).</p>
F	<p><i>Develop reading sub-skills, such as gist reading, skimming and scanning, search reading, careful reading?</i> Not really, although he reported encouraging learners to skim and scan. In October 2004, he could have tried to develop gist reading, but instead focused on supporting vocabulary (7.8, above).</p>
G	<p><i>Develop critical thinking and evaluation skills?</i> No, but there is insufficient evidence to judge.</p>
H	<p><i>Make the school a more literate environment?</i> Yes, and Omar deserves credit for this. He was creating posters to encourage environmental literacy in April 2005, and, later in the year, started an English club (7.13, above).</p>
I	<p><i>Encourage extensive reading by organizing a library of books to borrow?</i> Yes, by April 2005 (7.13, above).</p>
J	<p><i>Motivate learners to read extensively through activities that allow them to respond personally, thus reinforcing the idea that reading is enjoyable?</i> No, the “summary, vocabulary or verbs, something like that” (7.13, above) would be neither very personal nor motivating.</p>

As can be seen, growth in Omar’s PK was very uneven. Data from various sources, including assignments and interviews, suggest that methods introduced on the course were only partially assimilated into his teaching. This seems true of his use of miscue analysis to identify learners’ strategies and diagnose their problems (C in Table 7.2), his use of shared reading to support their skills at different world-word levels (A), and his encouragement of extensive reading (H-J). Data from observations also indicate a

partial assimilation of course content. While he missed an opportunity to develop gist reading in one lesson (F), he activated schemata in another (E), improving the teachers' book procedures in the process, and broke words down (D) in another two. The biggest puzzle was his neglect of the affective filter (B). Belief in and adherence to traditional methods seemed to override concerns for learners' feelings he also had.

Moving beyond a particular consideration of Omar's PK in relation to developing reading skills, of relevance, too, is his PK with regard to researching and reflecting upon experience. Regarding the latter, one change I detected in the last year of the programme was more of an acceptance of alternative methods. Omar's position in November 2004 and February 2005 was quite uncompromising. Chain reading was 'the' answer, the certainties in his language seem to indicate, 'will' perhaps the most frequently used modal in his discourse (7.8-9, above). By September 2005, however, he was much more relaxed about using chain reading alongside other methods. "It depends", he said several times, "if I'm teaching ... if there's a story". He used the word 'if' 9 times in the short extracts of data I quote from (in 7.13) above, while the modal 'may' also seemed to occur with greater frequency. This suggests that, perhaps as a result of greater reflection upon varied experience, he became more willing to recognize that different methods could complement each other and more willing to try alternative strategies in tandem, becoming, in the process, more open-minded. An inference is that Omar's statements indicating self-efficacy growth, which were based on having "lots of strategies", including "new techniques" (Table 7.1), are partially justified.

I say 'partially', since Omar also believed that one of the reasons he was a 'better teacher' was that he had "discovered (learners') weaknesses", and I am unsure how true this is. His dissertation was criticized for its lack of research (7.14, above), and indeed his own words suggest that long experience rather than research had provided insights into learners' problems (7.12, above). In his dissertation, he lists practical strategies and solutions to problems (7.13, above), but it is unclear how many of these had been accommodated into his practice. Clearly, Omar did develop, but his development was limited, and his reported increases in self-efficacy were not fully justified.

RQ3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in his PK and self-efficacy in helping learners overcome difficulties in reading, and how?

Omar's professional and geographical isolation were not helpful to his development. In many ways, he felt alone within his school (7.12, above), while, within the environment, it had been a struggle from the beginning (7.1, above).

Omar's practices were rooted in tradition, but he was attracted by new ideas. Some of these he adopted enthusiastically; groupwork (7.3, above), shared reading (7.5, above), making materials communicative (7.3, 7.6, above), but then seemed to forget about. His classes were always seated in rows during my last few school visits.

Some of the course input Omar received might have sent out contradictory messages. His great enthusiasm for chain reading in 2004 might have been encouraged by IL input on miscue analysis (7.4, above). Though miscue analysis was introduced as a research technique to be carried out in private, it was interpreted as a justification for the traditional use of chain reading, one function of which was to assess learners (7.9, above). Shared reading may have been forgotten about in all this.

Omar continued to be influenced by new reading skills input, on levels of comprehension and extensive reading (7.11, above) throughout the last year of the course, during which his interest in miscue analysis may have waned (Table 7.2, C). At some point, too, though, he started to make deeper connections between modules, identifying links between them and realizing he had "lots of strategies" at his disposal (Table 7.1). Tutorials, such as that in February 2005 (7.9, above), which challenged his assumptions, may have helped here, if he reflected on them. I believe he may have, as there is greater maturity in his later understanding of shared reading (Table 7.2, A).

His learning from day release sessions was mixed. Sometimes, he checked understanding, but without this new understanding seeming to affect his

practice; e.g.; with regard to comprehension questions (7.13, above). Sometimes, he seemed uninfluenced by input; e.g.; on chain reading (7.4, above). Sometimes, his practice seemed to change as a result of input; e.g.; on activating schemata (7.11, above).

Omar developed as a result of the course. I believe he would have gained more from it, though, if he had been less isolated, had engaged more practically with new ideas, and had been better supported through feedback (7.8, above). Course design, too, through integrating the Stories and IL modules, could have been more helpful, as could assignment choice for the latter. In my opinion, miscue analysis was something of a red herring. Nevertheless, by the end of the course, it is creditable that Omar was using a broader range of strategies with some confidence to support learners and had created an English Club with commitment and enthusiasm. In time, I hoped he would gain a deeper understanding of the affective filter and of its role in reading skills development.

Chapter 8: Mariyam's story – developing reflective practice

8.1 Introduction

Mariyam was the Senior English Teacher (SET) of a Basic Education Cycle 1 school (Grades 1-4). The school, in a leafy urban area, was well resourced, with colourful English language posters on the walls visibly supporting environmental literacy.

Mariyam was enthusiastic about the BA course from the outset and took her studies seriously, paying attention intently when new ideas were introduced, reading avidly and sharing ideas with friends (SETs in similar schools) during groupwork discussions. She wanted to exploit the practical benefits of the course, set as a target reflecting more deeply on her work (M1.2) and later planned to focus in her dissertation on helping teachers develop as reflective practitioners. I am interested in exploring changes Mariyam reported in her self-efficacy (TSE) beliefs in this, in discovering the extent to which these changes reflected changes in her practical knowledge (PK) and in ascertaining which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced these changes and how.

I will tell Mariyam's story according to the methodological principles outlined in Chapter 4 (above), addressing research questions at the end of the chapter. I start by presenting a picture of Mariyam in action, teaching and reflecting, with a view to analysing the latter.

8.2 Mariyam teaching and reflecting (October 2003)

It was all so friendly, so relaxed, the pleasant 'hello's and low-key 'good morning's from the smiling Grade 2 children, as I entered the classroom. One or two also asked me: "How are you?", "What's your name?". How refreshing it was that they were not all standing to attention and chanting "Good Morning, Teacher" in unison, as happens too often when I visit schools! I reciprocated, asking a few questions, smiling, trying to help them stay relaxed in the presence of a stranger, before sitting down to watch the lesson. The classroom seemed bright, cheerful and well organized, the children sitting in groups, lots of learners' work on display (MO.2).

Getting the learners' attention in a calm, pleasant way, Mariyam, standing at the front of the class, held up a cardboard clock. "What is it?", she asked. "A clock, yes, very good. How many are there in the class?" The children scanned the room quickly, searching the displays. There were three they could see. "Yes, very good." "It's one o'clock, says the clock, tick tock, tick tock", Mariyam continued in a musical, sing song voice, previewing the rhyme they would afterwards hear. "Get out your clocks." The children all produced cardboard clocks of their own, from the flaps at the back of their class books. "It's one o'clock", she said, holding up her clock to show them, and all the children adjusted theirs accordingly. "It's two o'clock", and they were busy with their hour hands (MO.2). Later, Mariyam recalled:

I revised, in a quick way, the times, by using my clock. I also let them listen... and then I asked them to make the time... the rhyme was very quick. They should move the hands, hours hand and the minutes hand, very quickly. I tried to help them by my clock in front of the class. That was step one (MI.1).

I prompted more and she recalled she had supported them in various ways, focusing them through her voice and gestures, getting their attention, helping them "go inside the topic quickly", refreshing their minds. What was the benefit of that type of activity for the children?

- M. Because they have their own clock, they made it, they like to use these clocks to know the time in sequence, 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock until 12 o'clock. Also the benefit from these activities is to warm them up, to activate their minds, their thinking, to revise the numbers, and also there is indirect way in learning because they are repeating the phrases of the clock rhyme, 'it's one o'clock, says the clock'. They are saying the time, they can respond to the time if anybody asks them the question 'What time is it?', they can say very easily... so they already pick it from the rhyme but indirectly.
- I. Yes, it's a song, I think, that's very useful for the senses, very good for language learning.
- M. It has lots of repeating, repetition, in the rhyme that helps pupils to keep it also.
- I. As you say, there's natural repetition of the language, which is good. It gets them used to the rhythm of English as well.
- M. And also, they are following the rhymes by listening and by doing something, they are learning by doing.
- I. They're physically involved, aren't they, (yes) so they're listening and they're really moving their (hands) yes the hands of their clock and if they look up from their clock then they have the teacher demonstrating the activity (demonstrating with them, yes) yes, so it's good for the eyes, good for the ears, and (hands) good for the hands, so involving the whole learner in that way, yes, interesting (MI.1).

Listening to this dialogue afterwards, I was struck by how it developed. Initially, Mariyam described Step 1 in a matter-of-fact, 'routine' way. However, when I

prompted her, asking her to recall the specific forms of support she had provided, she seemed to switch into a deeper mode of thinking. This was sustained when I asked her to consider how the activity had benefited the learners, as the ideas she then produced, quite enthusiastically, were learner and learning-centred. As the conversation continued, there was an interchange of ideas, with my point about the value of the song for the senses picked up on when she discussed ‘listening’ and ‘doing’.

Mariyam’s ability to reflect was evident here. She seemed to possess qualities identified by Dewey (1933) as pre-requisites for reflective practice, including a well-developed sense of responsibility and wholeheartedness. Her teaching was clearly informed by these attributes (MO.1-2). Mariyam was a teacher who cared. She cared about the feelings of “the weak, shy and quiet children”, and wanted them all to “love English... without putting them under pressure or under frightening feelings.” “I try to relax them, she continued,

to let them to learn positive attitudes in indirect ways. I try to use games, activities. I try to give them freedom in the classroom to talk, write, read, speak, even use Arabic if they don’t know the meaning. I try to help them in other ways like encouraging and praising them individually and in groups. Of course I use controlling ways but without frightening them. I don’t like to use a stick and I don’t like teachers to use sticks or other punishments because these leave our children feeling badly, suffering, and also they will lose their confidence (MI.2).

8.3 Mariyam’s development prior to the course

Mariyam had always tried to be a kind teacher (MI.4), but had not always been as comfortable in the classroom as she was now. She remembered observed teaching practice for her initial teacher training college (TTC) diploma, a decade earlier, as ‘terrible’. “My mouth became dry”, she told me, “my heart was beating, I was very nervous and confused and sometimes I forgot lots of things.” Unaware of children or strategies, she just followed the techniques learned in college (MI.5).

Mariyam graduated from the TTC and then taught OWTE Grades 4-6 “in an old school, with the old syllabus... nothing changed” (MI.3). She followed the teachers’ book throughout, concentrating less on the learners, she realized much later (MI.7), than the book or the language. “I spent the 4 years without thinking about change or adapting anything”, she told me. She had been unaware how to do this and was also ‘afraid’. “Maybe the inspector will not encourage me”, she continued,

and maybe it's wrong, something wrong, my thinking was not changeable. Also, there was no course, no refresher course from the inspector or from the older teachers. There is no senior teacher also to change anything or to advise us to change. The inspectors also come to observe the lesson. If it's OK, they said 'OK', if it's not OK, 'you have just to focus on that thing', without reference to thinking. Even the inspectors, they don't have these new ideas, these modern ideas (MI.3).

Then, in 1997, she was sent to Muscat for a 150-hour course designed to prepare her to teach the new curriculum, English For Me (EFM) that would be used in the Basic Education (BE) schools. This primary English teachers' (PRIT) course served as an introduction to practical things that BE teachers teaching younger children (Grades 1-4) would be expected to do; use TPR activities, songs, games, stories, new materials including big books, groupwork as a mode of classroom interaction, learner-sensitive classroom management techniques and new methods of continuous assessment.

Mariyam liked the trainer, a kind and experienced lady, who encouraged her "to love basic education" and "think deeply" about the forthcoming work. "Maybe because she was a woman also", Mariyam continued, "we had freedom with her to sing, dance, do everything" (MI.4).

After the PRIT course, Mariyam worked in one of the first BE schools in the region, which put her in the spotlight. She recalled there were numerous visitors from the Ministry: "The people who established the new syllabus came to visit us and discuss with us. They always tried to encourage us to use modern techniques... and do the best for our pupils" (MI.3). After a few years, as the number of BE schools increased, Mariyam was transferred to one of the new ones, where she was now, and promoted to SET (MI.4).

Though this new environment was conducive to personal growth and development, Mariyam was keen to join the BA Programme in late 2002, describing it as "a great chance", "a beautiful dream" (MI.3). The biggest disappointment of her life had been not getting into Sultan Qaboos University more than a decade earlier. She explained there were a lot of high marks in the Secondary School leaving exams that year. Nevertheless, she managed the next best thing, getting into the TTC, and she had always wanted to be an English teacher. Yet the course was something of a disappointment, a two rather than a three-year programme, with many subjects taught in Arabic (MI.2). She felt neither her grasp of methodology nor her English were very

good. She graduated in 1994, she told me, with “my simple language and with my simple information and knowledge”, perceiving herself as not quite a ‘real’ English teacher (MI.3).

For years afterwards, she had felt painfully self-conscious about her English, which “was very simple”, so simple, she reported, “it didn’t help me to do my work, it didn’t help me even to get contact with the real situation because I was always afraid. I was always afraid that I would make mistakes and errors”. “I tried sometimes”, she continued, “shyly, with a shy try, when I was outside in the supermarket and always at the doctors”, but had had so little confidence in her language that she did not feel encouraged to use it “to go and ask or search” for information that would help her. Taking a 150-hour Intermediate level language course at the British Council in 1996 had provided some relief, though (MI.3), leading to her successfully taking the PET Exam and qualifying for entry to the BA.

Mariyam’s candid recollections of her development present a revealing picture of how her self-efficacy had grown. During the TTC diploma course, until 1994, observed teaching practice was ‘terrible’, inducing nerves and confusion, states associated with low self-efficacy. Then, while she was teaching OWTE over the next four years, neither the school environment nor the supervision she received were conducive to the development of reflective practice. Mariyam was ‘afraid’ to adapt the teachers’ book procedures in case it was ‘wrong’ and she was criticized. In terms of classroom decision-making, she was thus unable to fully regulate her own behaviour, and self-regulation is an important condition for high self-efficacy.

She was also anxious about the quality of her spoken English. If she was ‘shy’ speaking English with presumably low status expatriate shopkeepers (typically from the Indian subcontinent), then one can infer that in using English in post-lesson discussions with much higher status expatriate inspectors her self-efficacy would have been low. Lack of self-efficacy in using English in the post-lesson discussion context may have contributed to the lack of dialogue, she seems to indicate, that characterized such encounters. If she palpably lacked self-efficacy in using English this may have influenced inspectors to tell her ‘OK’ or ‘Focus on that’, rather than try to develop her capacity to reflect on her work.

She indicates that attending the PRIT course in 1997 was an important experience, following the language course of the previous year. She recognizes, too, that then being part of a stimulating BE school environment, with lots of visitors, observations and other support, had helped her. I find it hard to recognise the picture Mariyam paints of herself prior to 1998, as by 2003, when I got to know her, she was clearly much more efficacious in many respects. She seemed self-confident when I first saw her teach, and from the first interview she was hardly tongue-tied. Her turns were frequently longer than mine, which suggests that her self-efficacy in using English was much stronger than it had been earlier.

8.4 Mariyam's development throughout 2003

At the end of her first year on the BA Programme, in December 2003, Mariyam reflected that her language, specifically her “speaking, reading and also writing skills”, had improved considerably. She reported gains in the complexity as well as accuracy of her vocabulary and grammar. Language modules, in particular, had supported this growth. She had also benefited from input on methodology and from the different types of learning experiences the course provided: opportunities to discuss, brainstorm, read, refer and identify ideas to apply in the classroom. When she tried new ways of “controlling groups, encouraging students, increasing students’ motivation, helping weak children,” she could observe her learners, reflect on her teaching and evaluate theories (MI.2). She sounded efficacious here, justifiably so, in my opinion, in light of the observational and interview data I had collected two months earlier (8.2, above).

Mariyam had been particularly influenced by the Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL) module, which had supplied many ideas. She was now helping parents use different strategies with their children “to revise things in English with them” at home. Her advice varied according to the needs of the child and the ‘results’ of techniques already tried. Parents were given freedom to choose from amongst her ideas (MI.2). In articulating this, Mariyam seemed not only whole-hearted and responsible in trying to share ideas, but also, in offering advice that included alternative suggestions, open-minded, the third pre-requisite of a reflective practitioner identified by Dewey (1933).

Besides qualities, reflective skills are important in a practitioner too, though. To what extent did she possess these in noticing, listening, analysing, problem-solving, hypothesizing, articulating arguments based on evidence and evaluating outcomes against objectives (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999, Galvez-Martin et al., 1998)? Furthermore, where was her level of reflection (Van Manen, 1991) on a cline from technical to critical? The latter would suggest her teaching was informed by a commitment to learning and social justice. To examine Mariyam's PK in light of these criteria, we need to look at further examples of her practice.

8.5 Reflecting on a successful lesson (April 2004)

In the next observed lesson (EFM Grade 2), Mariyam used flashcards of strange looking clowns as a warmer, eliciting adjectives that described them; fat, short, thin, happy, tall, sad, and then corresponding homemade word cards (MO.3). This was recycled vocabulary, to increase learners' familiarity, to help them "read and recognize" the words. "How did you respond", I asked her afterwards, "when a child said 'small'?"

- I. You held up 'short', I think, [yes] and the child said 'small'. How did you respond to that?
- M. I said 'yes' because I know that she means that the size of this clown is small, but she don't know that there is another adjective for it. When I said 'yes, yes' I encourage her to think more and produce another word, which was short, and that girl in the end she produced it... I don't want to discourage them because they say the first thing that they think of, because they are spontaneous, they have spontaneous thinking, so we have to accept all their answers and then we can use another way to change them without affecting them badly.
- I. Yes, and as you say, she understood the meaning generally, she'd also recognized the shape of the word, more or less, it's got the same number of letters and the same first letter, so there was a grapho-phonemic fit there as well.
- M. Yes, they are beginning with 's', 'short' and 'small'.
- I. And as you say, in terms of motivation, certainly that approach doesn't frighten children, it encourages them.
- M. And maybe because the pupils, also in Grade 1, they learn these adjectives, 'small' and other adjectives, 'tiny' and 'little', so they know for this size, the small size, more than one word. That's why they will produce these words that they know (MI.3).

The rest of the lesson was focused on a song, 'Sing a song of baskets'. Mariyam elicited key vocabulary in a warm and friendly way, varying her techniques, accepting easy answers quickly from individuals, letting learners share ideas to produce more

challenging answers together. She then used realia, whiteboard and big book to contextualize the song, encouraging children to notice that characters in the picture were carrying baskets, showing the difference between 'full' and 'empty' with the help of a jug. She listened carefully to the learners, responding with interest to what they had to say. "Honey? Oh, you like it, do you?" "Oh yes, money!", in response to a boy who told her that he had some ("Look, teacher!"), holding up a banknote. "You're a rich man" (MO.3, MI.3).

The learners engaged in listening activities; 'listen and look', 'listen and say which basket', 'listen and sing' (MO.3). However, identifying the correct baskets was "difficult" for "most of them". The word 'money' "wasn't clear on the tape", and there were difficulties with 'a basket full of tasty dates', because of the word 'tasty', although they knew "I can taste', taste the verb". They also got "confused between carrots and parrots". However, having words with the same rhyme was "very useful" for learners, which one girl had recognized, saying she would "keep" (remember) parrots, a new word, because of its similarity to carrots. "They use these strategies sometimes without (having been taught) them", Mariyam added (MI.3).

She "noticed" that the next activity, the singing, was also "difficult", as "it was the first time to sing the phrases" and the rhythm of the music made it harder "to break" them down. However, Mariyam was optimistic it would get easier through the unit, so that by the end some learners would produce phrases like "'a basket full of honey', 'a basket full of chocolate cake'" (MI.3).

Mariyam kept them interested throughout these activities, her voice warm and enthusiastic, her intonation varied, control immaculate and eye contact even. There was a recap of vocabulary, with flashcards on the whiteboard, followed by a game of 'What's missing?' The learners closed their eyes, Mariyam removed a flashcard, they opened their eyes: "What's missing?" They shouted out the answers, enjoying themselves (MO.3). This game, which they 'loved', was "very useful for keeping vocabulary," Mariyam reported (MI.3).

To recap, she possessed skills, identified (in 8.4) above, as desirable in a reflective practitioner. During the lesson, she listened carefully, noticed difficulties the learners

faced, observed them thoughtfully while they worked. Later she could analyse their responses, supporting her statements with data from the lesson. When asked to explain decisions made, she could justify these against an internally consistent set of principled beliefs about learning underlying her post-lesson discussion discourse; children are spontaneous, learn indirectly, have feelings, draw upon their existing knowledge, need activities of a suitable challenge level, develop their own learning strategies and acquire language gradually with the help of repeated exposure to it. Influences of various modules are discernible in these ideas; TEYL for the characteristics of young learners identified by Halliwell (1992), LAL for aspects of learning and motivation. Initial Literacy (IL) content was also drawn upon in her discussion of initial letters, word shapes, rhythm and rhyme. It seemed she was continuing to integrate this knowledge into her teaching, a process the post-lesson discussion may have been helping. This discussion was focused throughout on the learners and learning. She seemed relaxed about her own contribution to the lesson, and did not really mention it.

8.6 Reflecting on a less successful lesson (October 2004)

It did not always go so well. At the end of the next observed lesson, the Grade 3 class were divided half and half, lining opposite walls, one half repeating questions on the tape, such as “Is Maha thin?”, and the other half repeating answers true of distorted reflections in a hall of mirrors they could see in their coursebooks; “No, she’s fat”. After earlier seeming lively and involved, the learners appeared listless, mechanical (MO.4), which Mariyam addressed at the start of the post-lesson discussion, in a responsible, open-minded way, as soon as I asked for a reaction.

The activity had been challenging for the learners, placing different kinds of task demands (Cameron, 2001) on them. Mariyam had learned about these (cognitive, metalinguistic, language, involvement, interactional and physical) through the Tasks module. How had she perceived the problem? Did she have solutions? In Table 8.1 (below), I analyse the post-lesson discussion discourse for evidence of problem-solving, one of the skills identified in 8.4 (above), as needed by reflective practitioners.

Table 8.1 Mariyam's reflections on a 'hall of mirrors' lesson analysed for problem-solving, considering the demands the activity placed on the learners

Turn	Dialogue	Commentary
A	It's OK. Overall it's OK, but in the end the pupils make some noises and they were not attentive with me. Maybe next lesson, with another class, I will change the way that I do the repeating after the tape. I will ask two groups to stand together and one to repeat the questions and the other to repeat the answers, and then I will ask another two groups, like that, because maybe the number of the pupils, half of the class, make noises and some of them are not concentrating with the tape or maybe they cannot concentrate with each word.	Mariyam outlines the problem (children were noisy, inattentive, not involved). She then quickly moves to Possible Solution 1 (PS1) (do the activity in open groups), before restating the problem (noise, lack of concentration).
B	<i>Is it the first time that you've done it like that?</i>	<i>Exploring the problem - a new procedure?</i>
C	No, not the first time, but maybe because it's a question and answer. I did it for a story and it was very successful, for also repeating.	Willing to reflect on experience, Mariyam differentiates between this activity and a similar one.
D	<i>What did they actually do in the story?</i>	<i>Probing for details.</i>
E	They repeat the voices, the sounds, some of the phrases.	Mariyam recalls.
F	<i>Were they saying shorter things?</i>	<i>Exploring the problem, I am hypothesizing it relates to language demands.</i>
G	Yes, shorter things... Maybe, because the questions, for example, the third question, 'Is Maha's hair short?' - it's a little bit long for them. Maybe, I notice that, some children for example, like Hilal, know the answer in advance because they can see the pictures, so they are not concentrating with the questions, the repeat questions, or hearing the questions from the tape. They already know the questions from the pictures.	Mariyam listens and affirms that the language may have been too challenging, providing evidence from the lesson materials to support this hypothesis. She suggests, too, that the cognitive challenge may have been too light (all information visible). Supporting this point with further evidence from the lesson (the behaviour of a boy), she suggests this may have affected their level of involvement.
H	<i>Yes, and another factor could be perhaps that it was the end of the lesson as well. I mean the bell went while you were doing that and they probably would have sensed that their next lesson was about to start...(Yes) It would start fairly</i>	<i>I agree, but do not develop the cognitive challenge issue. Instead, picking up on the theme of involvement demands, I hypothesize that a further cause of the learners' behaviour was</i>

	<i>soon... OK. What's the value, though, would you say of having the whole class doing it? I mean, you say that next time you might do it in groups... OK. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two ways, would you say?</i>	<i>the time, the end of the lesson. I then invite Mariyam to evaluate PS1 against the original procedure.</i>
I	If I stand or ask the whole class to stand and each half standing to the wall, the first thing, of course, getting them to stand and move rather than sitting while repeating the words or the language, because from my experience, I could say if I ask pupils to repeat some language while they are sitting, like questions and answers, something like that, the first mistake is that the instructions will be not clear. How can I divide them without dividing them, without giving clear instructions for them? 'You are A - repeat the questions, you are B, repeat the answers' like that, because they will be all of them sitting. I can, maybe there's another way, I can ask them to do it while they are sitting, but some of them are sitting and others are standing, another way also.	Discussing the rationale behind the original procedure, Mariyam justifies (easier for the children to understand the instructions if physically divided and standing together). Supporting the metalinguistic demands of understanding instructions thus becomes the issue. Mariyam proposes an alternative solution, PS2, (with half the learners standing, half sitting) which will support this aim. She does not really answer my question, though.
J	<i>Yes, but I mean the idea of that way and the way that you tried is to change the routine a little bit (yes) and to split them physically so that ... when there's a physical split that can help them realize that they're part of a group with a certain thing to do and I suppose the advantage as well if they're standing together is that they can pick things up from each other they can realize, OK now we're ...</i>	<i>'Yes, but...' is a dispreferred response (Cook, 1989) (as the preceding discourse had not been structured in the way anticipated?) I affirm the value of the original procedure and of PS2 in helping the learners get more involved. I also indicate their value in supporting the learners' efforts to interact.</i>
K	And it will be very useful for me also to give them instructions, clear instructions, and to get them to pay attention.	Mariyam emphasises her key concern, meeting metalinguistic demands. She reaffirms the value of the original procedure for clarifying the instructions.
L	<i>When was the last time they were divided like that? Was it recently?</i>	<i>Through probing for further details about the learners' last experience of this activity type (F, above), I am signalling that for me the exploration of the problem is not complete.</i>
M	In the last unit, the last unit... It's working, but maybe it depends on the language, the amount of the language, and the time of it.	Mariyam affirms that the basic ½ & ½ procedure works (the learners are sufficiently familiar with the activity type) signalling

		that, for her, the exploration of the problem is complete. She then summarizes this problem, as relating to language and involvement demands.
N	<i>Yes, the amount of language and the time – those are two factors, aren't they? You say it was the last unit. I wondered if it would be helpful just to quickly remind them of that activity through perhaps having something very short to say to each other ...but it is more difficult to do that type of activity when they've got more language to produce, so how do you do it? Do you orchestrate them? Do you get them to say the language together? Could you do it orally, before the tape?</i>	<i>I affirm that she has highlighted two of the relevant factors, and then return briefly to the idea of supporting their efforts to interact, providing a suggestion as to how this might be done, PS3 (aware, though, of her wish to move on). Returning to language demands, I then suggest PS4 (more orchestration before using the tape).</i>
O	Yes, we can model it, for example, the question and the answer with a confident, I can model it with a confident pupil, another way is to ensure that they will use the language, or without even the tape, but the tape is good for listening skills.	Mariyam agrees and builds on the suggestion, focusing on supporting language demands through PS5 (modelling the activity with a confident learner).
P	<i>Yes, absolutely, I mean, it could be, as you say, modelled with two or three children from each side, so that they've got the idea, and first they just watch two people do it or something, two or three from each side do it, and then do it again with the whole side of the room, the whole half, maybe that might be a way.</i>	<i>'Yes, absolutely ...' a strongly preferred response (Cook, 1989). I build on her answer, in proposing PS6 (modelling in small groups across the room). This would support interactional, as well as language, demands, as the modelling would be done in small groups.</i>
Q	I remember something also, when I did that before, I used a competition. I asked them to repeat loudly and listen carefully, 'it is a competition so we will see who is paying attention more than others' and it was successful (MI.4).	Mariyam proposes PS7 (getting the learners to compete to be attentive), which might encourage greater involvement.

Mariyam's post-lesson reflections here, unlike after the song of baskets lesson (8.5, above), were more focused on the technical than the critical. There was a technical problem that needed to be addressed. How well was this managed?

Firstly, there is evidence (in G, above) that she listened and, when prompted, thought more deeply about what happened, using data from the lesson to support her arguments. This allowed her to broaden her analysis of the problem from involvement (A) to language demands (M). Interactional demands were not an issue for her, though (M), and she ignored my suggestions (in N & P) for supporting them.

These terms were not used during the discourse. However, four months later, when Mariyam was discussing demands and support, I reminded her of this lesson, showing her the coursebook pages she had been using. “I remember”, she told me. “I gave them the instructions but the pupils couldn’t follow them very well, and they confused a little bit”. They had “some language demands to ask the questions ... and involvement demands ... there wasn’t a physical demand” (MI.5). She did not mention interactional demands at all, which might seem to confirm that she had not seen their relevance. (Yet she had heard my words. I subsequently heard her on tape, in her role as SET, asking indirectly after interactional demands, as I had done, in a post-lesson discussion, MN.3). What were her solutions to the demands she identified? I return to Table 8.1, above.

Mariyam’s first possible solution (PS1), do the activity in open groups rather than $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$, would allow her to support the metalinguistic demands more easily. However, it would also leave a majority of the students, all but two of the groups, uninvolved at any one time, in what should be a practice activity. This point did not emerge in our discussion, as my question about the advantages and disadvantages of the two procedures (H) was not fully answered.

Mariyam was encouraged by that question, though, to re-examine her ideas. She switched her attention to PS2 (I), very similar to the original procedure but possibly allowing her more control to support metalinguistic demands (K). Giving clear instructions was of paramount importance to her.

After that, she seemed to conclude, though, that, as the procedure had worked before, the problem related chiefly to language and involvement (M). Mariyam then addressed these demands in PS5 (more modelling to support the language) and PS7

(more concentration on attentiveness), solutions that would probably have provided the additional support required.

To recap, Mariyam's abilities to reflect, when prompted, helped her find solutions. Perhaps, she moved to the first solution (PS1) rather quickly, and later ignored two suggestions (PS3 and PS6) that deserved consideration, but she had skills in analysing and solving problems that supported PK growth. The post-lesson discussion was beneficial to her. How well was she able to use these reflective skills as a mentor?

8.7. Planning to research developing reflective practice

Mariyam asked me if she could focus in her dissertation on helping teachers develop as reflective practitioners. This was during a day release session break, in September 2004. Her friend had tried to dissuade her, arguing that she lacked sufficient expertise, and Mariyam conceded, not very efficaciously, that perhaps she was right. After all, she "wasn't an expert". What was my advice? I encouraged her to pursue the idea. In the 2005 summer school, she could take the optional module, INSET and Mentoring, and, in the meantime, there were library resources (MN.1). I was aware that, as a SET, she took her work seriously, and I believed her sincere determination would win through.

In supporting teachers new to her school, Mariyam asked them not to "judge basic education", but to "try things" first, try methods and discuss them. There were meetings through which, she told me, "we share everything together, we discuss teaching styles, teaching techniques, materials, and I try to help them share, improve everything, reflect on their work" (M1.4).

To support reflective practice, she observed the four English teachers, encouraged them to reflect on their own, did workshops and organized peer observations. In post-lesson discussions, she asked them first to assess their lessons generally, report on what they did and why, and then evaluate success in terms of pupils' learning; e.g.; did they "understand the language or not?" (MI.4).

Mariyam had not always conducted feedback in this way. Indeed, at the beginning, she had not asked herself such questions, "but now, after the BA course, Basic

Education, lots of experience with the inspectors and becoming a senior teacher”, she ‘considered’ these questions “much more than before”(MI.4). She had been given tips on conducting post-lesson discussions after becoming a SET in 2000, but her capacity to do so then was affected by ‘limited’ knowledge (MI.5).

One particular inspector had influenced her, “a very nice lady” called Fatma, assigned to the school in 2002-3. Fatma had asked the teachers searching questions after observing them. “First, my teachers didn’t like these questions”, Mariyam reported, “because they cannot talk about their lessons”. Even if they had completed a reflection sheet, they still faced difficulties in explaining what they did and why. Drawing on the help of Fatma, then that gained through the BA course, as well as her experience, Mariyam was learning how to reflect on and discuss her own work, while also helping other teachers become “reflective by talking freely about their lessons” (MI.4).

Even the most experienced still faced difficulties, only partly caused by language. Despite ten years’ teaching experience, they were not accustomed to being asked to reflect. “Fatma was the first one who asked these questions”, Mariyam continued.

That’s why, the first time, they don’t like her, ‘Why’, they said, ‘why she ask us these difficult questions? We don’t know how to reply. This is very difficult for us. We like the lesson, the lesson was very good but we cannot say, we cannot say lots of things about it.’ But she tried to help them, as much as she could, and also we tried to train them to think themselves, to ask themselves regularly these questions, even with inspector or without, or with the senior teacher, with themselves (MI.4).

“Even the good ones always get distracted when the inspectors ask them to talk, analyse and evaluate their observed lessons”, Mariyam wrote in the rationale of her Researching TESOL assignment, submitted in November 2004. “Therefore I want to help them think critically about what was going on in the classroom in order to try to articulate their personal theories of teaching and learning and formulate future plans”. She hoped to prepare the teachers for future challenges they might face, and create a “supportive environment and special atmosphere for teaching and learning English language in the school” (MA.1).

Relating both to case study and action research, her approach would involve the use of observations and interviews. With the permission of the teachers, she would video

each of them teach and then play them their video during the post-lesson discussion. During this interview, which would be audio-recorded, she would pause the video from time to time for stimulated recall (Bailey & Nunan, 1996). Then, with reference to Ur's (1996) 'Enriched reflection' model, she would provide external input through mini-seminars, workshops, meetings and peer observations. She would then observe the teachers again (MA.1).

Although Mariyam had already tried to share ideas she had picked up on the BA course with the teachers, there remained a gulf between her knowledge of public theory and theirs. She had felt very aware of this in the previous academic year (2003-4), she told me, when Fatma's successor as her inspector, Yousef, a Cohort 2 graduate, asked the teachers

the same questions that you asked me, and that we learned on the BA course. My teachers, because they don't get the BA course, they only have diploma and PRIT course, they don't know anything about reflection or about lots of things (MI.4).

Yousef had asked about concepts, such as task demands, that were "strange for them". While trying "to clarify these things", Mariyam could "see the difference" between herself and the teachers, and could see how the BA course had helped develop her understanding of concepts, and helped her think deeply about teaching and language learning. "Before", she continued, she had not known "how to think like that" or talk about work or problems in teaching. There had been "lots of difficulties before the BA" (MI.4).

To recap, it is evident that before joining the BA Programme in December 2002, Mariyam had neither reflected a great deal on her own lessons nor been able to help much in this regard. Though she had been given advice on questions to ask in post-lesson discussions, she had not been able to use these very successfully to encourage reflection, so that when Fatma started inspecting her school in September 2002, her searching questions made a strong impact.

The BA Programme had introduced Mariyam to public theory and helped her analyse and reflect, creating a gap between her PK and that of the teachers in her school. The gap is quite pronounced when one compares Mariyam's reflective skills and attitudes

(8.4-6, above) to those she describes the teachers as possessing. Could she help them bridge that gap?

8.8 Mariyam's understanding of reflective practice (February 2005)

Mariyam received positive feedback on her Researching TESOL assignment. The proposal was described as “very interesting and well written” (MF.1) and she was awarded a ‘B’ (‘Very Good’). Mariyam reported feeling encouraged and seemed more efficacious about conducting the dissertation research. She would do this during the first semester of 2005, and when I interviewed her in early February, I wanted to explore her understanding of key concepts.

Reflection, she told me, involved “thinking back critically about what you did ... in order to do it well or better next time, for future development.” It was part of a three-stage process; planning, teaching “and then later, reflection”. During the planning stage of a reflective cycle, the teacher would “use her experience from the previous lessons and the experience of others, her personal theories and theories that she learned in advance”, together to make decisions. “After that”, Mariyam continued,

she will, of course, teach the lesson and after teaching or while she is teaching the lesson maybe, she will make some change and that change, I believe, will rely on some pressures or some decisions, some personal theories, some notice from the teacher, for her teaching style, for her teaching strategies, methods, for her pupils' level, abilities and skills, and after teaching the lesson, the teacher again will use all of that experience to evaluate what she did in that lesson (MI.5).

Every stage of the cycle was important, but the most important was “the final stage, the evaluation”, when the teacher would go back through the lesson “in her mind”, remembering important things relating to

the learners or her teaching, something that happened, something she didn't predict in the classroom or during teaching, even if it's a good or bad thing. She will evaluate ... why it was good or bad and she will try to think about that according to some criteria that she has... after that, she will have some decisions to go through... for future planning (MI.5).

Her recollections might be supported by notes made while teaching. Afterwards, she might note down further reflections on sheets provided in her preparation book, “but most teachers don't like writing after lessons”. Perhaps, Mariyam speculated, they were not aware how valuable writing notes could be for stimulating reflection (MI.5).

To be a truly reflective practitioner, she felt a teacher needed to read widely in the EFL literature, search for new teaching methods using the Internet and technology, discuss ideas with supervisor, SET, colleagues, as well as other people with expertise in teaching young children. Before all of this, though, Mariyam argued, a teacher needed to “believe in her work, in the importance of reflection”:

She needs to work in her mind, think continually every day about her work and not have a rest for her mind, only following the teachers’ book or other (guides) without thinking about them. Also she needs to think about the pupils, her pupils in the classroom, because the teacher is the only person who knows the pupils, because she lives with them in the classroom, in the classroom atmosphere every day, so she needs to know her pupils very well, their abilities, their skills, who are shy, the weak ones, to help them and to support them... So, reflection is the important thing the teacher can depend on for many things, for herself and for her pupils (MI.5).

As a SET helping teachers become reflective practitioners, she needed good relationships to facilitate her work and “a comfortable atmosphere” for post-lesson discussions. As she conducted these, she needed “special questions... to get them to think critically” and “soft language to persuade them, let them think, put ideas in their minds”. She needed to avoid “talking too much” about the lesson herself, aiming rather to elicit as much as possible, in the spirit of supporting rather than supervising. In structuring a post-lesson discussion, she would first “ask the teacher”, she reported, “to think about the lesson in general” and report on what she did. This would help Mariyam observing

notice if the teacher knows really what she did in the classroom, according to her planning in advance, and while teaching. What are the things that she noticed, what are the changes that she made while teaching and why? Did anything happen that she didn’t predict in the classroom? (MI.5).

From her answers, Mariyam could tell: “if the teacher noticed the learners”. At the end of the discussion, she “should ask the teacher to summarize”, to consolidate what she had learned through the discussion and help her in future (MI.5). Throughout this process, as a mentor, she should be “kind, open-hearted and a good professional”, unobtrusively collaborating while stimulating recall, she later wrote (MA.3), citing Glavaski (2001) and Moon (1994).

Mariyam’s understanding of what it was to be a reflective practitioner seemed to tally with ideas she had expressed in her Researching TESOL assignment (MA.1). By February 2005, I felt she had read widely and thought carefully about what she had

read. However, there were gaps in this, e.g.; on levels of reflection, a topic I had recommended to her. Nevertheless, Mariyam spoke fluently and self-confidently on the subject of helping teachers develop as reflective practitioners, an indicator in itself of high self-efficacy in this, and her discourse was well organized. What influence on her development did she ascribe to the BA Programme?

8.9 How the BA Programme had helped her

In her Researching TESOL assignment, Mariyam had mentioned models of teacher education (Wallace, 1991). How did she relate the various courses she had done to these models? Her initial TTC diploma had been “mainly craft”, she reported, because as they “taught us, we followed them” (MI.5). The PRIT course, which she subsequently described as a “transition” (MN.1), had involved reflection. What of the BA Programme? “Some people might say”, I challenged her, that it was more “like an applied science model, theory but not practice. Would you agree with that?” “No”, she replied,

because, OK, it was very difficult for us as teachers to work in the school for four days and to go for day release one day, but that one day helps us too much, that one day lets us think more about our teaching, think more also about the English For Me syllabus, strategies, all of the methodologies, all the theories, because yes, English For Me or Basic Education give us as teachers a new syllabus to try, but there were some gaps in that syllabus, there were some problems, some disadvantages in it, and these disadvantages need teachers to think, need also teachers to have knowledge, to have some theories to try to depend on, and that happened with the BA course (MI.5).

She was very positive about what she had learned.

The BA Programme (if) you could summarize the benefits of it ... expanded my thinking, expanded my knowledge very much ... in all the modules, every module that we learned, I learned lots of things ... and my knowledge about English as a language, about teaching English, English teaching and learning, expanded in all the modules (MI.5).

Through ‘expanding’ her thinking, the BA Programme had given her practical analytical and reflective tools. How well, though, could Mariyam put ideas she had articulated about supporting reflection into practice? How well could she create a “comfortable atmosphere”, and, through using “soft language” and “special questions”, “hold up the mirror” (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999) to help teachers reflect?

8.10 Observing Mariyam researching

To investigate, I planned to sit in on a lesson Mariyam was observing, and afterwards listen to a tape of her conducting feedback. I explained this to her, obtaining permission. We arranged to see Reema, one of the teachers she was studying. Mariyam was videoing the lesson, for the purpose of stimulating recall, with the help of a friend managing the equipment.

It was a lively Grade 1 class, starting with a motivating action song. The pupils “shared” with the teacher, Reema told Mariyam after the lesson, supported by “repetition and practice” (MN.3). After the song, Reema used flashcards to elicit rooms in a house, and coursebook characters, before focusing on a big book page. “Where’s Soot?”, she asked, “in the hall”. “Where’s Vicky?”. She answered the question herself, “She’s in the living room”, providing the structure she wanted but did not really get, as she elicited from groups. There was confusion in the use of pronouns, and Reema checked these, holding up a flashcard of Maha, and eliciting ‘She!’, Paul “He!”, before bringing two learners forward, a boy and a girl, for further work on this (MN.2).

Afterwards, Mariyam focused on this segment of the lesson during their discussion, pausing the tape.

1	<i>Were they able to produce the structure?</i> No, they found some difficulties in producing this sentence, the whole sentence, in the beginning they said the answer by saying the name of the room only.
2	<i>Yes, I noticed that.</i> Then, when I said the whole sentence, they answered using ...starting ‘in the’, ‘in the kitchen’, ‘in the bedroom’.
3	<i>So they started to notice the preposition.</i> The preposition and the name of the room.
4	<i>Why? Maybe, they are familiar.</i> They are familiar with the preposition.
5	<i>In the previous lesson and maybe in Grade 1, the first part, 1A. What about he and she, the pronouns? Were they able to notice he and she from the beginning?</i> No, from the beginning, no.
6	<i>Ok what did you do to help them notice?</i> I pointed to the character and say ‘he’, for example, I pointed to the boy in the picture and say ‘he’s’ and to the girl and say ‘she’s’. After that I called a girl and a boy from the class to practice the ... he and she (MN.3).

They then watched Reema doing this on video. “Why did you use pupils to clarify ‘he’ and ‘she’?”, Mariyam asked, and was told to make it “more obvious or clear”, so that the learners did not think that these pronouns referred only to characters in the book. A bit later, Mariyam elicited that producing the whole sentence was difficult because there was “a big amount of language” (MN.3).

Asked at the end of the discussion what she had learned from the lesson, Reema said she would “divide the sentence” next time, breaking it down to make it more manageable. She would also use pictures of a boy and a girl earlier in the elicitation process, rather than relying on the big book, to make the use of ‘he’ and ‘she’ clearer (MN.3). Mariyam had been ready to suggest this (MI.6).

Analysing their discussion, I can see that Mariyam was trying to ‘hold up the mirror’, picking through the details of the lesson, trying to suspend judgement. I wondered initially if she could have asked more ‘why’ questions, though I can see she was aiming to be patient. I would probably have asked ‘why’ in turn 2 (why was it difficult?), but perhaps, with hindsight, there was no need to, since Reema was building on her utterances, and later did answer this question, anyway. (The difficulty related to the “big amount of language”.) I might also have asked ‘why’ after turn 6. Mariyam did ask this question, but saved it while they watched more of the video, in so doing probably making appropriate use of the technology.

Mariyam was sensitive to the teacher’s feelings. “Reema can reflect”, she told me, “but also she needs more encouragement, more support... because she is shy ... and needs more practice”. Her English is “very accurate and she is very interested in using grammar but she needs to talk more about the lesson” (MI.6). By “asking her lots of ‘why’ questions” and prompting her with “verbal and non-verbal” cues, Mariyam felt she could help her to do so (MA.2). When she analysed the discourse for her dissertation, after transcribing it for herself, she cited evidence of Reema extending her responses as the conversation progressed, though Reema’s turns were usually fairly short throughout (MA.3).

Part of the challenge was that Reema lacked access to public theory (MN.1). Underlying Reema’s discourse were identifiable beliefs in the benefits of getting

learners to 'share', repeat, practise and come forward to make presentations clearer. However, she found it hard to articulate these beliefs when she had the opportunity to do so, which may have made her seem rather diffident. A supervisor Mariyam had interviewed felt Reema was "sometimes too quiet, just there for your feedback, not to reflect" (MA.2). Mariyam felt Reema needed "academic teaching" (MI.6), as well as the support that she could provide to help her articulate "her personal theory behind each decision" (MA.3).

Perhaps, Reema also lacked flexibility. In contrast to another teacher, Budoor, who, "when she notices her pupils are facing difficulties in the classroom, ... can change it immediately, change the strategies", Reema "maybe will spend the time on doing the strategies that she planned", even if she noticed that they did not work. "She will try to use it and try and try, but sometimes wasting time is not a good idea." Mariyam had been surprised on more than one occasion, she told me, because "before I suggest a new idea at the end of the interview she can tell me about it", as after the '10 in the bed' lesson, above. Mariyam felt Reema could have diverted from her lesson plan and drawn quick pictures of a boy and girl on the whiteboard, as soon as she ran into difficulties with the pronouns, 'he' and 'she' (MI.6).

Mariyam seemed to want from Reema more reflection in-action, as well as more expansive, critical thinking during discussion afterwards. To move towards this, she was trying to 'hold up the mirror' in a sensitive, considerate way. How were the teachers taking it?

8.11 The research process and the teachers' reactions to it

Seeing themselves on video for the first time made taking part in the research an interesting experience for all the teachers, Mariyam told me. One, in particular, was fascinated, as she "focused on watching herself, watching what happened, watching her movements, how she pronounced the language". While curious, they were also a little 'afraid', though. "They said that Mariyam is asking about everything and she wants us to talk about everything and she wants us to think with her about everything." And when they sat together, it was difficult at the beginning, both for the teachers and for Mariyam, herself, "using the tape recorder and the video, watching, analysing, asking questions, supporting". With the later interviews, though, it got

easier, as she had learned techniques she could use again. She provided the teachers with questions in advance and encouraged them to make notes before the discussion. Then, while watching the video, she suggested they jot down ideas, prompted by what they saw, arguing “lots of things happen in the classroom they cannot notice while teaching” (MI.6).

One of the teachers, Sara, the least experienced of the four, had needed more support than the others during the interview process.

She always paused the tape recorder to let her think and write, and sometimes I explained what I meant and she said, ‘Stop please, just give me a minute to write my thoughts, my ideas and then later I will talk, but without writing I cannot talk’. So that’s why I spent a long time with her (MI.6).

“Sara needed to think...(find) suitable words ... organize her ideas”. And there were concepts, such as demands and support, Mariyam wanted to discuss with her and the others. “Even up till now”, the teachers could not analyse “the kinds of support” that they provided in the classroom, which did not stop Mariyam introducing some of these concepts, ahead of the BA Programme they would join (MI.6).

It seemed Mariyam’s wholeheartedness and sincerity had carried the teachers with her. She had established warm relationships and trust, and the teachers were willingly giving up free time to participate in the research. In the next stage, she was planning a group development session, using clips of videoed lessons and involving the teachers in a free discussion. In this discussion, they would express ideas, putting forward critical as well as positive points, but in a positive spirit, so that no one felt they were being attacked. She hoped for outcomes, such as a sharing of strategies teachers had tried and succeeded with (MI.6). These plans were expressed efficaciously.

8.12 The success of her research

Mariyam was pleased with the progress she was making in April 2005. She had aimed to help the teachers “talk freely” about their work and had received positive feedback from them. At the end of one interview, during which she had worked hard, encouraging the teacher to reflect, she had been told, “it was very easy now. ‘I can talk ... and think also and analyse my lesson.’” Before that, the teacher had not been able to do these things.

She was only looking at her lessons generally, but now she can divide the lesson into steps and stages and think about them and relate each aim to each other, but she needs more help and more support in future, also (MI.6).

One can infer that growth in Mariyam's self-efficacy was supported by this positive feedback. Six months later, she told me she "was very happy" with her dissertation research. "I loved to work on it very much", she reported. Using a "new method", stimulating recall with the video, had been a very positive experience, and she felt she had successfully helped teachers "think more deeply about reflection, every day reflection for their teaching, and think more about learning". "Some of them were reflective before", she reported, "but using the video gave them a chance to look at themselves for the first time ... and when we discussed ... they discovered lots of things." It was true that there had been a language barrier, but she had given "them the freedom to talk and express their feelings, to think deeply about what happened, (helping) them formulate their ideas in some ways." "Sometimes it was not accurate language", she concluded, "but we got the meaning from their speech and that's the important thing" (MI.7). Her positive language here suggests high self-efficacy for achieving her aims through the use of the stimulated recall method.

8.13 The support she gained from the INSET and Mentoring module

Mariyam had benefited from the optional module, INSET and Mentoring, introduced in June 2005. This had focused on encouraging growth in 'personal practical knowledge' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987) through tasks that involved awareness-raising and concept development work. Links between personal and public theory were explored through reflection on experience, as were topics such as listening actively, resolving conflicts, deep learning, seeing, empathizing, supporting change and action planning.

"I loved the module", Mariyam told me in October 2005, for the "free" way in which she had "learned the concepts", and for their relevance to her roles as teacher, SET and researcher. "It depended on us", she continued, "and on our experience, our thinking, our personal theories". One session, on stages of development, had helped her recall how, as a young, newly graduated teacher, "I was thinking about myself", she told me, "to improve only myself, my skills in teaching. Yes, I worked, but only to improve myself as a teacher". She had "loved English" and had tried to teach well,

“but without thinking so much or so deeply about my learners, especially the pupils who need our support” (MI.7).

In a facilitative role, I was involved in some of the INSET & Mentoring sessions that Mariyam attended, and saw how deeply she engaged in discussions, and how carefully she reflected. Assessment was through a practical assignment, submitted in November 2005, for which Mariyam gained an ‘A’, her only ‘A’ on the course. She was told her work showed “a firm commitment to, and understanding of, teacher development and mentoring”. It showed “good insight”, as well as “clear awareness and understanding of module concepts”. Theory was related to practice effectively (MF.2). This positive feedback would again have benefited her self-efficacy in supporting reflective practice.

8.14 Mariyam’s reflections on her growth during the BA Programme

Helping teachers reflect involved communicating and, in October 2005, Mariyam felt very pleased with the way her own powers of expression had developed during the BA course. “Before the BA, my knowledge of vocabulary was very simple,” she reported, “according to my simple knowledge, also from the simple syllabus that I teach.” However, the course had helped her learn “lots of complex vocabulary, especially academic” and she had “learned how to deal with this vocabulary in different contexts.” She was also much more fluent and self-confident. Before starting the BA, when she had wanted to talk about anything, it had taken her “a long time”, she said, “to think in my mind about every word, about the grammar, and I was afraid that when I would talk my language would not be accurate and it should be very accurate.” Now, this feeling had ‘disappeared’, and she felt she could “express any idea with the language ... focusing on the meaning rather than grammatically”. “At the same time”, she continued, “I try to be more accurate also” (MI.7).

As a teacher, she was more autonomous now. “I can look at any area in the syllabus”, she told me, “and see how can I help my learners to learn more and to learn it effectively also”. She could focus on problems and identify ways of helping learners “improve their skills and get them to love English also.” She was more aware of learners’ individual differences now, she reported, more “patient”, better able to “notice important things” that happened in the classroom and better able to act on

them. Now, she asked herself many questions when something was not working in the classroom, which she had not done before. “I can think of quick solutions. I can use different strategies”, she reported. “I am a more reflective modern teacher than before. I know now how to reflect on any action” (MI.7).

Her mind was “open”, Mariyam told me, because “now we have the awareness to exploit everything around us”. “I know now”, she continued, “how to improve myself, how to improve my skills; reading, writing, speaking.” Before she had felt it was “very difficult” to do this, “but now”, she continued, “I think it’s very easy to improve myself, even after [I finish] the BA” (MI.7)

Mariyam felt grateful, she reported, to the government for giving “us this chance to improve the society, to improve ourselves. From ourselves we can improve our society. In education, we can help our learners, Omani learners, to learn English” in a more effective way. She could use what she had learned to help other teachers and further support the school, she continued. In future, she would continue to do research, and would try to share the findings with others (MI.7). When contemplating these ideas, she sounded happy and positive, indicators of high self-efficacy.

8.15 Discussion

I will now address my research questions with specific reference to this case.

RQ1. What changes does she report in her self-efficacy in developing reflective practice?

I turn to self-efficacy statements Mariyam made about developing reflective practice (Table 8.2, overleaf). As can be seen, prior to joining the BA Programme, Mariyam indicates she lacked self-efficacy in many ways. In her earliest teaching practice, she recollects experiencing nerves, confusion and fear. The fear persisted in some form for years, in her adherence to coursebook procedures and in interactions she took part in that involved English.

Table 8.2 Mariyam's self-efficacy statements related to developing reflective practice

No.	Mariyam's self-efficacy in ...	Between 1993 and 2002 (her recollections of self-efficacy prior to joining the course)	Between 2003 and 2005 (her self-efficacy after joining the course)
1	Teaching and supporting learning	It was a terrible time really. My mouth became dry and my heart was beating and I was very nervous and confused and sometimes I forgot lots of things. I wasn't aware about children or about strategies, only following the techniques that we learned in the college (1993-4)	Now I can look at any area in the syllabus and see how can I help my learners to learn more and to learn it effectively also, and at the same time I can focus on their problems and try to think about the real solutions to improve their skills and to get them to love English. (October 2005)
2	Analysing, adapting and problem-solving	Before I don't know any information about adapting the lessons or doing changes and also there is an old feeling that I had. I was afraid to make change, maybe the inspector will not encourage me and maybe it's wrong, something wrong, my thinking was not changeable. (1994-8)	Now I can notice the important things from my lessons. I can pick my weaknesses and my strengths and I can, at the same time, analyse them. I can ask myself lots of questions about what happened in the classroom and why that happened, and how can I change them... now I can think about quick solutions. I can use different strategies... I can discuss with others. I can use other resources ... and reach the solutions. Now we have the awareness to exploit everything around us and at the same time my mind is open now. (October 2005)
3	Expressing ideas in English	I was always afraid that I will make mistakes and errors. (1996) Before the BA, before talking about anything, I took a long time to think in my mind about every word, about the grammar, and I was afraid that when I would talk my language would not be accurate and it should be very accurate. (Until 2002)	After the BA, this feeling disappeared and now I feel that I can say, I can express any idea or anything that I want to say with the language, in different ways and focusing on the meaning rather than grammatically, but at the same time I try to be more accurate also. (October 2005)
4	Using English for self-development	Our language didn't encourage us to go and ask or search for something... my language was very simple, it didn't help me to do my work, it didn't help me to even get contact with the real situation... I tried sometimes, shyly, with a shy try, when I was outside in the supermarket and always at the doctors. (Until 2002)	I can use lots of resources... exploit the resources like technology... I know now how to improve myself, how to improve my skills, reading, writing, speaking, that (before) I felt it was very difficult to improve, but now I think it's very easy to improve myself, even after the BA. (October 2005)
5	Reflecting	Before I didn't know how to think about that... how to talk about my work or my problems in teaching. (There were) lots of difficulties before the BA. (Until 2002)	I am a more reflective modern teacher than before. I know now how to reflect on any action. (October 2005)
6	Helping teachers reflect	Before the BA course, they (inspectors) gave me those questions (to ask teachers in a post-lesson discussion) but my knowledge was limited a little bit. (2000-2).	After the BA course... I understand those questions very deeply. (February 2005) I was very happy... I helped my teachers to think more deeply about reflection, every day reflection for their teaching, and to think more about learning. (October 2005)
7	Stimulating recall through the use of video		The first (time to use stimulated recall) was difficult for me and for the teachers because it was the first time, but the later interviews were easy. I learned some things (and) applied them for the next interview. (April 2005)

While much of this fear may have disappeared before she joined the course, Mariyam indicates she still found it difficult to reflect deeply on her own teaching in post-lesson discussions. As a new SET, too, working with a set of standard questions to ask of teachers she observed, she felt she was hampered by ‘limited’ knowledge.

In contrast, by the end of the course, Mariyam was much more efficacious in every respect, in terms of her own development as a reflective practitioner, and in her capacity to support others in this way, as the table confirms. Her ‘I can’ statements are clear and strong.

RQ2. To what extent do changes in her self-efficacy beliefs reflect changes in her PK?

In addressing this question, I first evaluate Mariyam’s PK in developing reflective practice against various criteria earlier identified (8.2, 8.4, 8.8, above). See Table 8.3, below.

Table 8.3 Mariyam’s PK in developing reflective practice, evaluated against various criteria

<i>No</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.	Does she possess the following qualities identified by Dewey (1933) that he says teachers aiming to be reflective need to possess: open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and a sense of responsibility?	I have argued above (in 8.2, 8.4) that Mariyam does possess these qualities. Further evidence can be found in her discussion of what a teacher aiming to be a reflective practitioner needs to do; ‘discuss’, look for ‘new’ ideas, ‘think continually’, ‘believe in her work’, ‘know her pupils very well’ to ‘help’ and ‘support them’ (8.8, above).
2.	Does she possess skills in the following: noticing, listening, analysing, problem-solving, hypothesizing, articulating arguments based on evidence, evaluating outcomes against objectives (Malderez & Bodóczy, 1999, Galvez-Martin et al., 1998)?	There is evidence (in 8.5-6, above) that Mariyam does indeed possess these skills. Furthermore, in evaluating outcomes against objectives, she draws upon pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987), relating to modules including IL (8.5, above) and Tasks (8.6, above).
3.	Does she have a deep understanding of the following key concepts: reflection in/on action, the reflective model of teacher education, reflective cycles, stages	She discusses most of these concepts convincingly in February 2005, after reading for the November 2004 Researching TESOL assignment (8.7-8, above). However, she refers to stages of

	of teacher development, levels of reflection, the role of a mentor in stimulating reflection?	development only after the 2005 Summer School (8.13, above). She never mentions levels of reflection.
4	Is her level of reflection towards the critical end of Van Manen's (1991) cline?	Mariyam's reflections can initially be routine (8.2, above) but prompting helps her think more deeply (8.2, 8.6, above). Her focus can be on the technical, if there is a technical problem that needs to be solved (8.6, above). However, at a deeper level, her reflection is critical, informed by learner and learning-centred preoccupations that seem based on an internally consistent set of principled beliefs (8.5, above).
5	Can she "hold up the mirror" (Malderez & Bodóczyk, 1999) to help teachers reflect?	Mariyam suspends judgement well, questioning in a sensitive, considerate way (8.10, above). While using the stimulated recall method, she develops techniques that help teachers concentrate more fully on the lesson (8.11, above).

As can be seen, Mariyam possessed qualities, skills and understanding of key concepts that allowed her, within her context, to develop considerably as a reflective practitioner and help others do so. Mariyam was self-aware and forthright, qualities that combined to make her self-efficacy statements seem realistic, as she qualified her words, e.g.; 'try to think', become 'more' reflective (Table 8.2).

She was also level headed. Reflecting on positive feedback from a teacher (8.12, above) that might have given her a sense of pride, she included both hedging in reporting the teachers' words, and caution in her evaluation of them, concluding "she needs more help and more support in future, also". Mariyam's positive self-efficacy appeared justified.

RQ3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in her PK and self-efficacy in developing reflective practice, and how?

The importance of Mariyam's reflective qualities in her development should not be understated. Without patience, enthusiasm, self-awareness and determination to succeed, she would not have come so far, and it is a tribute to these qualities that she did. There were other factors as well, though, that were influential.

As argued (in 8.4) above, the PRIT course Mariyam took in 1997, and the experience of teaching in a BE school with lots of visitors from 1998 onwards were important. The language course she took in 1996 also helped her. Nevertheless, prior to 2002, she had little confidence in her English and in the 'limited' knowledge that affected her ability to reflect and stimulate reflection (Table 8.2, above).

Her inspectors helped her. At the time she started the BA course, Fatma was asking searching questions during post-lesson discussions in the school, which increased Mariyam's awareness of these. Then, in the following academic year, Yousef was asking questions of the teachers 'similar' to those I had asked of her in post-lesson discussions. She realized from this how much she had learned in the first year of the BA Programme (8.7, above).

Mariyam saw the course as following a reflective model of teacher education (8.9, above). She appreciated the various types of learning experiences it provided (8.4, above), and was conscious of the benefits, in terms of language improvement, deeper methodological awareness and the development of research skills (8.4, 8.14, above).

She "loved" engaging in research (8.12, above) and she "loved" the INSET and Mentoring module (8.13, above). These positive feelings encouraged behaviour associated with high self-efficacy such as concentration, determination and persistence, leading to deep learning.

Mariyam felt her research was successful. She received high grades and positive feedback on her written work from university markers (8.8, 8.13, above), and positive feedback from the teachers she was researching (8.12, above). This encouraged high self-efficacy for continuing to research (8.14, above).

Chapter 9: Rashid's story – Supporting low achievers in groupwork activities

9.1 Introduction

Rashid was intense, enthusiastic, quick to volunteer and eager to answer at the start of the BA Programme in December 2002; withdrawn and 'disappointed' that he would not get a 2:1 by the end of it (RN.1). Rashid believed in cooperative learning, and wanted friends to share ideas with while reviewing concepts, drafting outlines, revising for exams and proofreading assignments (RI.7), perhaps since this approach had worked for him before. Building good relationships with the most "brilliant" students in the class and checking ideas between lessons had helped him succeed at school (RI.8). Yet, on the BA course, he did not find "supportive colleagues" (RN.1). His closest friends wanted an easy life, while others were 'miserly', listening to ideas, offering nothing in return, yet achieving higher grades. He responded by becoming less open, though he continued to help "an honest man", he "couldn't be miserly" with (RI.8), who was, in fact, a lower achiever.

Fortunately, he assured me, his work at school, on the outskirts of his hometown, an hour's drive from the regional capital, was unaffected by these negative experiences (RI.8). This was a new Basic Education (BE) school for boys (Cycle 2, Grades 5-9), where he was using groupwork for the first time. His own education had been in teacher-fronted classrooms, with the learners sitting in rows, and all his teaching, until September 2002, had predominantly been in the same mode.

Early in the course, Rashid reported wanting to use groupwork more effectively (RI.1), and learning how to do this to support low achievers later became the focus of his dissertation. I became interested in investigating changes Rashid reported in his self-efficacy (TSE) beliefs in supporting low achievers through groupwork, in discovering the extent to which these changes reflected changes in his practical knowledge (PK), and in ascertaining which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced these changes, and how.

I will tell Rashid's story according to the methodological principles outlined in Chapter 4 (above), addressing research questions at the end of the chapter. Rashid first conducted research into his use of groupwork for the Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL) assignment (October-December 2003), when required to keep a reflective journal focused on language acquisition issues. I will start by exploring this journal, while also examining his use of groupwork in the classroom at the time.

9.2 Rashid's first research into groupwork

"Groupwork is considered one of the most important types of social interaction", Rashid wrote in his LAL journal, because of the opportunities provided for increased language input, practice and "involvement in language learning". Citing Moon (2000), he argued that "children are by nature very sociable, and groupwork makes use of this natural tendency" (RA.1).

Groupwork was the focus when I visited Rashid's school in October 2003. The Grade 5 boys had recently transferred from a Cycle 1 school, where they had studied English for four years in mixed classes with female teachers. Their new classroom environment was rather more spartan, with fewer posters on the walls, fewer displays of learners' work. The classroom organization, though, would have been familiar, with desks arranged for groupwork. While observing the lesson, based around a song and a grammar activity, I focused on levels of participation and involvement within the groups, concentrating on the behaviour of a few learners who caught my attention (RO.2).

"One problem I am trying to research is uncooperative groups", Rashid told me afterwards. He had been watching the learners closely the previous week. In each of his four classes, he concluded, there were one or two groups that did not cooperate together. They were not noisy or disruptive. They simply were not active (RI.1).

"They just smile or look at each other and few of them doodling in their books", he reported in his first LAL journal entry.

My interpretation of their behaviour is that there is a good familiarity between them. In terms of doing the activity, they were completely confused and none of them could understand what to do. At this point, I built up some hypothesis that there is a lack of leadership in each group. So if there is a brilliant pupil he might help them (RA.1).

Accordingly, for today's lesson, the lesson I observed, Rashid had redistributed the learners, breaking up a group of 'brilliant' pupils that contained the strongest students, and dividing them amongst the six groups in the room. This had only been "40% successful". The 'brilliant' had done as he had asked and tried, in the new groups, "to collect other members to cooperate with them", but most of the rest of the class "refused ... they tried to only keep watching and observing work". A few students had cooperated with the brilliant, those sitting closest to them, adjacent at the table. Those sitting further away, though, and each group contained five or six students, had not participated (RI.1).

Was shyness a factor, I asked, particularly given the presence of an outsider observing the lesson? Rashid thought not, reporting that he "saw many shy pupils today try to work with the brilliant. Before, they were shy, keeping silent" (RI.1).

I shared my observation that one boy, in particular, had seemed distracted, looking around when he should have been focusing on the song and not seeming to concentrate on the lesson afterwards very much at all. The reason, Rashid told me, was that "all the brilliant were from that group", and he was missing them. Not a particularly good student, he depended on his friends, and "for this reason I ignored him", Rashid continued. He was "keeping silent ... sad ... I can get the meaning from his eyes", looking for the others. But, in time, "he will realize that he must do his work by himself rather than" get others to do it for him (RI.1).

Rashid persevered with the new grouping arrangements and recorded in his second journal entry, a few days later, that there was progress in the way the groups interacted with the newly appointed leaders, the 'brilliant'. "They tried to discuss their work together and ask each other where and how to find answers. Through looking at their books, I found that they answered the comprehension questions as required in the activity" (RA.1).

Though Rashid reported that he did not "really know how to conduct research" (RI.2), I feel that in the post-lesson discussion referred to above he demonstrated the ability to observe carefully, an important quality in a teacher planning interventions to improve practice. Furthermore, in his LAL assignment, he was able to use data from

the learners to evaluate outcomes, finding evidence of improved learning linked to the use of mixed ability groups (RA.1). Once he was aware of his PK in observing and drawing evidence-based conclusions, I felt it would benefit his self-efficacy, but he still seemed uncertain about conducting research. Perhaps, he needed further successful concrete experiences to reflect on, as suggested by the model of self-efficacy growth outlined earlier (Chapter 2, above).

9.3 Groupwork and the ZPD

Rashid's third journal entry was about the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), Vygotsky's (1962) term for what a child can do in interaction with another but not alone, as she reaches higher levels of knowledge and performance through support provided from a skilled other; a teacher, parent or classmate (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). A practical application of this theory, I argued in a day release session, is that meaning-focused pairwork and groupwork activities should be utilized (RN.1).

Prior to the course, Rashid "didn't know about the ZPD" (RI.2). Learning about this theory had helped him as a teacher, he reported. "I used to believe that my learners cannot depend on themselves in learning [or] learn from each other", he wrote in his journal (RA.1). "I wasn't understanding my students", he told me, "what they need, what they have, but now I can understand what they know and what they should know", and he felt he could build on this. "They have some knowledge, they have got ZPD. I should complete, just complete, not restart or start from the beginning" (RI.2).

An understanding of "the ZPD may explain how groupwork increases language acquisition", he wrote in his journal, deciding to investigate this by interviewing two learners.

The first one, Ahmed, said that sometimes he knows the answers in Arabic (L1). His partners help him in translating them in English. He added, 'we check each others' ideas and choose one answer'.

The other one, Salim, answered that his partners help him to correct his answers before he presents them to the teacher. This pupil mentioned an interesting point which is relating to psychological problems. He said that sometimes he has a part of an answer, but for some reasons (shyness, confusion, worry), he cannot say it to the teacher. He finds that in groupwork he can share his answer with the brilliant pupil. Otherwise, it will be difficult for him every time to say wrong or uncompleted answers.

This indicates that they have something in their minds but can't express it out. This shows me that they wait for some support to interact in the language. Through the

interaction of groupwork they found the required support to learn and acquire the language.

From all this, it appears that their ZPD could work and may lead to more acquisition and learning. My role in this is to create a suitable classroom atmosphere and give my pupils more chances to interact (RA.1).

Not only was Rashid conscious of being able to apply a theory, but the awareness of having a clearer insight into children's minds also seemed to have empowered him. "I can manage psychological problems", he told me, with quiet self-confidence in November 2003, "and their weaknesses and their needs also. I can understand what they need and what they lack" (RI.2). Theoretical knowledge, relating to the ZPD, had been assimilated into his PK, and Rashid seemed more efficacious about solving learners' problems through groupwork.

9.4 Changing ideas about motivation and learning

Much of the input Rashid received through LAL was completely new, "like Krashen's theories and hypotheses". Other theories contradicted those he had learned ten years earlier on his TTC diploma. It was a bit "challenging", as he tried to "understand and compare and remove the old ideas" (RI.2). One of these ideas was faith in the value of giving gifts, prizes, which, Rashid argued in his journal, would not support learning. "They will learn for the gifts, which causes extrinsic motivation". "I remember one day", he continued, "when my tutor recommended me to avoid rewarding pupils ... during his first school visit to me" (RA.1). This had been in March 2003, in the first semester of the BA Programme. I had recommended praising groups for working cooperatively towards a purpose rather than singling out individuals for prizes, particularly with rewards like chocolates, and had mentioned Skinner's M&M theory (Brown, 1990) (RO.1).

In his journal, Rashid considered the value of cooperative versus competitive groupwork activities, with extrinsic motivation encouraged through the latter. Citing Scott & Ytreberg's (1998) advice that giving rewards does not help learning take place, he conducted an experiment, doing an activity differently with two different classes, offering the winning group in one class (Class A) new pens for finishing first, while offering no inducement to the other class (Class B), who worked cooperatively. Class A finished quicker, but Class B remembered more vocabulary. This led him to

suggest that offering rewards “seemed not” to provide “suitable reinforcement” (RA.1).

I was concerned that the experiment was unethical, since Rashid already suspected that encouraging extrinsic motivation did not help learning, while the marker doubted how “much of value about language learning” could be discovered through “such a one-off experiment” (RF.1). This might have caused him to doubt his self-efficacy for researching if it had reflected the overall tone of the feedback (9.5, below), which it did not.

Rashid had as yet received little input in conducting research. Nevertheless, there were positive signs. He was trying to promote group cohesiveness with one class and was testing hypotheses about motivation, which would deepen his PK of the relevant concepts. If he could put into practice conclusions about the need to promote intrinsic motivation through groupwork activities, I felt his classes would benefit.

9.5 Dealing with group domination

As well as encouraging extrinsic motivation, Rashid was concerned that the use of competitive activities resulted in the domination of the work of some groups by strong pupils. There was one learner, in particular, he was thinking of, in one of his classes, who did not let other members of his group participate. “He thinks himself a brilliant and knows every answer.” The others could not “find any opportunities to participate, which stops them from learning and acquiring the language through interactive and cooperative work”. Rashid had not stopped the boy because he was afraid of disappointing him. He decided he would try to deal with the problem indirectly, through the use of different strategies. He would assign roles (e.g.; writer, reporter) to each member of the group, according to abilities (the easier for the weaker). He would encourage the group to work as a team, helping each other, and, while they were engaged he would monitor, offering extra encouragement to weaker pupils (RA.1).

Rashid reports trying out these procedures in the next lesson, as groups discussed the rubric of an activity, before explaining back to him what they should do. Rashid observed the behaviour of the boy who wanted to dominate. He tried to get Rashid’s attention “by shouting ‘Teacher, Teacher’, raising his hand a lot”, then spoke to his

partners when Rashid ignored him, waiting impatiently for his turn to speak, but “after many trials, went back to his group to share his ideas with them” (RA.1).

“The easiest answer maybe”, the marker commented, “is to change the nature of the task – if you make it information gap then everyone has to speak!” (RF.1). Rashid gained a ‘B’ in his LAL assignment, though, his best result in an assignment to date, which pleased him as he had worked very hard. “The overall journal is very coherent”, the marker continued,

and you have found out a lot about how your pupils work. You also have read well and make good connections between your practice and theory. I wanted more attention, though, to the kind of language that goes on in groups, and also to the sort of task. Some tasks are better than others! (RF.1).

The links Rashid made between theory and practice, acknowledged by this positive feedback, are likely to have deepened his PK, and supported self-efficacy growth. For him to become more efficacious still in using groupwork, though, he needed further successful concrete experiences (9.2, above). To see if he gained these, I turn to his practice for evidence.

9.6 Rashid’s reading race

The domination of groupwork by strong students was an issue explored when I next visited Rashid’s school, in March 2004, to see a Grade 5 lesson in mid-morning on a hot day. Rashid’s class was not arranged exactly as he would have liked. The tables were set up for quite large groups of up to 8, as the classroom was shared by other teachers, who had different sized classes and different preferences. Sometimes, as today, Rashid accepted the existing seating arrangements, rather than spend 5 minutes on reorganization (RO.3, RI.3).

The topic was food, and the first activity was a reading race. Rashid stuck a poster on the whiteboard showing food in a supermarket. In turns within their groups, learners were supposed to run up to the whiteboard and look at the poster, find the picture of a food item, make a mental note of the accompanying number and run back to their group to supply this. Someone else should write the number on a checklist. Then another group member was supposed to run up to the whiteboard to look for another item, amongst the fruit, vegetables, types of meat and drinks (RO.3).

Before starting, Rashid asked the learners to read the food items on their checklists together in groups. He then explained the activity clearly, checking they understood what to do by getting one boy to feed the instructions back to him. But “do *all* the groups understand?” my observation notes written at the time asked (RO.3). Rashid told me after the lesson he was confident they had. The instructions were clear and the learners were familiar with the task type from earlier in the course (RI.3).

The reading race started, and quickly unravelled. Many of the learners seemed off-task, with only a few involved in some groups, monopolizing either the writing or the running and reading. “Groups a bit large for this activity”, I noted at the time and shared with him later. Some groups seemed to give up, discouraged, despite the teacher’s efforts while monitoring to spur them into action, and in the end none of them actually completed the task. After about 7 minutes, Rashid brought the activity to a close, by taking down the poster, and got the class to quieten down, raising his arm in the air and encouraging the learners to do likewise while miming silence, until there was calm. He then spent 15 minutes checking the answers, explaining different food items (e.g.; beef, mutton and lamb) while he did so, and providing an L1 translation of coffee (RO.3).

This was disappointing. The reading race should have led to active engagement with the language. It should have involved teamwork. It should have been motivating. Better organization of the physical space, more time supporting demands in the setting up process, clearer rules and more systematic management would have helped. What did Rashid think of this lesson?

9.7 Rashid’s reflections on the reading race

“I faced a problem in the reading race,” he told me at the start of the post-lesson discussion. The learners did not know or could not remember most of the vocabulary, apart from “common things like bananas or oranges”, even though, as Rashid assured me, this was being recycled from earlier grades. Admittedly, some of the lexical items, such as cabbages, cucumbers and spinach were new in this unit and difficult to pronounce, but nevertheless Rashid felt they should have been “able to do this (activity) easily”. Given that the language demands had seemed too high for the

learners, though, I wondered if it would have been possible for him to do a preparation activity at the start of the lesson through which vocabulary was reactivated, perhaps using BE Cycle 1 materials, such as flashcards of food items, if these were available. Rashid felt this should not have been necessary since their previous lesson had included a matching activity, when the learners had met most of the vocabulary in their coursebooks. Basically, though, my idea was unfeasible through lack of time, he argued. The revision activity I had suggested would take an extra 5 minutes, and if he regularly added such activities to recycle vocabulary, he would not complete the syllabus. This would cause problems, as all the books followed from one another, and there were the progress tests supplied by the administration that he had to use. ‘How then would the learners catch up?’, I asked. He hoped that they would learn indirectly or make active use of the environment. A strategy he had suggested to his classes for the current unit was to look at the English names of food items when they accompanied their parents to the supermarket (RI.3).

Some of the groups had only 5 or 10 answers correct out of 26, Rashid told me. The “foundation” was not strong enough, he said. I felt the language demands might have placed a strain on the functioning of the groups. “They want to win”, Rashid complained. “They’ve got a desire to play and to win. Many brilliants don’t want their weak pupils to go there [to the board], because they want to win, [finish] first and quickly. This is the kind of problem.” And yet, even with the stronger students dominating, so few answers were correct, I pointed out (RI.3).

Rashid felt he had tried to respond to this problem of group domination, discussed, he reminded me, in his LAL journal. “I tried to control this situation, I tried to control it”, he assured me. “I mean to let the brilliant write only sometimes, to write the numbers, and let the weak pupils go [and run to the board]. I didn’t allow sometimes ... I gave them a lot of work, the harder work, which is writing.” He sounded rather tentative. “Sometimes. This is just a small suggestion” (RI.3).

The weaker ones had been “squeezed out ... pushed out”, I had just told him (RI.3). My feeling was that, perhaps, if the groups had been smaller, if key vocabulary had been reactivated through a preparation activity, if the groups had been set goals for cooperation as well as completion, and had been rewarded for working well with each

other (a procedure that had been demonstrated a few months earlier in a day release session), then perhaps they might have gained more from the lesson.

However, I realized afterwards when listening to the transcript that I had not summarized these ideas as clearly as I could have done (RI.3). I felt that Rashid was not really receptive, though. As far as he was concerned, the contextual demands he faced, in terms of completing the syllabus, made it impossible to provide more language support. Without more language support, I felt it could not have been successful. I felt he was making the fundamental ‘mistake’ of teaching the book not the learners, and on the evidence of this lesson, could see little basis for any positive self-efficacy he had in using groupwork for reading races (competitive activities, which he felt less comfortable with anyway, and susceptible to domination by strong students). Concerned about his feelings, I concluded the discussion in a gentle, non-judgemental way.

9.8 The influence of the BA Programme on Rashid’s cognitions

Rashid was aware that he had “some problems with groupwork”, he told me the following semester (in October 2004). “Sometimes it didn’t work for discussing rubrics or something like that”, and the school environment was not always supportive. He valued the EFM curriculum, liked the smaller classes of about 30, but found the many responsibilities stressful, particularly since he wanted time and space to conduct ‘challenging’ research and “solve problems” by himself (RI.4).

Rashid believed in the power of groupwork. In his LAL journal, he identified advantages relating to increased communication, greater motivation, quicker understanding, practice of strategies that facilitate communication, the encouragement of “shy pupils to participate supported by others” (RA.1).

The question was, ‘How to make it work?’, and he was grateful that the BA course encouraged him to ask himself, “why groupwork, why am I doing groupwork, what are the benefits, advantages, disadvantages?” The course also encouraged him to “try to make some mini-researches”, as for his LAL journal, and he had not had that kind of support before. He recalled inspectors who “said only, ‘this is the classroom, work in groups’”, but had not focused on learning processes. One would “say, ‘use your

groupwork, use your pairwork quickly', don't, but how to use, he can't notice, cannot notice, for example, why the pairs can't do it" (RI.4).

The BA course, building on the practical experience he had gained "from the field", had added "something important", Rashid reported, which was to help him "know about the theories". Before, he continued,

I was just doing the daily teaching, doing my job without realizing, without knowing what's the background of it, what I'm doing, but the BA clarified for me what are these things, why I am doing this, it answered many questions that were growing in my mind (RI.4).

He felt that now, in October 2004, he was solving problems "according to the new knowledge" that he had gained from the BA, which he was aware of when planning, teaching and "mentally reflecting at the end of every lesson". "I try to see my objectives", he told me, "if they're achieved or not, that's what's important for me, how much I achieved my objectives and also the motivation of the learners, whether the learners were motivated, all these things". When he had reflected on lessons before the course, he had drawn on beliefs, he felt, rather than knowledge. "The BA gives me knowledge and when I come to my school and am doing my job, I mean I discover these things, I mean practically". When he learned theories in lectures and seminars, he tried "to join it", "relate it" to his job, asking "does it exist in my job?", so afterwards discovering whether or not the concept was "true" to him. When he learned new concepts, he "tried to think immediately, 'how can I discover this in my job, in my teaching?', 'how would it work exactly when I try it in the class?'" For example, he told me, as soon as he had learned about communicative purpose,

I tried to reflect on my experience, on my knowledge and ... I mean I tried to go back as soon as I heard about it ... I tried to go back in my mind ... 'was I doing communicative purpose?'. So I discovered the difference immediately, and I tried, when I came to my job, I tried to practically practise this (RI.4).

Listening to Rashid here, talking in an open-minded and whole-hearted way about these processes, I felt that much of his learning from the course was deep, which made me feel optimistic about him developing in his use of groupwork. How well, though, could he overcome the contextual challenges?

9.9 Planning to research groupwork for his dissertation – November 2004

In his dissertation, Rashid wanted to explore how he could develop in his use of groupwork, particularly with regard to helping low achievers, a term I suggested to him as an alternative to the one he used, ‘weak pupils’, pointing out the dangers of labelling students in this way. Rashid was surprised and produced forms indicating how widespread this expression was. I asked Rashid if ‘weak’ pupils knew they were ‘weak’, and he confirmed they did. The school organized special remedial lessons for them, and made it clear who these were for (RN.1).

Rashid addressed issues related to ‘low achieving pupils’ in his Researching TESOL assignment, describing them as “those who find some difficulties to achieve learning activities [due] for example [to] shyness, lack of knowledge and low motivation”. They were often labelled and neglected. “I think dealing with them in this way is not fair”, Rashid continued.

It does not help them to improve their learning. On the contrary, it creates isolated pupils in a way they refuse to talk to others. It also kills their motivation towards learning. It makes low achievers more shy. As a teacher, I saw some types of low achievers who keep silent even in free discussions with their classmates. They could not express their social needs and learning problems (RA.2).

For his research, Rashid would identify four low achievers in one class, and observe them. How would they respond when working in mixed ability groups, when grouped according to their interests or friendships, when given responsibilities within the group? As well as observing the learners himself, Rashid would invite two teachers to watch a series of lessons he was teaching. They would focus on the low achievers and provide qualitative data to help answer his research question: “How can I help the low achieving pupils in groupwork activities in Grade 5?” (RA.2).

I admired his focus on the affective side of learning. However, I was also concerned that his proposal lacked sufficient focus on what the learners would be doing in groups, on the tasks themselves, a point that had also been made in the feedback on his LAL assignment (9.5, above), and one which, after further prompting, he dealt with (9.10, below).

Rashid received a disappointing 'D' for his Researching TESOL assignment. The marker seemed confused. "What is your role?", she asked.

You seem to be teacher, observer, and, in your question, you might also be a member of the group. In what way do you expect the low-achieving child to be helped by the group? You could change the focus to see in what ways high achieving pupils can help low achieving ones and then your role would logically become that of an observer but you have to rework the proposal and concentrate on peer interaction rather than groupwork (RF.2).

I did not feel this feedback was entirely helpful since Rashid wanted to improve his own practice rather than observe it. I was also aware that he had tried to explain that the help provided would primarily be through varying the groupings. In this, he had obviously failed. Sometimes his writing was opaque in places, which markers had commented on.

I knew he would be disappointed by the feedback and was concerned it might lower his self-efficacy for researching groupwork. This self-efficacy had been boosted a year earlier by positive feedback on his LAL assignment (9.5, above), possibly influencing his choice of dissertation topic. In mediating the Researching TESOL feedback, I wanted to focus on the gaps in his understanding it highlighted. How would the learners be interacting in groupwork? What would they be doing? How would he measure improvement? Were there any criteria he could use for this? I needed to help him explore the topic and the research methodology more deeply to support PK growth in these areas.

9.10 Taking his research further

When I next interviewed Rashid (in February 2005), I first wanted to explore his conceptual understanding of the problem in more depth. A low achieving pupil was one "who finds difficulties to finish a task successfully", he told me, due to various reasons including "lack of knowledge, knowledge of language and skills ... difficulties in listening or writing, maybe lack of experience ... maybe fears, shyness, negative attitudes towards the teachers or school, family problems maybe". The result was "shyness, no participation... they can't participate in groupwork, they keep silent". If he could help them, "they will be like the other pupils, successful in completing their tasks". "They will gain language knowledge", he continued, "improve their skills like reading, writing, improve as well their sub-skills". They

would become confident, lose their fear, and, he added rather idealistically, “maybe solve some problems in their homes, family problems”, “improve themselves outside the school and gain more experience in the world” (RI.5).

As a teacher, how could he facilitate this? He might “encourage the pupils”, Rashid told me, by giving any low achiever trying to raise his hand “priority to answer”. And if the low achiever “found some problems in the group”, he “may persuade the others to accept him”. He would give them tasks that were achievable, by providing “easier questions”, and would show ‘patience’ in accepting any answers. While monitoring, Rashid could ask: “do you have a problem, a specific problem?”, focusing on why they did not get “involved in the groupwork”, and trying to discover if the problem related to their skills or knowledge, or if “they are afraid or shy”. Changing the seating of the pupils would be one of his major strategies. Perhaps they would be “more comfortable with their friends”, or perhaps he could find “any specific partner” who could help them. So, he would try friendship groups and mixed ability groups, and sometimes allocate different responsibilities (RI.5).

For ‘subjects’, he would select from amongst those who had performed badly in the first semester. “I’ve got some 7 or 8 failures”, he told me. He would also consider the views of other subject teachers who taught the boys, interviewing them informally in Arabic. “So, you’re identifying the most vulnerable, the ones with biggest problems”, I checked with him, while exploring “how they’re similar and how they’re different?” “They have different experiences”, he replied. “They have different problems, family problems, other problems, so some of them maybe will develop more than others, maybe improve more than others” (RI.5).

Rashid set up his research, identifying four low achievers in one of his classes to focus on. These pupils had had medical check-ups before joining the school, from which he could eliminate physical and mental disabilities, and impairments in seeing and hearing. As to his research methodology, he decided against interviewing the learners, as he felt they might be discouraged if they realized he considered them to be low achievers, and he decided against interviewing their parents, as he was afraid they might blame their children for not doing well at school. His primary method would be observation of a series of three lessons, in which he tried out different ways of

grouping learners while engaging them in six different types of groupwork activities, one competitive and one cooperative in each lesson. In the first lesson, these would be a reading race and a survey, in the second, a game of pelmanism and an acted out song, in the third, dominoes and a TPR activity. The pupils would be organized in mixed ability groups for the first lesson, then friendship groups for the second, before low achievers were asked to take on leadership roles in the third. Two teachers would observe each of the three lessons, describing the low achievers' performance qualitatively on a form provided, and Rashid would supplement these data by taking field notes of his own. At the end of the semester, he would interview three other teachers who taught the class, for Arabic, Science and Social Studies, to see if they had detected any signs of improvement (RN.1). My feeling was that, by the time he put it into action, his research design was much improved. How well could he execute it?

9.11 Rashid's research observed

I observed the second of the three research lessons in April 2005, as one of two observers. The first lesson had not been particularly successful, as Rashid later explained in his dissertation. The reading race, done in mixed ability groups, had been particularly problematic, as the low achievers found the "competitive game difficult". Participation was "dominated by high achievers" and "low achievers got lost". Rashid criticized himself. "As a teacher, I may have failed to control and manage carefully the game activity very well to avoid these shortcomings" (RA.4). So, like the earlier reading race (9.6, above), this one had not worked very well, though in this case he blamed his management of it rather than the learners' language, a positive sign, perhaps, possibly suggesting more searching reflection.

At the start of the lesson I observed, Rashid gave me the names of two students he wanted me to focus on covertly, before doing a roll call, in the guise of checking attendance, so that I could identify them before they joined friendship groups. Pelmanism was the first activity. Rashid demonstrated the game with the help of leaders, before it was played in groups. I took the following notes to give Rashid following the post-lesson discussion:

Khalid

As you explained how to play pelmanism to the whole class, he was looking around, fidgeting, and you called out his name to get his attention. After that, he focused on you, squinting and concentrating hard. When the group leader came back to his table to explain the activity, he got close, looking curiously, and then helped arrange the cards. He got very involved in the game when it started, trying to read the cards when it was his turn, leaning forward and, at one point, knocking over a chair in his eagerness to participate. It was clear from his smile that he was happy playing. He responded positively when you, the teacher, came over to help. A minute or two later, he was trying to read his friend's card 'They like riding their bikes' upside down. Throughout the game, he was moving around, very involved throughout.

Isam

Isam's behaviour was quite different. As you explained how to play pelmanism at the beginning, he seemed to be paying attention to you, while leaning back in his chair at the back of the class, with his fingers covering his mouth. The group leader then returned to the table to set up the game, and all the other boys huddled around, to check how to play it. Isam, though, sat apart, detached from the group, now rubbing his nose. When it was his turn to play, he pointed at a word card out of his reach, and others turned it over and read it. He then pointed at a picture card, which another boy turned over for him. The cards didn't match, and a look of annoyance and disappointment momentarily passed across his face. A bit later, after you had spoken to his group, he got more involved, showing, to a boy sitting on his left, who helped read it for him, a card that his group had passed to him. A moment or two later, he struck me again as withdrawn, touching his face from time to time, and standing apart, while the rest of the group became animated, playing the game excitedly. The next time it was his turn, he just pointed at a card for others to turn over and read, showing little interest in the outcome. He didn't win any cards, I don't think (RO.5).

When we spoke about this activity afterwards, Rashid reported feeling pleased with it. Most of the learners had found it "enjoyable", and "played it successfully". Isam's behaviour, though, had surprised him.

He refused to involve with the game. I went to him and asked him. He said 'I don't want to.' This surprised me really, and his group were encouraging him but he refused. I encouraged him several times but he still refused to engage. He was just watching (RI.6).

I told Rashid about the signs of defensiveness I had observed, the hand so often in front of the face, and his physical detachment, sitting, standing apart from the group.

"Yes I noticed that as well", Rashid replied,

and I encouraged him to change his place if he couldn't reach the (cards). He said 'no, no, it's normal. I don't want to join. I don't want to involve. I don't want to participate'. I said 'why?'. He said 'no, no problem ... it's normal, normal'. Twice he said 'it's normal. I don't want to participate in the game'. I was surprised with this word. 'Why it's normal?' He said 'just normal' (RI.6).

Khalid's performance was better. "He's trying to be involved and he shared his ideas about the cards. He was more active." However, Rashid had discovered "a little problem", "which is lack of knowledge. He cannot read, so he faced this problem. He asked me several times to explain what's on the card or read it to him". Khalid had tried "to look at the pictures and the card" and match them, but found it difficult.

Rashid had realized during the activity

that if there is a high achiever with him or near him it may make him more successful because he was active and wanted to participate but the point is knowledge. He cannot read actually, and this is a barrier to him [preventing him from being] successful in matching the cards (RI.6).

An implication Rashid drew was that being in a mixed ability group might have been better for Khalid. "I faced this problem, which is the absence of high achievers near some pupils." Without the support of high achievers, Khalid "was depending on my support", Rashid continued. "He was calling me a lot". This provided evidence that grouping learners according to mixed abilities was very "helpful for the teacher and the pupils. High achievers can help and support and interact" (RI.6).

What about Isam? He had done better in the cooperative activity, the song following the game of pelmanism, performing "his role very well", Rashid observed (RI.6). I agreed that he had seemed active and relaxed later in the lesson. So sometimes, perhaps, I suggested, the activity type was crucial.

What had Rashid learned to date from conducting the research? "I learned where to focus on the problems of the pupils" and their effect on participation and motivation, he told me,

and I learned how to investigate these problems and how to find out and how to notice, actually, from the observation while I'm teaching, to be a researcher and a teacher at the same time. While I'm teaching I noticed several problems with the pupils and I can solve the problem, maybe immediately or later on if the problems are complicated (RI.6).

Rashid seemed more self-confident in this post-lesson discussion than he had in earlier ones, partly perhaps because he was so interested in the outcomes of this carefully planned one-off lesson that consisted of two enjoyable revision activities. The lesson may have been relatively easy to prepare, but Rashid had planned the research carefully and executed it well. The lesson had gone smoothly, and the

observations he made afterwards of the learners complemented mine. I felt Rashid's firmer evidence-based pronouncements about the value of mixed ability groups and his stronger self-efficacy statements about conducting research justified. He had not lost sight of the challenges. "I am dealing with low achievers", he told me the following month, "and cannot expect too much" (RN.1)

9.12 Trying to use groupwork in an unfavourable context

When I next visited Rashid's school, in September 2005, it had not settled down yet for the new academic year, and flying classes (the practice of classes moving from one room to another between lessons, according to the next subject) had not been introduced as yet. Perhaps they would not. The new headmaster was trying to make the school "calm, more secure" by keeping the pupils in the same place throughout the school day. "The victims", Rashid felt, would be English teachers, science teachers bringing "chemical materials to the classes" and teachers of various subjects such as himself wishing to re-arrange the groups (RI.7).

"Some groups were poor", he reflected after the Grade 6 lesson I observed that day. I highlighted successes; lively whole class interaction, focused group discussions, but Rashid was dissatisfied. He could not organize the groups as he wished to, and some lacked high achievers. A group close to the door, which I had noted "to be cooperating very well" together (RO.6), contained three high achievers, Rashid reported. In contrast, two groups on his right "didn't do well". He had lost control of them "because sometimes they don't know what to do. They are trying but nobody is there to help them". They did not want to move, as the Arabic teacher had told them to stay where they were. "It's a major problem I'm facing in my class", Rashid continued. "What to do?" Another problem was that different subject teachers appointed different group leaders. At the beginning of the semester, a few weeks earlier, he had tried to form his own groups for every lesson, "but I gave up", he said, because this had always taken him 5 or 10 minutes to organize. He needed flying classes (RI.7).

I felt that unless Rashid could convince the headmaster to agree to flying classes, he could accomplish very little. Rashid's positive self-efficacy for solving the problems in his class seemed dependent upon him being able to regulate his classroom space.

He reported that that he had a “deep understanding” of groupwork now, of “organizing groups and identifying low achievers and where to put them”, so that it was “easy now, with the use of groupwork, to help them and ... improve their levels and their language”, but he needed his own classroom to do this successfully (RI.7).

9.13 Involving other teachers in supporting low achievers through groupwork

Rashid wanted other teachers to support low achievers by sharing his belief in their potential. The four learners in his study, including Khalid and Isam, had improved. While “they’re still low achievers they can improve”, he told me, but unfortunately “some teachers still consider them difficult cases, they deal with them as difficult cases. When a teacher puts in his mind that this is a difficult case, it’s hopeless.” “If you consider them as hopeless”, he continued, “you cannot improve them, but if you consider that they have to improve and force, encourage them to improve their level” then you can succeed (RI.7). This suggests high self-efficacy for dealing with low achievers, high self-efficacy for projecting positive beliefs.

For the sake of learners throughout the school, Rashid also wanted other English teachers to use groupwork effectively. In October 2005, he was promoted to SET, bringing new responsibilities, including observing colleagues and conducting workshops, and giving him the opportunity to practise ideas picked up on the INSET and Mentoring module. For this, he would produce a portfolio assignment reporting on three reflective actions related to mentoring.

“It would be a wise idea”, Rashid wrote in a report on one of the first lessons he observed as SET, in October 2005, and included as an appendix in his INSET and Mentoring portfolio, “if you got pupils to discuss the activity in groups before asking them to explain. This might get high achievers to help low achieving ones (and) help you to gain more pupils’ participation and involvement”. He wrote similar comments in reports on two other teachers. None of the three used groupwork for discussing the rubric of activities, which seemed to have a negative effect on participation, with many pupils, unsure what to do and going off-task. In light of this, he felt there was a justifiable need to address this issue through a workshop that, he hoped, would develop understanding and improve knowledge of groupwork. “I might also get them to learn from each other and exchange experiences and ideas”, he added (RA.3).

The workshop would be based around four activities. First, through discussion, he would “begin to explore participants’ ideas and experience”. This would tell him “whether to start from zero or not”. Then he would engage the teachers in a groupwork activity, analyse their performance on the task with them, and finally, through discussion, generate suggestions for the future, supporting this discussion with an OHT listing benefits of groupwork and recommended procedures (RA.3).

During the first activity, Rashid discovered that the teachers had some understanding of groupwork. One reported it “increased the pupils’ interest in the lesson”, while another said it “broke the routine”. After this initial discussion, the teachers did a practical groupwork task, completing a crossword, while divided into two teams, competing against each other. The winners were applauded. Why had they won?

The mentees explained that cooperation between members was one factor which helped the winners [who had] divided the words among them during the group discussion beforehand [thinking] it would be quicker. However, the other group said they did not coordinate their work very well (RA.3).

Rashid felt outcomes were positive. “Their responses show that they understand the importance of the procedure of getting groups to discuss the activity in advance, which is the main aim of this workshop”, he concluded. “They also appeared to interact ... which reinforced their learning from each other” (RA.3). By sharing ideas he was committed to with other teachers in this way, Rashid felt he could influence them, an empowering, efficacious feeling.

Rashid followed up the workshop with an observation of one of the teachers who attended it, focusing on this teacher’s use of groupwork in a reading race. Rashid described this as follows:

The teacher selected some pupils as leaders and explained the activity. After that, he asked the pupils to play the reading race without getting them to discuss in groups. I noticed that there was no winners, because the teacher collected the sheets before pupils announced to finish. In addition, there was some crowds of pupils at the board. I saw some pupils dominate the game where they did not allow their partners to go to the poster (RA.3).

Afterwards, Rashid asked the teacher if he felt the activity had succeeded. ‘Yes’, he replied, “but I lost the classroom management at the end when all pupils got very enthusiastic to win the game.” Inviting him to reflect on this experience, Rashid asked

him how he could deal with this problem in future. The teacher replied he would be stricter, showing his “angry face to those naughty pupils in order to keep them calm”. Rashid interrupted, pointing out “this would demotivate them” and have a negative effect on all learners, including those who could not participate due to the domination of the ‘naughty’ or ‘clever’ ones.

For this point, I told him that I faced this problem, but my solution was to set up rules like football game. For example, before I get pupils to start I tell them if any one shout or more than one from one group come to the poster together, I will deduct one point each time. Besides, I prefer to get pupils to discuss and explain the activity in groups (RA.3).

I was pleased that Rashid had ideas for managing reading races more effectively (9.6, 9.11, above). He later told me he was “proud” to have thought of the ‘football rules’ solution himself, (though I had demonstrated how to do this with competitive groupwork activities early in the course). He felt reading races were most “difficult” when they were new activity types in the first semester with Grade 5, as for this particular teacher. “I can reduce the rules with higher grades”, he assured me (RI.8), sounding more efficacious than before in using this activity type. This suggests that experience may have led to PK growth.

9.14 Rashid’s learning from his research

What had Rashid learned from conducting his research? One finding he presented in his dissertation was that allowing groups to form themselves on the basis of factors such as friendship had worked well with the low achievers in his study. Perhaps, in these groups, he continued,

they felt more relaxed and were able to ask for help. They might feel shy to ask the high achievers in the mixed ability groups. They also could not ask for help as group leaders, because I think they did not want to appear knowing nothing in front of their group members (RA.4).

Friendship groups might benefit most, he speculated, those “who lacked motivation and confidence”, while mixed ability groups would help those whose lack of participation related less to affective factors and more to a deficiency of “language knowledge and skills” (RA.4).

He recommended varying the formation of groups occasionally, giving low achievers achievable responsibilities such as arranging materials or dividing card games, and

suggested using “simple, funny and interesting groupwork activities, such as songs, with low achievers”. In contrast, he argued, “using difficult games” that required them to “write and read long sentences” would hardly benefit them (RA.4).

The teacher’s facilitative role was important in urging a cooperative spirit in groupwork, in encouraging ‘dominators’ to work as part of a team, in persuading high achievers to support those that needed it (RI.7). “Through some remedial techniques”, he argued, “low achieving pupils can be improved”. They should not be labelled, or ignored or neglected (RA.4).

Rashid’s data supported the above analysis. However, at a micro-level, the marker argued, he needed “to define more precisely the categories of behaviour” he aimed to measure (RF.4). Though he had various categories of this; (interaction, active participation, language knowledge & skills, confidence, motivation, groupwork cooperation) he provided insufficiently focused examples. So, ‘helping others write the answers’ was classified as ‘groupwork cooperation’ (RA.4), though additionally it might have related to other criteria, as these were undefined. Nevertheless, Rashid gained a ‘C’ for his “original and interesting” work (RF.4).

Rashid had learned much of benefit from his study, but the key thing for him was how to put it into practice. His main criticism of the course was of its “assessment spirit”. He wanted to test theories and ideas, and relate knowledge to practical experience (RI.4). Now he would have time to do this, as the programme was coming to an end, and he felt he had the “skills to make other researches” (RI.7). How well could he develop in his use of groupwork? Would his context allow him to experiment in the classroom?

9.15 Defeated by the context

Unfortunately, Rashid never did get the flying classes he wanted in the 2006/7 academic year. Though he tried hard to convince the headmaster himself and also asked an English teacher trainer to intervene on his behalf, he went the whole year with posters in L1 on the walls, and learners sitting mostly where other teachers had put them. Occasionally, he tried to change the groups, but the learners complained: “teacher, teacher, all teachers like us to sit here except you, so what’s your problem

with us?” They could tell him this in Arabic. Sometimes, he tried to convince them, arguing: “by regrouping you, I can help you learn”, but to little avail. He felt in a difficult position, unable to devote 5 minutes at the beginning of every lesson to regrouping the class. He was behind with the syllabus, and lost a unit from the coursebook during the semester as it was (RI.8).

I asked him then, in July 2006, after we had talked more about the past, if he felt better able to use groupwork than he had been at the beginning of the research. “Yes”, he told me,

but it depends on the conditions. First of all, if I have got some problems, I have to fix the problems, for example, my own teaching room, my techniques, my students and the cooperation of the school, other teachers’ cooperation as well. First of all, I have to fix these problems, and then I could work well with groupwork (RI.8).

Rashid seemed realistic here about the context. Though he could notice problems, he felt unable to do much about them. Positive self-efficacy for solving the problems was conditional upon him dealing with the context, which he could not satisfactorily. He had gone a whole year hardly able to put his ideas into practice, which must have been frustrating.

9.16 Discussion

I will now address my research questions with specific reference to this case.

RQ1. What changes does he report in his self-efficacy in supporting low achievers in groupwork activities?

In focusing on this question, I will analyse statements made by Rashid in interviews and assignments for relevance to self-efficacy (see Table 9.1, overleaf).

As can be seen, Rashid’s self-efficacy grew in various ways during the course. In the first year, he reported feeling more efficacious in relating to low achievers after developing a finer understanding of their needs. Later, while acknowledging limits to the progress they could realistically make, he emphasized that he believed in their potential for growth. He also believed that he had the means to provide the help they needed, through groupwork, so that supporting them now was easier.

Table 9.1 Rashid's self-efficacy statements relating to his research into helping low achievers through groupwork

<i>Self-efficacy in:</i>				
<i>Working with low achievers</i>	<i>Organizing reading races</i>	<i>Grouping learners</i>	<i>Conducting research</i>	<i>Coping with his context</i>
<p>I can manage psychological problems and their weaknesses and their needs also. I can understand what they need and what they lack. (11/03)</p> <p>I am dealing with low achievers and can't expect too much. They won't improve greatly but they can be helped. (5/05)</p> <p>I've got a deep understanding of organizing groups and identifying low achievers and where to put them because I don't consider them as obstacles or difficult cases in my class. It's easy now, with the use of groupwork, to help them and to improve their levels... They're still low achievers but they can improve. Some teachers still consider them difficult cases, they deal with them as difficult cases. When a teacher puts in his mind that this is a difficult case, it's hopeless. You consider this as hopeless, you cannot improve, but if you consider they have to improve and force, encourage them to improve, their level will be better hopefully. (9/05)</p>	<p>I faced a problem in the reading race. They didn't know most of the vocabulary, only common things, like bananas or oranges. (3/04)</p> <p>As a teacher, I may have failed to control and manage carefully the game activity very well. (Describing lesson taught in early 4/05)</p> <p>I told him that I faced this problem, but my solution was to set up rules like football game. (Reported post-lesson discussion, 10/05)</p>	<p>One of my problems ... is uncooperative groups... It was 40% successful because few members only tried to cooperate with the brilliants. (10/03)</p> <p>I noticed that those groups started to interact with the brilliant pupil. They tried to discuss their work together and ask each other where and how to find answers. Through looking at their books, I found that they answered the comprehension questions required in that activity. (LAL journal, 12/03)</p> <p>Mixed abilities for grouping pupils is much helpful for the teacher and for the pupils. High achievers can help and support and interact. (4/05)</p> <p>Mixed abilities is better... we have to encourage and we have to persuade these high achievers to support those low achieving pupils. (9/05)</p> <p>Some group organizations can improve the low achievers for specific aims. For example, friendship groups offer confidence for those who lack this factor. (Dissertation, 12/05)</p>	<p>I don't really know how to research. (11/03)</p> <p>I feel that researching is challenging. I don't have experience of doing academic research, so I'm worrying. (10/04)</p> <p>I learned where to focus on the problems of the pupils and the (effects), like participation, motivation, and I learned how to investigate these problems and how to find out and how to notice, actually, from the observation while I'm teaching, to be a researcher and a teacher at the same time. While I'm teaching I noticed several problems with the pupils and I can solve the problem maybe immediately or later on if the problems are complicated. (4/05)</p> <p>The main thing is that now I've got the skills to make other researches. (9/05)</p>	<p>Yes, (I can use groupwork well), but it depends on the conditions. First of all, if I have got some problems, I have to fix the problems, for example, my own teaching room, my techniques, my students and the cooperation of the school, other teachers' cooperation as well. First of all, I have to fix these problems, and then I could work well with groupwork. (7/06)</p>

Rashid believed he had gained “a deep understanding” (RI.7) of how to organize groups by the end of the course. He had developed solutions to deal with the activity type he found most problematic, the reading race, and had experienced some success in his attempts to regroup learners.

Rashid’s self-efficacy in conducting research into his use of groupwork developed from a position of some uncertainty, so that, by 2005, he could express self-confidence in his ability to observe and intervene while teaching and researching. His findings strengthened his belief in the need for mixed ability groups, and in the importance of action, reflected in more powerful language; “we have to encourage, we have to persuade” (RI.7). Rashid felt he could organize groups successfully, according to the learners’ specific needs. Unfortunately, though, at the end of the research period, there were contextual challenges he could not overcome, blocking further development (9.15, above).

RQ2. To what extent do changes in his self-efficacy beliefs reflect changes in his PK?

In addressing this question, I will first evaluate Rashid’s PK in supporting low achievers through groupwork against various criteria (see Table 9.2, below).

Table 9.2 Rashid’s PK in supporting low achievers through groupwork evaluated against various criteria

A	<p><i>Has he developed an understanding of the role of social interaction in learning?</i></p> <p>Prior to the course, Rashid’s ‘old beliefs’ had included the need to encourage extrinsic motivation (9.4, above). He did not believe that learners could “depend on themselves” then and had not considered they could “learn from each other” (9.3, above), even though this had been a feature of his own education (9.1, above). This belief changed during 2003, when he was influenced by the LAL module, and, specifically, by input on the ZPD (9.3, above). He reflected carefully on such input (9.8, above). Rashid expresses his ideas about the ZPD rather awkwardly, “complete, just complete” (9.3, above), but his more strongly expressed views about the need for mixed ability groups (9.11, above) are consistent with a practical understanding of the concept. As to the outcomes of the social interaction that resulted, he was not particularly interested in the language produced or in the transactions that occurred, as markers noted (9.5, 9.9, above). His focus was more at a macro level on successful task completion, social and motivational processes involved as well as more global language development (9.2, 9.5, 9.10-11, above).</p>
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B	<p><i>Does he show sensitivity to the needs of low achieving young learners?</i> Rashid was not very sympathetic to a boy who was avoiding work (9.2, above), but was consistently sympathetic to low achievers without ever appearing to patronize them (9.9-14, above). He insisted they had potential that could be developed (9.13, above).</p>
C	<p><i>Does he encourage peer interaction?</i> Sometimes learners refused (9.2, 9.11, above), were difficult to convince (9.5, above) or did not cooperate when he “tried to control the situation” (9.6, above). However, he persevered, demonstrating belief in low achievers (9.13, above), and noted improvement in the quality of interaction (9.2, above), as with Khalid (9.11, above).</p>
D	<p><i>Can he group learners in appropriate ways?</i> He could do this in October 2003, getting learners to work in mixed ability groups that became more cohesive over time (9.2, above). He then experimented in his research, grouping learners systematically according to different principles (9.9-11, above), which allowed him to offer some insightful conclusions (9.14, above). Contextual factors, though, then made it very difficult for him to put his ideas into practice, and he “gave up” (9.12, 9.15, above).</p>
E	<p><i>Can he organize groupwork activities in an appropriate way?</i> Rashid never really analysed groupwork activities in much depth (9.5, 9.9, 9.14, above), classifying them simply as competitive or cooperative (9.10, above) when they could be both (9.13, above). He clearly had problems managing reading races (9.6, above), but acknowledged these problems (9.7, 9.11, above) and felt he developed answers to them (9.13, above). Reading races, involving a competitive edge, inter-group competition and movement, are perhaps intrinsically harder to manage than pelmanism, which has just the first of these elements. He could set up and monitor pelmanism effectively (9.11, above), and may have developed in his use of groupwork for peer-checking the rubric of activities, which he earlier had problems with (9.8, above). He made peer-checking the rubric the focus of both post-lesson feedback and a workshop he conducted (9.13, above).</p>
F	<p><i>Is he able to conduct research into his use of groupwork?</i> In October 2003, before receiving much input on conducting research, Rashid’s observations of his learners were focused (9.2, above). He then demonstrated the ability to notice in every subsequent post-lesson discussion (9.7, 9.11-12, above). For his research, he developed observation tools and involved other teachers in helping him (9.10-11, above). His research designs became more ethical, developing from the experiment he conducted for his LAL journal (9.4, above) to a dissertation plan fairer to all involved (9.10, above). One of the weaknesses of his research, though, was that, at a micro-level, his categorizing could have been more precise (9.14, above).</p>
G	<p><i>Is he able to share his ideas with a view to improving the practice of others in his context?</i> Rashid’s workshop for fellow teachers may have led to beneficial outcomes (9.13, above). Unfortunately, though, he could not convince the headmaster to agree to flying classes (9.15, above), which would have made it very difficult for any of the teachers to put his ideas into practice.</p>

As can be seen, there was development in Rashid's PK during the course, although some skills, such as his ability to observe (F), were already finely-tuned. In 2003, he developed a much clearer understanding of the role of social interaction in learning (A), and then, during the next two years, developed in his ability to conduct research into his use of groupwork (F), while gaining insights into appropriate ways of grouping learners (D). Knowledge growth in these areas seems consistent with a learner-centredness (B) that appears to have informed his actions.

Limits in his development are discernible, too, though. At a micro-level, his analysis of categories of behaviour could have been more focused (F), while his analysis of the characteristics of groupwork activities could also have been sharper (E).

I have some doubts as to the extent of his development in organizing groupwork activities appropriately (E), as there are limitations in the data. I observed a reading race managed unsuccessfully (RO.3), and would have liked to see evidence of progress. I am dependent, though, on Rashid's reports. There is consistency in these, in both the acknowledgement of a problem at different times (RI.3, RA.3-4), and in the identification of a solution (RA.3, RI.8). However, firsthand evidence is lacking.

Of great importance in Rashid's development is the context. Though Rashid encouraged peer interaction in his own classes (C), and peer checking the rubric as a standard procedure in others' (G), the headmaster's intransigence with regard to flying classes, the pupils' reluctance to move within their own, and his concern about not losing time for coverage of the curriculum materials all contributed to him being unable to put ideas into practice (D).

If we reconsider Rashid's self-efficacy beliefs (Table 9.1) in light of his PK we can find a reasonable degree of fit. However, I feel initially he may have underestimated his ability to conduct research, since, by November 2003, he had already demonstrated skills useful for researching his own practice. Of course, it is likely that Rashid's understanding of the term 'research' would also have changed substantially throughout the period.

Another term one might question his understanding of is ‘psychological’ in his claim to be able to “manage psychological problems” in 2003 (RA.1, RI.2). Rashid was enthused by input on LAL, and perhaps his sense of empowerment, as a psychologist as well as a teacher, was particularly strong then.

Most of his self-efficacy statements seem realistic. In July 2006, in assessing the effect of the context on his use of groupwork, his choice of the modal ‘could’ (to indicate the unachievable?) in “I could work well with groupwork” (RI.8) is interesting.

RQ3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in his PK and self-efficacy in supporting low achievers through groupwork, and how?

Rashid’s own experiences at school, of being scaffolded by friends, may have predisposed him towards cooperative learning (9.1, above). Learning about the ZPD through the LAL module (9.3, above) provided a theoretical basis for his belief in the power of groupwork (9.8, above), which even dissatisfactory learning experiences on the BA Programme with ‘unsupportive colleagues’ were unable to dispel (9.1, above).

Rashid reflected on new concepts as soon as he was introduced to them, trying to “discover” them “practically” (RI.4), trying to relate them to his experience (9.8, above). Though he disliked the “assessment spirit” (RI.4) he associated with the course, the three modules he claimed influenced him most included LAL, and INSET and Mentoring (RI.7), both of which involved very practical time-consuming assignments closely related to his research, (RA.1&3). Rashid was ambitious and became disappointed with results (9.1, above). However, his willingness to reflect and try out new ideas in his own context was sustained throughout the course and contributed to his own development.

Personal qualities and language skills affected Rashid’s growth. He possessed enthusiasm and often thought deeply and carefully, but unfortunately was not always able to make his points clearly (9.9, above). This may have contributed to his lack of success in securing cooperation (9.1, above). I wanted him to transfer to my other day release group, which had a more cooperative ethos, but he was unable to switch. At school, Rashid was unfortunate in his headmaster, whose policies, in terms of flying

classes (9.15, above), were at odds with the practices of other schools in the region I visited as part of my work.

Rashid picked up ideas from day release sessions, sometimes sub-consciously (9.13, above) and gained from tutorials, a mode of interaction he valued, often clarifying his ideas through them, e.g.; on 'weak pupils' (9.9, above). He frequently sought out tutorials, both in Oman and in Leeds, when he spent the second summer of the course. He described one kind tutor there as having taught him to write (RI.7).

In my opinion, he was less fortunate with feedback on assignments, which occasionally missed the mark (9.9, above) and left him depressed. Feedback sometimes appeared very focused, though, as for the LAL assignment (9.5 above). Unfortunately, in this instance, the advice given may not have been accommodated. On occasion, Rashid resisted suggestions as being impractical in his context (9.7, above).

Overall, Rashid felt he benefited a great deal from the course, but frustrations remained because academically he felt he did not fulfil his potential (9.1, above). Nor could he put his ideas in the school into practice as he wished (9.15, above). In both cases, he blamed contextual factors.

Chapter 10: Cross-case analysis

In the previous five chapters, I have presented case studies demonstrating growth in practical knowledge (PK) and teachers' self-efficacy (TSE) in the following areas; developing speaking skills through communicative tasks (CTs), enhancing motivation through materials design, overcoming difficulties in reading, developing reflective practice, supporting low achievers through groupwork. In telling these stories, I have focused on the particular, the unique vitality of each case (Stake, 2006), with the help of thick description (Geertz, 1973). In this chapter, I compare growth in PK and TSE across cases, with a view to gaining broader insights into both the nature of this development and the role of the course in supporting this. I will explore patterns and highlight contrasts in the teachers' development in relation to research questions (first introduced in 4.2, above), around which the chapter is structured:

1. What changes did the teachers report in their TSE?
2. To what extent did changes in their TSE beliefs reflect changes in their PK?
3. Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in their PK and TSE, and how?

10.1 What changes did the teachers report in their TSE?

A range of changes in TSE that varied in terms of depth and focus were reported in relation to context-specific tasks. The teachers who were most self-aware produced the richest data.

Mariyam was deeply conscious of her growth in many aspects of developing reflective practice. She often thought back to earlier stages in her teaching career, which allowed her to put her development in perspective. Recalling how earlier her autonomy had been restricted by "simple language... information and knowledge" (MI.3), she felt empowered by the BA Programme in many ways. She spoke efficaciously about her growth in teaching and supporting learning, analysing, adapting and problem-solving, expressing ideas in English and using English for self-development (Table 8.2, above), all of which supported her in

reflecting and helping other teachers reflect through using the stimulated recall technique.

Waleed was also highly conscious of his own development in relation to his task, designing materials to enhance motivation. Before the course, he had gained useful practical skills in this area, but felt a lack of clear criteria for evaluation purposes and a lack of alternative strategies when innovations did not work had limited his development. The BA Programme supported him in the more cognitive aspects of designing materials to meet his learners' motivational needs. He spoke efficaciously about his growth in adapting materials, assessing taught lessons, justifying decisions made, coping with contextual demands and encouraging other teachers to use materials in a motivating way (Table 6.2, above).

Rashid's TSE growth was more uneven. Focused on supporting low achievers through groupwork, he reported feeling more efficacious in understanding low achievers, grouping them according to their needs, and researching his use of groupwork while teaching. There is also evidence that suggests he became more efficacious in managing 'difficult' groupwork activities, such as reading races. Unfortunately, however, he could not cope with the challenges posed by his context, which undermined his TSE for the task (Table 9.1, above).

Fawziya was also very conscious of challenges posed by her context, in relation to the task of using CTs to develop speaking skills. At first glance, her statements throughout the research period suggest low self-efficacy in meeting both the physical demands of preparing materials for CTs and the practical demands of managing the classroom (Table 5.2, above). However, an analysis of these statements reveals a subtle shift over time, with external factors outside her control (the broken photocopier, seating arrangements preferred by other teachers) taking the blame ahead of her capacity to arrange materials and organize. TSE growth cannot be ruled out amidst this pessimism. The area in which she did express TSE growth unambiguously was in meeting the conceptual demands of planning CTs.

Omar's TSE statements focused on methodological decisions he made in relation to the task of overcoming reading difficulties (Table 7.1, above). Moving from a

position of uncertainty in 2003, he sounded highly efficacious in 2004 in his solution to use the dubious practice of chain reading. Perhaps he then experienced self-efficacy doubts leading to learning, as, in 2005, he spoke of having a variety of strategies (not just one) at his disposal, to use with the coursebook during class time, and with other materials in the English Club. These statements stressing variety and choice were efficacious. Can one accept them at face value, though, or do they need to be considered in relation to PK?

In summarizing, I would like to highlight patterns of development. Firstly, all the teachers reported TSE growth in cognitive aspects of their work, variously pinpointing the following: identifying needs, planning, adapting materials, choosing from alternative strategies, problem-solving, assessing learning, researching practice, justifying changes, reflecting while using English, and advising/supporting other teachers. This emphasis on the cognitive underlines that these were in-service teachers with mostly well-developed practical skills on a course that was academic as well as reflective. When practical issues such as organizing groupwork or managing the classroom for CTs were mentioned, contextual factors could also loom large. Self-reported TSE statements are not necessarily accurate, though, as has been argued above (Chapter 2). They can over- or under-estimate or misrepresent capability in relation to any particular task. Based on observational evidence, I consider some of Fawziya's self-efficacy statements too pessimistic, and Omar's over-optimistic, as will become clear as I discuss the next question.

10.2 To what extent did changes in their TSE beliefs reflect changes in their PK?

PK, which in the context of this study can be seen as experiential knowledge realized through reflective actions and TSE beliefs that mediate these actions and function as estimates of capability (2.14, above), was introduced in 2.8 (above). I explained then that dimensions of PK discussed in the literature include the self, milieu, subject matter, curriculum and instruction (Elbaz, 1981), as well as types of formal knowledge, such as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and knowledge of the learners and their characteristics (Shulman, 1987), which I subsume under PK, following Borg (2006) (2.8, above). However, rather than use these terms, I will discuss the teachers' developing PK under headings that have emerged from my

analysis of their growth in TSE. I will introduce each section describing PK growth with a quote that illustrates self-efficacy growth in the same area.

10.2.1 PK regarding the learners and learning

“I can manage psychological problems and their weaknesses and their needs also. I can understand what they need and what they lack” (*Rashid, 11/03*).

Although several teachers, including Waleed and Mariyam, demonstrated deeply engrained learner-centred practices early in the course, the input on children’s characteristics and language acquisition theories was new to all. Even Mariyam, who had attended the PRIT course and worked with very young learners, had not met Halliwell (1992) before the pre-sessional, while Waleed reported that he had not known “too much” about the learners or the learning process, thinking that learning came from the teacher and from the books, rather than from the learners, themselves. Rashid had similar ideas before the course, thinking that the learners could not depend on themselves.

The LAL module was very influential, providing theoretical knowledge, which the teachers made practical. Learning about Vygotsky’s (1962) ZPD provided a theoretical basis for Rashid’s beliefs in the power of groupwork, informing his actions, while Waleed explored Krashen’s (1982) affective filter hypothesis through research. Mariyam gained a heightened awareness of how to support the development of learning strategies and made use of this, while Fawziya, influenced by learners’ statements in a questionnaire complaining of teachers embarrassing them, became sensitive to the need to encourage positive attitudes by making learning enjoyable and stress-free, which was evident in her practice. As his RT, I was disappointed, though, that Omar did not appear to grow in the same direction.

10.2.2 PK regarding teaching approaches

“Now I try to deal with them like they are really adults and they are responsible for their learning. So when you give them that chance they really become adults” (*Fawziya, 10/04*).

Of the five teachers, the one whose teaching approach changed the most was Fawziya. She realized that before the course she had been too strict, too focused on teaching to exams, too teacher-centred; an ‘instructor’ with the children there to ‘receive’. Influenced, though, by new and powerful beliefs in the value of communicative tasks, she wanted to transform herself as a teacher, to be a ‘facilitator’, a ‘catalyst’ for classroom interaction. Indeed, she succeeded in changing in this direction.

Of the others, Waleed reported that, influenced by early methodology modules, he reduced his use of L1 and learned to scaffold learners’ efforts in different ways, fine-tuning the level of support he provided. Similarly, building on the learners’ knowledge was how Rashid saw his role now. He also became increasingly concerned about supporting individual needs, as did Mariyam. She felt, during the BA course, that she became a more sensitive, caring teacher. Omar’s teaching approach, though, remained quite traditional.

10.2.3 PK in organizing the class

“I’ve got a deep understanding of organizing groups and identifying low achievers and where to put them because I don’t consider them as obstacles or difficult cases in my class. It’s easy now, with the use of groupwork, to help them and to improve their levels... They’re still low achievers but they can improve” (*Rashid, 9/05*).

In organizing the class, one similarity is that all five teachers indicated finding groupwork valuable, although several had limited experience of using this mode of interaction prior to the course. At the start of the research period, Fawziya’s learners sat in rows, as did Omar’s, apart from one Grade 4 class. Rashid was just starting to teach the new curriculum, in which groupwork activities were prominent. Waleed and Mariyam were already using groupwork, although it was not a feature of Waleed’s OWTE syllabus.

Little of the course input was directly related to groupwork. Indeed, the most explicit focus was probably provided by a one-hour workshop I did on the topic in October 2003, relating this to LAL. However, during lecture and seminar sessions, the teachers invariably sat in groups and were asked to do things together. They were

thus given opportunities to realize the possibilities of groupwork as they explored each other's ideas, while exposed to the tutor's ways of combining and recombining groups, monitoring, checking, getting feedback, introducing a fun, competitive element on occasion.

Mariyam felt she picked up useful techniques in using groupwork, as did Waleed, who was interested in encouraging learners to communicate actively in groups through materials design. Encouraging communication was Fawziya's main concern, and when she switched to using groupwork she reported successful learning outcomes, in terms of the sharing of ideas and language development. The composition of groups was an issue for Omar and Rashid. Omar wanted mixed ability groups for his small Grade 4 class in 2003, but was frustrated by other teachers who wanted to stream them. In 2004 and 2005, his observed classes were in rows. Rashid became very interested in exploring learning opportunities for low achievers in relation to the composition of groups, the focus of Chapter 9 (above).

10.2.4 PK in analysing the coursebook

“Now I can look at any area in the syllabus and see how can I help my learners to learn more and to learn it effectively also, and at the same time I can focus on their problems and try to think about the real solutions to improve their skills and to get them to love English” (*Mariyam, 10/05*).

The teachers were working with different coursebooks (3 OWTE, 2 EFM) at different levels (Grades 1-9), and took quite different positions with regard to analysing the ones they were using. Since early in his teaching career, Waleed, for example, had been quite critical of the OWTE materials for their lack of variety. Accordingly, he had tried to adapt them before the course began. Fawziya, on the other hand, also working with OWTE, had always followed the coursebook. However, once exposed to input on communicative methodology, she started to see OWTE as influenced by Audiolingualism, and became quite critical of its limitations. Mariyam, working with EFM, had also followed the coursebook without analysing it very deeply. She then reported that day release sessions involving practical analysis were instrumental in helping her discover for herself its strengths and weaknesses. Rashid liked EFM and tried to follow the recommended procedures. Omar, working with OWTE, believed he had to teach every activity provided, though he felt he could modify the procedures to

a certain extent; e.g., by using realia or pictures to activate schemata, which implies a degree of analysis.

10.2.5 PK in adapting materials

“When I plan I can see which part, which step is suitable for them, which part might be difficult and how I’m going to adapt it or create something new. I mean, I have some new ideas, which make teaching more exciting... When you are adapting something, you are not adapting it at once like magic and suddenly it will perfect. It requires hard work and concentration. The process of analysing and reviewing needs a clear mind, but I have a lot of ideas now” (*Fawziya, 10/05*).

The two teachers who engaged most in adaptation were Waleed and Fawziya. Fawziya sought to bring the course materials to life in various ways and designed carefully constructed communicative tasks to go with each unit of the coursebook. These tasks became more complex (as I have indicated in Chapter 5, above), and it became easier for her to plan and execute them, though challenges remained.

For Waleed, these challenges were much less of an issue. Indeed, he seemed at ease adapting materials throughout the research period, for which there may be several reasons. Firstly, he had been doing it for longer, since before the course began. Secondly, adaptation was an integral part of his daily work. Creative materials design and use characterized every one of the five lessons I observed him teach over two and a half years, which suggests it was deeply engrained in his practice. During the research period, there was also growth in his PK, though, as he learned to incorporate the design of materials into a more logical three-part communicative task structure, which allowed for the provision of sufficient speaking practice (Chapter 6, above). As the course went on, he also felt, along with Fawziya, that he had more ideas to draw upon, with clear criteria that he could use to guide him in the design process.

In contrast, Omar rejected the idea of making major adaptations, complaining, on one occasion, that if he created a communicative task it would require a whole additional lesson. He was prepared to find extra time, though, to revise grammar points. Time was also an issue for Rashid, when he rejected my suggestion on one occasion that he add preparation activities to recycle vocabulary before a reading race. He was

concerned about not being able to complete the syllabus. I was concerned that without the extra preparation the activity would not work.

Being able to make things work when the lesson did not go according to plan was a practical benefit Mariyam felt she gained from the BA course. She felt she could do this by asking herself many questions and then finding quick solutions, using a range of strategies to implement them. By reflecting in-action, she felt she could respond to the changing situation and make procedural adaptations as she saw fit in a way that led to positive learning outcomes.

10.2.6 PK in evaluating lessons and learning

“Now I can evaluate myself, I mean, in terms of what I’m providing for my pupils, not evaluating my performance, how I’m doing in the classroom, but what I’m providing for the pupils, evaluating activities” (*Waleed, 9/05*).

Several teachers reported a shift in their focus, away from evaluating their own performances and towards evaluating learning outcomes, with Waleed, for example, reporting that paramount in this evaluation were considerations such as learners’ feelings about the activities and the cultural appropriacy of the materials he had designed. Omar indicated that he concentrated now on learners’ difficulties, regardless of others’ perceptions of his work. Important to Rashid now were considerations such as the levels of motivation in the class. After input on stages of development through the optional module, INSET and Mentoring, which neither Waleed nor Omar took, Mariyam recalled how her initial concern had been with herself and improving herself, while now she was concerned with the learners who needed her support.

When evaluating lessons, the teachers learned to focus on the achievement of objectives. Waleed felt that lack of clarity in this area had caused him problems earlier in his career. Fawziya felt that different modules provided clear criteria she could use to evaluate the success of lessons against objectives. Rashid also felt that learning to use criteria to see if aims had been achieved was one of the major practical benefits of the course.

10.2.7 PK in developing reflective skills

“I am a more reflective modern teacher than before. I know now how to reflect on any action” (*Mariyam, 10/05*).

The teachers developed skills that helped them reflect on lessons. Mariyam, for example, reported that she felt better able to notice important things that happened in her class. There was evidence of careful noticing and listening in her lessons and those of Rashid, Waleed and Fawziya. The development of these teachers’ skills in observation was encouraged by demonstrations and practice of how to observe during day release sessions when loop input activities were used, by practical assignments that involved them in reporting on what went on in their classrooms and also by the types of questions they were asked in post-lesson discussions in their schools. Rashid, who demonstrated that he had the ability to notice early in the research period, while collecting data for his LAL assignment, later claimed, in comparison, that inspectors he had known could not observe and analyse in detail the workings of any group. Comments about groupwork from this source would only be very general ones, he reported.

10.2.8 PK in use of language while reflecting

“I can express any idea or anything that I want to say with the language, in different ways and focusing on the meaning” (*Mariyam, 10/05*).

Language development during the course supported the teachers’ ability to talk critically about what had happened in their lessons. This language development was stimulated both by modules focused explicitly on language, and also, through exposure to varied sources of input requiring different processing skills, by modules focused on methodology. Mariyam seemed most conscious of these influences and most aware of her own development. However, I concluded, while listening to taped interviews conducted between October 2003 and November 2005, that the speech of all five teachers developed in terms of fluency and grammatical complexity. Thus, Fawziya, Waleed and Mariyam, for example, often seemed to take longer but more coherent turns towards the end of the research period when describing lessons, while fewer pauses were discernible, particularly in Waleed’s discourse. Fluency was supported, in his case, by better use of linkers to sequence ideas. There was evidence

of increasing complexity in the way that Fawziya, for example, learned to use modals to express her ideas more cautiously, and in the way that Omar learned to hedge, using expressions such as “it depends”. As regards accuracy, Mariyam felt she developed considerably. I noticed progress in this area, but was conscious that inaccuracies in her speech remained.

There were also signs of language development in their more specialized use of academic vocabulary. Thus, in the last year of the course, Omar could talk about activating schemata, while Waleed could mention the cultural context of the learners. Fawziya reported surprising her supervisor by introducing the terms ‘deductive’ and ‘inductive’ into the discussion of a grammar lesson. This use of more specialized academic vocabulary was indicative of the teachers’ ‘expanding’ theoretical knowledge, as Mariyam put it.

There were further signs of this ‘expanding’ theoretical knowledge made practical in the way they started referring to authors, summarizing a theoretical position with an expression such as; “as Halliwell says”, and in the way they learned to support assertions about learning with evidence from their classrooms. Thus, Rashid, in arguing that low achievers with language difficulties could best be helped if groups were organised according to a mix of abilities, could cite evidence from the lesson we had just seen to support this view.

10.2.9 PK in justifying pedagogical decisions

“Now I can change and I can also tell why I changed ... and the inspectors can’t, I mean, force me to follow the teacher’s book procedures as before” (*Waleed, 10/03*).

During the course, some of the teachers, Waleed, Fawziya and Omar, needed to defend pedagogical decisions to inspectors who were hostile to their methodology. This provided opportunities to draw upon growing understanding of theory to justify practice, perhaps for the first time.

Waleed, for example, reported that before the course if an inspector criticized his work he would remain silent, unable to say anything. During early 2004, though, after adapting a coursebook narrative to give it the characteristics of a story, he came into

conflict with his inspector, who demanded, in the post-lesson discussion, that the teachers' book procedures were followed. Waleed, though, defended his adaptation, arguing his case, he later reported, for more than half an hour, by citing different writers' views about the value of stories and justifying his pedagogical decision with theory learned through the Stories module. Waleed reported that he held his ground.

A few months earlier, Omar, at a school 90 kms away in the mountains, but with the same inspector, was criticized for his use of groupwork, which the inspector felt was 'a waste of time'. When he reported this to me, Omar was adamant that the procedure had saved time, not wasted it. However, he later reported that he had little inclination to argue with his inspector again, and would follow the teachers' book procedures (that made no mention of groupwork) next time to avoid conflict.

Fawziya also felt bruised by a conflict with an inspector in the first eighteen months of the course, when her use of peer correction at the end of a writing activity was attacked. Fawziya felt this procedure was useful for encouraging the learners to take on more responsibility, but the inspector did not like it. She said it wasted time, rejected Fawziya's defence drawing on ideas she had learned while doing the BA, and gave her a negative appraisal.

Mariyam and Rashid reported no such conflicts with inspectors, but then they were working in Basic Education schools with a curriculum that was closer to the philosophy of the BA Programme, and perhaps, in their opinion, needed fewer changes. Mariyam was also fortunate in being with an inspector she regarded very highly, Fatma, and her next inspector was then an Omani graduate of an earlier cohort of the BA Programme, as was Rashid's inspector. In the following academic year (2004-5), a further University of Leeds BA (TESOL) graduate replaced the expatriate inspector who Waleed and Omar had argued with and relations were very different, with the new inspector seen as much more supportive. The pressure to justify pedagogical decisions was thus much reduced.

10.2.10 PK in developing reflective attitudes

“Now we have the awareness to exploit everything around us” (*Mariyam, 10/05*).

For teachers to engage on their own in reflecting deeply on their work, Dewey (1933) suggests they require the following qualities; open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and a sense of responsibility. I have argued (in Chapter 8) above, that Mariyam possessed these qualities. Enthusiastic and sincere about trying to help her learners before the course, she developed greater flexibility through it. “My mind is now open”, she told me towards the end of the programme. I was impressed by the whole-hearted way in which she addressed problems. I felt she developed qualities highly conducive to continued learning. Omar also developed greater flexibility in his thinking, so that towards the end of the course he could evaluate alternative strategies, when earlier he had given the impression that he felt there was just one way.

A deep and sincere dedication to the well being of their learners was a characteristic possessed by all five teachers, together with a determination to do something about it. Thus, Omar, who described the learners as his ‘babies’, his ‘children’, invested considerably in time and his own money in developing an English Club in his school and stocking it with reading resources to encourage literacy skills. Waleed, concerned about the affective filter and encouraging learners’ active participation, put a great deal of effort into designing materials that would help make lessons interesting. Fawziya became very conscious of her learners’ real world needs in speaking and directed her efforts towards meeting these. Rashid, in taking a special interest in low achievers and insisting that they should not be seen as ‘hopeless cases’, focused on ways of supporting them in the classroom.

Like Mariyam, both Waleed and Fawziya talked about lessons in a very open-minded way. Fawziya’s written reflections, when she evaluated her use of communicative tasks for assignments, were also particularly thoughtful. In contrast, Omar and Rashid could both be a little defensive at times, though Rashid reflected quite openly on paper.

10.2.11 PK in researching practice

“The main thing is that now I’ve got the skills to make other researches” (*Rashid, 9/05*).

Conducting research for their dissertations was a positive experience for all five teachers. Waleed and Rashid talked about how they had learned to investigate their lessons, through establishing criteria, collecting data, observing, analysing, evaluating, interpreting, planning interventions for the next action research cycle. Their research methods impressed me, as did those of Fawziya and Mariyam. Omar’s did not really extend him, though. He simply conducted, not very proficiently, a miscue analysis, as he had been shown how to in the IL module, and a few interviews that included leading and complex questions. All five felt, though, that their research had benefited those they had involved in it; Fawziya’s Grade 9 classes who needed to speak, Rashid’s low achievers, Mariyam’s teachers who found it difficult to talk about their lessons, the OWTE learners and the teachers who struggled to motivate them in Waleed’s school, Omar’s Grade 7 boys in the mountains with limited opportunities to read in English. Omar declared that after finishing his dissertation he would continue to conduct research, as it was part of his job, Rashid reported he felt empowered to do research in other areas, while Mariyam expressed an ambition to write for publication. Fawziya talked about sharing what she had learned about researching practice with teachers of other subjects in the school as well as English teachers who had graduated from other universities. She did not feel any of them had as strong a grounding in research methodology as she did.

10.2.12 PK in supporting other teachers

“It will be easy to speak and to talk to them about what I have learned and what I think they should follow in their teaching” (*Waleed, 9/05*).

Besides Mariyam, whose development in supporting other teachers has already been discussed at length (Chapter 8, above), others grew in this way, too. Though initially wary of ‘training’ teachers without first having taken a course in this, Waleed provided wonderful practical examples of materials design and use in lessons others observed. After promotion to SET, he conducted a workshop in his chosen area. Promotion to SET also encouraged Rashid to share his particular interests. Working

towards an assignment for the INSET and Mentoring module, he acted on evidence from lessons seen and made groupwork the theme of a workshop and follow-up observation.

10.2.13 PK in coping with contextual demands

“Sometimes you can find some chance to change something. I mean, you are not going to, you can’t do it 100% but you can do something, make something new, make using materials maybe easy for teachers, make the materials motivating for teachers to use. Even if they don’t like teaching, when they find the materials facilitate teaching and make teaching easier, they will start to use [them]” (*Waleed, 2/05*).

The teachers, confronted with a diverse range of contextual demands as they tried to put ideas into practice, coped with them to varying degrees of success. Unfortunately, several were bothered by colleagues at school. Fawziya’s fellow teachers wanted the learners sitting in rows, Omar’s in streamed groups. Waleed’s colleagues included those who did ‘nothing’ in the room next to him while he worked hard. Omar complained about teachers who did not take their work seriously. Rashid’s headmaster did not allow flying classes. Working with older learners, Fawziya (and Omar with one class) were in environments characterized by anxiety over impending exams, very different from Mariyam’s situation. Mariyam taught only very young learners (Grades 1-3) during the research period. Regarding class size and school facilities, Fawziya and Waleed both taught large classes of about 40 in fairly dilapidated schools that lacked equipment; e.g.; working photocopiers. Omar, in contrast, taught much smaller classes of fewer than 20 in a modern building, while Mariyam’s BE school was characterized by state-of-the-art technology and comfort for classes of about 30. Mariyam did not have any significant problems in her context.

I felt Waleed coped with the contextual challenges particularly well. His lessons were invariably well-prepared and interesting, with imaginative use made of materials. His energy and self-belief helped him persevere. Although he indicated it was not easy to maintain high standards in this particular context, I never saw him accept the second-rate. The same is true of Fawziya. She was always conscious of the contextual challenges facing her, but tried to work around them and solve any problems that occurred. So, if she could not get worksheets photocopied she did an activity orally,

when she wanted to organize the class in groups she found ways of accomplishing this successfully, even in an overcrowded classroom. Like Waleed and Fawziya, Omar also expressed strong determination to overcome obstacles, but in practice this was not always realized. For example, although he said he wanted to regroup his ten Grade 4 learners for every lesson in their interests, he did not actually do so. Similarly, with numbers of about 30, Rashid could also give up in organizing the class as he preferred, but admittedly came up against more formidable opposition. He could not get the headmaster to agree to flying classes, and also met resistance within the classroom, from the Grade 5 learners themselves.

10.2.14 Summary

To help me summarize my comparisons between the teachers in the above discussion, I present, in tabular form (Table 10.1, overleaf), the areas of PK growth I have identified in each. Of course, this discussion is by no means exhaustive, and nor could it be, given, for example, the large and complex growth in subject matter knowledge enjoyed by all five of the teachers over the three-year period. However, in identifying common areas of PK growth, I believe this analysis is useful.

As can be seen from the table, there is evidence that most of the teachers grew in PK in nearly every area identified. This can be ascertained from a consideration of their cognitions and reflective actions, sometimes corroborated by self-report TSE belief statements, though TSE beliefs can also be inferred from reflective actions, given the relationship earlier established between the two (Chapter 2, above).

Returning to the table, question marks indicate that there is insufficient evidence of growth in a particular area rather than absence of it, and I should explain some of these. For Mariyam, there are question marks against items 9 & 13, because a) she was not called upon to justify pedagogical decisions in quite the same way as the others, and b) she did not seem burdened by contextual demands. It is my view that she may well have been able to rise to these challenges. However, she did not need to do so. Hence the question marks. Similarly, there is insufficient evidence of Fawziya developing her PK in supporting other teachers, though this may have happened.

Table 10.1 Evidence of growth in the teachers' practical knowledge (PK)

<i>No</i>	<i>PK ...</i>	<i>Fawziya</i>	<i>Waleed</i>	<i>Omar</i>	<i>Mariyam</i>	<i>Rashid</i>
1	Regarding the learners and learning	√	√	?	√	√
2	Regarding teaching approaches	√	√	?	√	√
3	In organizing the class	√	√	?	√	√
4	In analysing the coursebook	√	√	√	√	?
5	In adapting materials	√	√	?	√	?
6	In evaluating lessons and learning	√	√	√	√	√
7	In developing reflective skills	√	√	?	√	√
8	In use of language while reflecting	√	√	√	√	√
9	In justifying pedagogical decisions	√	√	?	?	?
10	In developing reflective attitudes	√	√	√	√	√
11	In researching practice	√	√	?	√	√
12	In supporting other teachers	?	√	?	√	√
13	In coping with contextual demands	√	√	?	?	?

Overall, it is clear that there was growth in the PK of Waleed, Fawziya and Mariyam across a wide range of competencies. Rashid developed well, too, although his growth was more uneven. His PK in relation to the learners and in finding ways of grouping them developed more than his PK in relation to interpreting the curriculum. His PK in researching his own practice developed far more than his PK in coping with contextual demands. Omar's growth was also uneven, with some of the basic principles underlying the BA programme seemingly having little (lasting) effect on his practice.

As I have argued (in Chapters 5-9, above), there was generally a good degree of fit between PK and self-reported TSE growth. This was particularly true in the cases of Mariyam and Waleed, who were also perhaps the most self-aware. Interpreting qualitative self-report TSE statements can present challenges, though. A careful

examination of the language used is required to provide clues, while other sources of evidence need to be considered. So, in 2003, what was Rashid's understanding of 'research', I asked (in 9.16) above (as observational data suggested he was underestimating his capacity in this) or of 'psychological problems', a term used twice in 2003, in an interview and an assignment he was working on at the time? ('Twice' hints at practical understanding to support his TSE claim.) In Fawziya's case, observational data and documentary analysis suggest much greater PK growth than her TSE statements acknowledge. When discussing her beliefs, memories of using CTs and drive to use them (Table 5.2, above), she was also very positive. Her caution, tempered by her knowledge of the context, when discussing what she could do (TSE), contrasted with her drive, use of 'must', moral responsibility orientations, when outlining what she had to do for the learners. So her TSE statements, which when analysed for content reveal external pressures, tell only part of the story. The same can be said for Omar's TSE statements, which conversely seem over-optimistic. They need to be questioned in light of his uneven PK.

10.3 Which aspects of the BA Programme may have influenced changes in their PK and TSE, and how?

In addressing this question, I will consider first the module content that appeared to be most influential and then the elements of the programme that seemed to contribute most to growth. These foci correspond to Freeman's (2007) first and fourth questions about the project (3.5, above).

Four of the five teachers were deeply influenced at the beginning by input on learners and learning, including Halliwell's (1992) ideas about YLs' characteristics that were central to the pre-sessional and first methodology module, TEYL. Theory gained through LAL was also highly influential, as teachers, investigating the affective filter, learning strategies, the ZPD, scaffolding, motivation and group dynamics, accommodated it into their practices (10.2.1-3, above). Interestingly, TEYL and LAL were two of the three most influential modules identified by Freeman's (2007) study (3.6, above).

Tasks, another of those described by Freeman (2007, p. 13) as: "key to the new instructional practices" (3.6, above) was also an important module for the teachers in

this study. It helped Waleed and Fawziya analyse course materials and engage in adaptation (10.2.5-6, above) and enabled Mariyam to use concepts such as task demands (Cameron, 2001) while supporting teachers in reflecting on lessons. Other modules, too, including TS&L, TG&V, ACLL, led to engagement in the evaluation of lessons, materials and learning outcomes, cumulatively influencing extensive PK growth (10.2.6, above).

Depending on research topics, different strands of the programme were of particular interest to individuals. The coherent communicative strand (TEYL, Tasks, TS&L, TG&V, MDD) structured Fawziya's development (5.19, above), supporting growth in her use of CTs. Omar was less fortunate in that the literacy/reading strand (IL, Stories, TR&W) inadvertently sent out mixed messages (7.15, above). However, he could have made more practical use of the course content, as others did. Mariyam's practice, for example, was informed by concepts drawn from IL (8.5, above), while Waleed took practical ideas from Stories and TR&W to redesign lessons (6.7, 6.12, above). Waleed drew upon input from an impressive range of modules when designing materials, including TILL.

The research strand (LAL, Researching TESOL, Dissertation) influenced all five teachers (10.2.11, above), as did the freedom to choose options in the last year. Mariyam and Rashid benefited considerably from INSET and Mentoring, and Fawziya and Waleed gained much from MDD. Mariyam commented most on the benefits of the language strand, but it supported all five in discussing their work (10.2.8, above).

As to the elements of the programme that contributed most to PK and TSE growth, there is evidence that those identified by Freeman (2007), and discussed (in 3.6 above), were influential. Crucially, Mariyam argued that the course related to a reflective rather than an applied science model of teacher education (Wallace, 1991), citing the importance of day release in helping her think about her teaching in relation to methodology and the curriculum, and evaluate course materials (8.9, above). During day release sessions, there were loop input activities and discussions, followed by library time and tutorials. During day release, the teachers were engaged in

practical assignments that involved them in applying ideas in their schools, using input from the module and often planning/teaching/observing/evaluating lessons, getting tutorial help in relation to this. These assignments led to deep learning, as is clear from the stories of Fawziya and Rashid (Chapters 5 & 9, above), which drew extensively on data from assignments.

Teachers also had the opportunity to experiment during their four days per week at school during term-time. Rashid would have liked more time for experimentation, free of assessment, but in practice all the teachers gained, as observed lessons and post-lesson discussions referred to throughout Chapters 5-9 indicate. The key role of the RT in drawing ideas out, inviting elaboration and suggesting links between practice and public theory is evident in the reported conversations. However, feedback sessions did not always lead to successful learning outcomes, as there was occasional resistance to new ideas (7.6, 9.7, above).

From a greater distance, due to the organization structure of the project, Leeds staff also played a key role in influencing developing PK and TSE. Academics wrote the materials, while lecturers and teaching fellows delivered summer and winter school sessions, provided tutorials at these times, particularly for the Dissertation, marked assignments and produced feedback. The Leeds summer school of 2004, when the teachers spent eight weeks in England, was for many the highlight of the course (Freeman, 2007).

These interactions produced valuable learning experiences. Mariyam reported that the experience of studying in Leeds had contributed to her becoming more open-minded. Both she and Waleed highly rated the TILL module taught there. Rashid recalled a kind teaching fellow in Leeds using a tutorial to teach him to write. Fawziya and Mariyam spoke warmly of the support they received from female lecturers. All five teachers benefited from feedback on assignments. Waleed, Fawziya and Rashid quoted from them long afterwards. Feedback was generally of a high quality, but occasionally missed the mark (9.16, above).

All five teachers adopted learning strategies that were successful for them. Fawziya listened and asked questions, Mariyam let new concepts settle in her mind, Rashid

reflected immediately on experience, searching his memories to see if a new concept was true for him, Waleed shared understanding with his group, Omar asked for clarification when he was not sure, but sometimes could have gained more from the answers (7.15, above). Yet, despite his uneven growth, he still benefited considerably from the reflective nature of the course and the range of modules offered.

10.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have drawn together various threads from the preceding five to address my main research questions. In the following chapter, I will relate this analysis to the literature, focusing on what I have learned about PK and TSE growth in this particular teacher education context, and offering my interpretations.

Chapter 11: Discussion

At the conclusion of the previous chapter, I focused on aspects of the BA Programme that may have influenced change in PK and TSE and how. I wish to continue this discussion now, but from a more theoretical perspective, referring to the model illustrating TSE growth (Figure 3) earlier proposed, that may then be revised. This theorizing will lead into a further discussion, when substantive findings will be examined in relation to the literature. Finally, I will address the methodological contribution of my work. In this way, I will explore the key elements of my study; PK, TSE, teacher education and qualitative research methodology. As I do this, I will highlight crucial findings and point the way towards future research. I will start, though, by focusing on the PK and TSE growth central to the investigation.

11.1 How is PK growth achieved?

Describing the model ‘Growth in teachers’ self-efficacy’ (Figure 3) (Chapter 2, above), I reported that each revolution corresponds to a teaching cycle that involves, at its most basic, planning a context-specific task, teaching and reflecting upon it, before conceptualising, and planning again. In this section, I explore how areas of a language teacher’s PK earlier discussed (in 10.2, above) relate to these key stages. I start with conceptualising, which requires of teachers, as Ur (1996) argues, intellectual thought in relating experiences to principles or concepts.

11.1.1 Conceptualising

The teachers engaged with new ideas through the vicarious and interactional experiences generated by lectures, seminars and tutorials, meeting, for example, Halliwell’s (1992) characteristics of young learners, Krashen’s (1985) hypotheses of language acquisition, Cameron’s (2001) communicative tasks, in the first year. They reflected on input, which triggered powerful childhood memories. Omar recalled the struggle of learning to read in a poor environment, Fawziya the frustration of being unable to speak, recalling how she had learned English as a child, then taught it for the past decade in a teacher-centred way, uncovering tensions that needed to be resolved (Freeman, 1993). Rashid reflected on the learning processes he was going through, reporting that, when introduced to the new and unfamiliar, he immediately

evaluated his practice in relation to the new concept. How could he adjust his methodology to see if it worked for him?

Through listening carefully, reflecting, reading, checking their understanding of concepts with each other and with tutors, the teachers developed, their PK growing as to learners and learning and teaching methodology. Meanwhile, as they grappled with problems that concerned them (developing speaking skills, making better use of groupwork, making materials motivating), their language became more complex and academic. Over time, too, as they learned to theorize for research purposes, their problem-solving capabilities developed.

In some cases, concepts became more elaborate (Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000), as teachers accommodated input into their practices, so enriching them; e.g.; Waleed evaluating learning more deeply (6.13, above). Sometimes, however, new ideas were assimilated (Lamb, 1995) to support existing practices; e.g.; chain reading (7.11, above). There was also evidence of reversal (Cabaroglu & Roberts, 2000), with Rashid seeking to 'remove' old ideas after experimenting with new ones in the classroom (9.4, above), as well as adaptation and rejection (Lamb, 1995), in Omar's enthusiasm for and later rejection of communicative tasks (7.6, above).

11.1.2 Planning

From the beginning, the teachers were encouraged to develop their PK in analysing the coursebook and in adapting materials and activities to suit the needs of learners. Coursebook exercises from OWTE and EFM were used for analysis as part of taught sessions, and practice was provided of physically adapting materials to create tasks. They found these vicarious and interactional experiences beneficial. Waleed, for example, reported that, although he had tried to adapt materials before the course his range of ideas was limited, and when things did not work he did not know what to do. So, he found the Tasks module empowering, introducing him to a self-questioning process to utilize in materials design. Further input, e.g.; that gained from TS&L & MDD, deepened his capability to analyse and adapt. Meanwhile, LAL had helped him gain a better understanding of the learners in his context. As the course progressed, he learned how to develop research plans to investigate his own practice and to overcome contextual challenges.

11.1.3 Performing

Though classroom teaching was not an assessed component of the BA Programme, the course was designed in such a way as to encourage the accommodation of ideas into classroom practice. There was the provision of microteaching during summer school and day release. School visits made by the RT supported links between theory and practice. Practical assignments involved adaptation. Indeed, Mariyam rejected the notion that the course conformed to an applied science model of teacher education, describing it as reflective.

The concrete experiences that teachers gained from experimenting enabled them to transform their PK. Thus, Fawziya, for example, gained experience of introducing conversational strategies, giving learners control over the language they used, providing for a variety of interactional opportunities, and, as she reflected on these experiences and accommodated them into her practice, they became part of her PK. Teachers developed PK in using techniques, strategies, activity types, methods, organizing the class, observing practice with the use of research instruments, reflecting in-action to make adjustments, assessing learners and learning while they taught.

11.1.4 Reflecting

The encouragement of reflection through the interactional experiences of post-lesson discussions with the RT provided a new experience for most teachers. Post-lesson discussions with inspectors had been substantially different. Only Mariyam felt that she had really been invited to reflect on her lessons in the environment of a post-lesson discussion before the course, and had found it difficult to do so, although Rashid alluded to a similar experience. He reported that he had a change of inspector just prior to the course, with a Cohort 2 graduate taking over, and found a question asked of him too complicated, too complex to answer, involving a concept he did not understand. During the first half of the course, Fawziya, Waleed and Omar complained that their inspectors, as they had before the course, simply handed out judgements in post-lesson discussions, without seeking to elicit much, which frustrated them as at this point they felt they had plenty to say, while Mariyam and Rashid also remembered inspectors like this.

During the BA Programme, though, all five developed attitudes, skills, knowledge and language that facilitated reflection, and indeed, all argued that reflecting on lessons had become important to them. Their PK grew in these areas, and in evaluating lessons. Mariyam also reported self-efficacy gains in helping other teachers reflect.

11.1.5 Summary

Clearly, the BA Programme supported PK growth in relation to each of the main reflective actions that are part of a learning cycle (conceptualising, planning, performing, reflecting), as represented diagrammatically by Ur's (1996) cycle of enriched reflection (Figure 2, above), which was the basis for Figure 3. I would not wish to over-simplify the growth that took place, though, by suggesting it was entirely cyclical.

11.2 How does TSE grow?

I would now like to move from PK growth to TSE growth, from cognitions and reflective actions to TSE beliefs influencing the way that PK was realized through reflective actions. I will organize this section around assertions, as suggested by Stake (2006), focusing on key findings that will allow me to evaluate the model (Figure 3), with a view to amending it if a better explanation of TSE growth can be found. I am conscious, as I undertake this that, while the design of Figure 3 emerged from my understanding of TSE in the teacher education literature in general as well as my understanding of PK with particular but not exclusive regard to language teachers, my research then focused solely on language teachers. Any amendment might reflect this shift in balance.

11.2.1 Deep engagement in reflective practice is crucial to achieving TSE growth

Omar and Fawziya felt they had always taught by the teachers' book prior to the course, without reflecting consciously, without changing lessons in any planned way, without really questioning their own practice. As a result, perhaps, their teaching had remained fairly teacher-centred for a decade, until the course began. Their inspectors had not encouraged them to reflect, they said.

Nor had Waleed's. Nevertheless, Waleed had made an effort to reflect and change. He reported noticing, early in his career, a drop in learners' motivation after Grade 4, ascribing this at the time to a lack of variety in the course materials. He then tried to intervene by adapting, and I believe this engagement in analysing and adapting prior to the course may have led to subsequently higher levels of TSE in these aspects of teaching. He found it relatively easier to engage in this during the first year of the programme, and then did so with increasing fluidity throughout it.

Fawziya also made great progress in adapting once she started reflecting more deeply on-action, and indeed, in terms of approach to teaching, changed most. However, by the end of the course, she was still not as efficacious as Waleed in analysing and adapting, which I ascribe to less extensive reflective practice in this area. This finding is consistent with the model, though it suggests a dynamic element that requires greater emphasis: The more revolutions of the cycle, the more spiralling growth occurs.

11.2.2 If positive concrete experiences are not reflected upon, they are unlikely to have any lasting impact on performance, and their effect on TSE growth will therefore be minimal

Omar had a very positive experience of using a big book he had designed for a shared reading with a Grade 6 class. He invested time and energy into preparing for the lesson and it went well. Unfortunately, though, apart from reflecting that the learners had enjoyed the story as a kind of treat, he seemed to pay no more attention to it, and seemed puzzled when I reminded him of the experience just over a year later. Though he acknowledged that the shared reading experience had been motivating for the learners, he could not see how the techniques used supported the development of reading skills, even after I elicited these techniques from him. My conclusion was that he could not have reflected very deeply on this lesson, as he did not appear to have learned much from it. The innovative practices used on this one-off occasion remained alien to the rather traditional methods he was using a year later, when he was still worried about developing reading skills. This underlines the importance of reflection on-action within the cycle, and demonstrates, after Ur (1996), how a lack of it can lead to a lack of growth.

11.2.3 If contextual challenges cannot be dealt with, TSE growth is likely to be inhibited and frustration may set in

Of the five teachers, the only one I would characterize as frustrated in this way was Rashid. Due to his inability to manage contextual demands relating to the school, he could not put plans for supporting low achievers through groupwork into use, and therefore could not experience success in this, depriving him of opportunities for TSE growth. In contrast, though it never became easy for her, Fawziya felt she could use CTs in her school and did so, while Omar was able to create an English Club in his.

This underlines the importance of contextual factors within the model, also highlighted by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) at the planning stage. However, a whole range of contextual factors, including relationships with observers, tutors, peers and students, as well as the physical environment and available resources would seem to affect reflective actions throughout the cycle, not just at the planning stage. This suggests that the model may need revising.

11.2.4 In the more mechanical aspects of teaching, TSE growth will occur over the first few years, supported by reflection in-action, even though more deliberative reflection on-action may be limited

Mariyam recalled being overwhelmed by fear and confusion as a novice teacher suffering from low TSE in classroom management, an experience that one can assume is fairly widespread amongst beginning teachers (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001). After several years' teaching, though, these feelings disappeared, even though she felt, in retrospect, that she was not being encouraged to reflect on her practices until much later. This suggests that, before becoming very reflective on-action, she was able to develop more positive TSE in classroom management, perhaps as TSE in this area involves the mastering of fairly mechanical skills. In other, more cognitive aspects of her PK (Table 8.2, above), her TSE beliefs did not seem to develop much before she joined the course.

In some ways, this finding might seem counter to the model. However, I think it demonstrates that not all reflection is deliberative. We may assume she reflected in-action earlier in her career, but was not perhaps very aware of it. As a result, her growth may have been fairly slow prior to joining the course. The model needs to be

adjusted to account for TSE growth influenced by reflection in-action as well as more deliberative reflection on-action.

11.2.5 If teachers are not willing to entertain self-efficacy doubts when reflecting, attributing failure to external causes, this may have an effect on both their ability to solve their own problems and their TSE in planning, as contextual problems may loom larger.

Discussing a disappointing reading race, Rashid attributed the problem to learners being unable to retrieve vocabulary, some of this recycled from previous years, that had been re-introduced earlier in the unit. I felt the problem lay more with his teaching; the lack of a preparation activity and the organization of the class. Rashid argued that it was impossible to add preparation activities such as the one I suggested (and he had seen me demonstrate in day release) since then he would never complete the syllabus. Without such preparation activities, though, I felt he could not solve the problem. Furthermore, as this problem was attributed to the learners, I felt that contextual challenges would have seemed greater when he next planned a similar activity with the class, which would have negatively affected his TSE. I was pleased, therefore, that he later acknowledged that he had a problem with reading races (this awareness stimulated perhaps by further interactional experiences with observers in post-lesson discussions or further attempts to use reading races so that they became a more central part of his PK). These self-efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2001) seemed to open up a way of at least partially solving the problem.

When would these self-efficacy doubts have been experienced, though, when he was reflecting or planning, and what are the implications of this as to the design of the model? I believe the whole notion of self-efficacy doubts implies that a revision of TSE beliefs may occur at points in the cycle other than just prior to performance when a teacher assesses personal teaching competence in relation to the task and contextual demands, as in Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) model (Figure 1), and my Figure 3. Since TSE beliefs are focused on perceived capability (Bandura, 2001), this point, prior to performance, may be of particular importance, but it seems clear that it is not necessarily the only point in the cycle when a revision of TSE beliefs can take place. More research needs to be done in this area, but, on the basis of what I have learned, I feel I should amend the model accordingly.

11.2.6 Physiological arousal is likely to be felt most keenly before challenges that are perceived as particularly new and stressful

In discussing their feelings in fulfilling the context-specific tasks that are the subject of the case studies, none of the five teachers made any comments I would relate to physiological arousal. Mariyam's reports of being overwhelmed by fear and confusion related to the start of her career. However, I do have data regarding physiological arousal, provided by Fawziya. I have not shared these yet, as they did not seem relevant to her context-specific task of using CTs with older learners. The data are more relevant to the current discussion, and an account follows.

When I visited Fawziya's school in October 2004, it was to see her teach Grade 1, as we had agreed beforehand. A month earlier she had been asked to teach this class, after a decade of teaching English to teenagers, on the introduction of EFM to her school. I knew Fawziya to be a strong and self-confident teacher, and was surprised, at the school assembly before the first lesson, when she told me that she felt very nervous, as she invariably did before teaching Grade 1. "Am I the right teacher for this?" she had asked when confronted by the prospect of teaching English to six year-olds a few weeks earlier (FN.1). One of the methodological dilemmas she faced concerned catering to young learners' instincts (Halliwell, 1992), while establishing sufficient order to run a lesson smoothly. Trying to achieve an appropriate balance of firmness and child-centredness often made her feel very tense. Wondering if her Grade 1 classes would do as she asked the next day, and worrying about how she would handle it if they did not, she would wake up in the middle of the night, she told me. "Before I sleep again I am thinking, are they going to point or not? Is it the right way to do it like that, or should they hold up the card or what?" (FI.4). A year later, she reported that these feelings had disappeared (FI.7).

Clearly, physiological arousal is an indicator of TSE, and might be felt keenly, particularly when stress is involved. Re-examining the model, I do not think I have it positioned correctly, though. I believe it is linked, with affective states, to TSE and other beliefs influencing the quality and quantity of effort expended on a task. As Fawziya's experience demonstrates, too, it is not only felt at the point when self-

directed behaviour is initiated. Worrying about her Grade 1 class troubled her sleep. Clearly, the model needs adjustment to account for this.

11.2.7 Teachers may experience contrasting levels of TSE in relation to distinct tasks engaged in concurrently

Fawziya's concurrent experiences of using CTs with Grade 9 and managing Grade 1 demonstrate how context and task-specific TSE beliefs are. With one class she was fairly confidently using her developing expertise in supplementing the course materials to provide speaking activities, while with the other, she was enduring sleepless nights unsure how to proceed. This demonstrates that any consideration of TSE needs to be focused on specific tasks, (as I have argued in Chapter 2, above).

11.2.8 An understanding of TSE growth in relation to any particular task can be informed by an understanding of TSE growth in related or constituent tasks

While using CTs with Grade 9 and managing Grade 1 are not very closely related tasks, some are. For example, when Fawziya gained a poor grade for her first assignment, with the feedback criticizing her description of her communicative activity, this may have affected her TSE beliefs with regard to both writing assignments (with lesson plans and descriptions as components), and teaching communicatively. Regarding the former, the feedback seemed to cause self-efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2001) as she reflected on performance, pushing her to conceptualise and then plan more rigorously, leading to improved performance in her writing. In terms of the latter, teaching communicatively, however, the cycle described in the sentence above could be seen as a cycle within the planning process, the feedback on her assignment perceived as interactional experience affecting her planning of lessons and CTs. Clearly, the model does not capture this complexity, and needs developing so that it may account for this concept of cycles within cycles.

11.2.9 Growth in TSE across a range of tasks may lead to a greater sense of professional competence, supporting the development of GSE beliefs

The quotes used to illustrate self-efficacy growth in each area of PK discussed earlier (in 10.2, above) can be interpreted as GSE rather than TSE statements. When teachers notice growth in particular areas of their own PK, realizing they possess greater proficiency in certain reflective actions, I believe they generalize from particular

instances to a broader picture of their own success. Mariyam, for example, after numerous instances of analysing course materials, during which she developed TSE beliefs in this, later claimed that she could look at any area of the syllabus critically, with a view to supporting learning outcomes; a GSE belief that may have emerged from TSE beliefs.

Clearly, the model needs developing to express the dynamic nature of self-efficacy growth. Out of spiralling TSE growth, GSE beliefs seem to develop, together with professional competence across multiple areas of PK.

11.2.10 Amongst motivational constructs other than TSE beliefs influencing teachers' behaviour, moral responsibility orientations seem to play a particularly important role in affecting the quality and quantity of self-regulated effort

As earlier indicated (in 10.2.10, above), all five teachers appeared motivated by a sincere wish to help their learners. With their PK in learners and learning developing with the support of LAL and other modules, they indicated feeling morally obliged to cater to the affective filter, support low achievers in groupwork, create environments conducive to skills' development, their sense of duty appearing to interact with TSE beliefs in helping them persevere in this. Indeed, their moral responsibility orientations (Ames & Ames, 1984) may have been strengthened by developments in their PK.

I feel the model should highlight the role of moral responsibility orientations in affecting the quality and quantity of self-regulated effort. It should draw attention, too, to the relationships between PK, moral responsibility orientations and reflective actions, which could be represented in the model by arrows.

11.2.11 Summary

On the basis of these findings, the model 'Growth in teachers' self-efficacy' (Figure 3) clearly needs revising. Accordingly, I have done so (Figure 4, overleaf), making the above assertions central to this, and acknowledging, through a change in the title, that the focus is more specifically on growth in *language* teachers' self-efficacy. Through the revision process, I have also eliminated terms, drawn from Bandura (1986) and Kolb (1984), which featured in Figure 3 but are no longer needed.

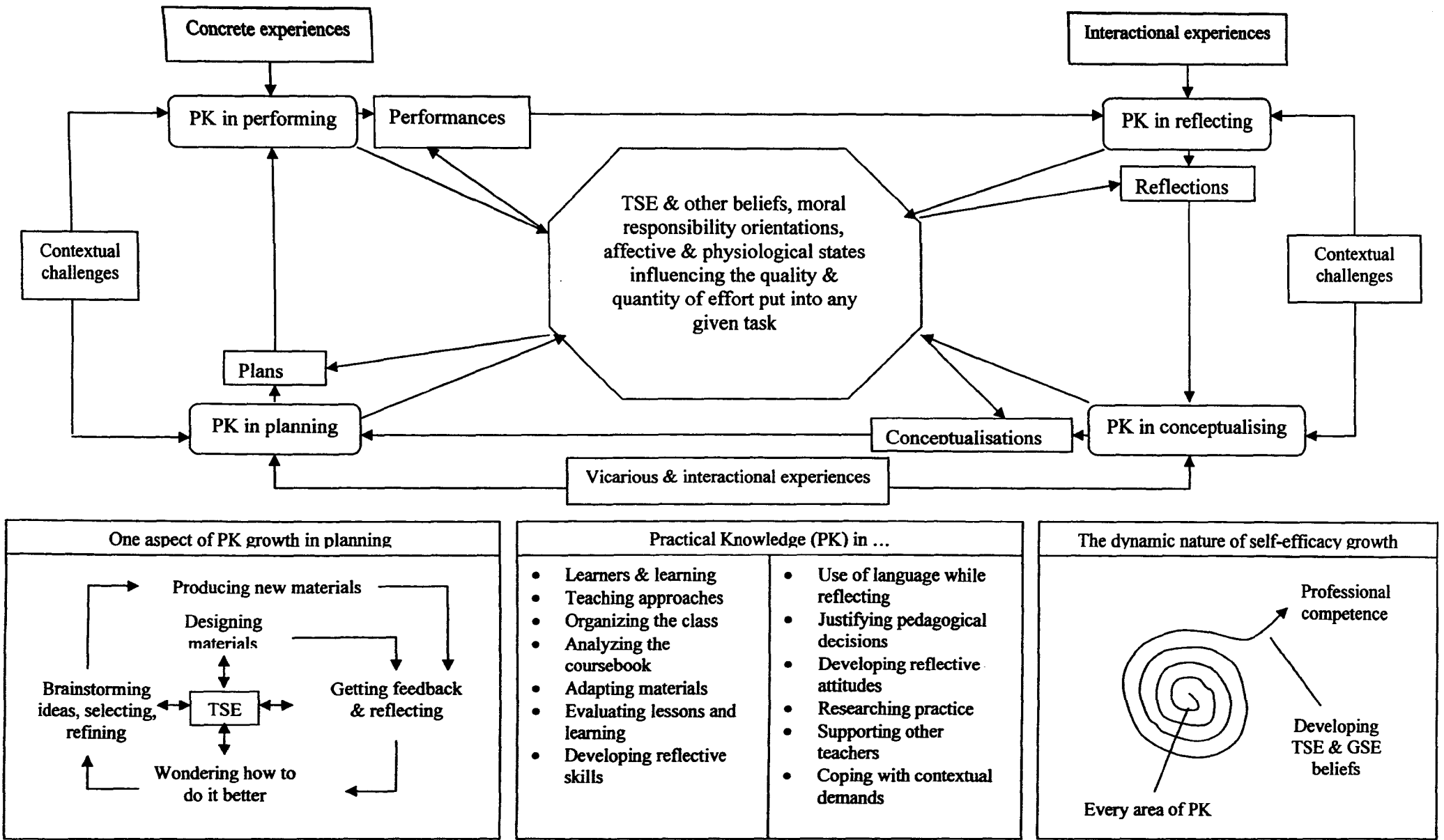


Figure 4. Growth in language teachers' self-efficacy

11.3 The 'Growth in language teachers' self-efficacy' model

11.3.1 Description

The revised and renamed model (Figure 4) is based on the assumption (after Fives & Alexander, 2004) that experiences of various kinds (concrete, vicarious & interactional) are accommodated into a language teacher's PK. TSE and other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and physiological states (11.2.6, above), then act as mediators of PK, affecting the quality and quantity of effort put into the reflective actions through which any context-specific task (11.2.3, 11.2.7, above) will be realized. The direction of these relationships is illustrated in the model with the help of various arrows (11.2.10, above), pointing inwards from points in the learning cycle to the cognitions that affect levels of motivation with regard to any specific task and then back out to the learning cycle again. The model thus demonstrates the 'interactive role' (Richardson, 1996) of beliefs. TSE beliefs are shaped by PK (2.7, above) and drive action (2.8, above), as Fives & Alexander (2004) argue.

One of the most significant changes from the earlier model (Figure 3) is the emphasis on the dynamic nature of growth in PK (11.2.1, above), both in how this relates to reflective actions within the TSE growth cycle (11.2.2, above), and more holistically in relation to spiralling TSE and GSE growth (11.2.9, above), as teachers develop towards professional competence. I have tried to represent the dynamic nature of self-efficacy growth through the diagram in the third box below the main figure. In the teacher research literature, growth has been conceived in terms of spiralling learning cycles since the work of Lewin (1948), but this concept has not been used in the same way before in the teacher efficacy literature, as previous studies have not focused on the relationship between growth in PK and TSE.

In making this link, I believe my research makes an important contribution to the teacher efficacy literature. This is evident when we consider the account of TSE development Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) provide in discussing their cyclical model (Figure 1, above):

Greater efficacy leads to greater effort and persistence, which leads to better performance, which in turn leads to greater efficacy. The reverse is also true. Lower efficacy leads to less effort and giving up easily, which leads to poor teaching

outcomes, which then produce decreased efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p.23).

While there is an element of plausibility in this description, Wheatley (2001) warns, too, against the kind of over-simplification it represents, making the case that self-doubt is essential for learning. By focusing purely on motivational constructs, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) seem to neglect reflection, and the benefits that can arise from this. In contrast, my model of spiralling TSE growth (Figure 4), in making links between a language teacher's PK and TSE explicit, ties TSE growth to the self-doubt and reflection that are part of any learning cycle. I make these links explicit by listing, in the second box below the main figure, areas of the five language teachers' PK growth earlier identified (in 10.2, above), and then analysed (in 11.1, above) in relation to the reflective actions part of the learning cycle.

I have argued that reflection is crucial to development (11.2.1, above). However, I have also distinguished (in 11.2.4, above) between the deliberative reflection on-action conceived as being a part of the learning cycle, as reflection follows performance and is followed by conceptualisation and planning, and reflection in-action. Reflection in-action, might, for example, affect PK, and thus TSE, in many aspects of performance, including the basic classroom management issues that concerned Mariyam early in her career (11.2.4, above). However, I argue, without reflection on-action to complement reflection in-action, PK growth in the areas described in the second box below Figure 4 is likely to be limited, as is TSE growth in the same areas.

Reflection in-action nevertheless affects TSE growth. This finding, together with those relating to self-efficacy doubts (11.2.5, above), growth cycles within cycles of PK (11.2.8, above), and the interactive relationship between PK and motivational constructs besides TSE, such as moral responsibility orientations (11.2.10, above), leads me to withdraw my claim that TSE beliefs are revised exclusively during the dynamic interplay between an analysis of the teaching task within its context and an assessment of personal teaching competence (the argument put forward in Chapter 2, above, and represented in Figure 3). Rather, the evidence suggests that the revision of TSE beliefs is a more complex and on-going process. In designing Figure 4, I have

amended Figure 3 in the following ways to account for these findings: Firstly, at the centre of the diagram I have changed the wording to include key constructs that emerged in my analysis; TSE & other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and physiological states. These are all influences, I argue (in 11.2.6 & 11.2.10, above), on the quality and quantity of effort put into any given task. Secondly, I have acknowledged the presence of self-efficacy doubts at each stage of a learning cycle, during planning, performing, reflecting and conceptualising (10.2.5, above) through the inclusion of arrows pointing to the centre of the diagram. These arrows represent the idea that the revision of TSE beliefs is an on-going process. Thirdly, to demonstrate the complexity of growth cycles within cycles of PK (11.2.8), I have included information about one aspect of PK growth in planning, as an example, in the first box under the main figure.

A further finding relates to the importance of context in TSE growth (11.2.3, above). I argue that contextual challenges influence every stage of the learning cycle, and my revised model (Figure 4) represents this accordingly.

11.3.2 Summary

To summarize, the ‘Growth in language teachers’ self-efficacy’ model (Figure 4) represents the first attempt I am aware of to illustrate this change process diagrammatically. My construction of the model was intimately linked to my growing understanding of language teachers’ developing PK and TSE during an in-service language teacher education course, which is why I need to specify that the model relates primarily to language teachers. Through incorporating findings discussed (in 11.2) above into the final design, I have created a more elaborate version of my earlier model (Figure 3), which concerned teachers in general. This model (Figure 3), in itself, though, drew upon the concept of learning cycles prevalent in the language teacher education literature, as represented in Figure 2 (above).

I have emphasised Figure 4’s relevance to language teaching, but believe that the model might be useful, too, to researchers into the TSE of teachers of other subjects, particularly since the only published model available (Figure 1) appears to under-represent the roles of knowledge, learning, doubt and reflection in TSE growth (Wheatley, 2005). However, if it was to be taken up by these researchers, I believe

they would need to consider the ‘Growth in language teachers’ self-efficacy’ model (Figure 4) in relation to the PK of teachers in the field they were investigating and adapt it accordingly.

Having presented and discussed Figure 4, I would now like to summarize what I have learned about TSE, drawing more substantially on the literature as I do so.

11.4 What have I learned about TSE and TSE growth?

To recap, since Bandura’s (1997) clarification of the task and context-specific nature of TSE and the development of Tschannen-Moran et al.’s (1998) conceptual model, understanding of the construct has grown considerably. TSE is seen as the central mediator of effort, operating between knowledge and action (Fives, 2003), influenced by experiences, ‘sources of efficacy information’, that contribute to the development of teachers’ knowledge and belief systems (Fives & Alexander, 2004). Growth in TSE can occur, supported by teacher education activities that encourage reflective thought and action (Henson, 2001b). However, this growth is far from linear. Doubting one’s efficacy is essential for learning (Wheatley, 2001).

My earlier conceptual model of TSE growth (Figure 3) emerged from my understanding of this literature emphasising relationships between TSE and knowledge, learning, teacher development (Chapter 2, above). I have since refined my understanding and revised the model (Figure 4), on the basis of assertions (11.2, above) stemming from empirical research into language teachers.

There have therefore been two distinct phases in my growing conceptualisation of TSE, leading to the development of Figures 3 and 4. When I developed Figure 3, I was keen to distinguish the ‘current conceptualisation’ of the construct (Fives, 2003) rooted in Bandura’s (1986) self-efficacy theory from earlier conceptualisations involving personal and general teaching efficacy (PTE & GTE) that had emerged from Rotter’s (1966) ideas. These earlier conceptualisations are still influential, with an instrument used by De la Torre Cruz & Casanova Arias (2007), for example, containing GTE items, despite Bandura’s (1997) insistence that these are not relevant to TSE. Accordingly, I would like to emphasise (below) the support my empirical data provides Bandura’s (1997) clarification of the construct, before going on to

explain how this research has also led to 'new' knowledge of TSE, with particular regard to language teachers.

11.4.1 TSE is not 'an immutable trait', as argued (in 2.13), above. There is evidence throughout all the above case studies of TSE growth. One example should suffice. In October 2003, while I was asking him to reflect on a lesson, Waleed (Chapter 6) told me: "I can't evaluate myself" (WI.1). Approximately one year later, he reported: "I am a teacher but also I am an observer, I can assess myself, if I do well or not... when you assess yourself, you can see if you are changed or not" (WI.4). Then, in September 2005, he reflected: "Now I can evaluate myself, I mean, in terms of what I'm providing for my pupils, not evaluating my performance" (WI.7). There is clear evidence of TSE growth here (in assessing teaching and learning outcomes), as well as evidence of PK growth. As Henson (2001b) argues, TSE growth can occur under 'fertile' conditions that encourage teachers to think critically about their work.

11.4.2 TSE is context-specific, as argued (in 2.4-6) above. Rashid (Chapter 9), for example, after investing considerable effort into conducting research, could tell me efficaciously towards the end of the course: "I've got a deep understanding of organizing groups and identifying low achievers and where to put them" (RI.7). Unfortunately, though, he then felt the conditions in the school were against him, and could not put his ideas into practice. He told me much less efficaciously in the following year: "First of all, I have to fix these problems, and then I *could* work well with groupwork" (RI.8). The context had (at least temporarily) defeated him.

The importance of context in affecting TSE (and PK) growth should not be underestimated. Contextual factors, as Borg (2006) argues, can have a major impact on teachers' cognitions and practices. They can either influence changes in the cognitions themselves or affect practices, often in a constraining sense, which can lead to "a lack of congruence between teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices" (ibid, p. 276). To make sense of TSE beliefs, we need to understand the context they relate to.

11.4.3 TSE is task-specific, as argued (in 2.4-6) above. Thus, Fawziya experienced very different levels of TSE in tasks she was engaged in concurrently; using CTs with

Grade 9 and controlling/trying to manage Grade 1 (11.2.7, above). With one she felt reasonably efficacious, while the other caused sleepless nights (until she gained sufficient PK). The different dimensions of PK (10.2, above), and how they relate to TSE, are crucial to understanding this. Teachers have different levels of PK for different aspects of their work, and may achieve expertise in some areas but not others, as Borg (2001) points out, citing the example of a teacher who was much better at teaching reading than grammar. PK of various types; e.g.; PK relating to the learners, the subject matter, the curriculum, will affect TSE in relation to any specific task. As the circumstances surrounding the task (e.g.; the particular subject, class or activity) change, so will the TSE (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

11.4.4 Growth in TSE is intimately linked with growth in PK, as argued (in 2.8-12) above. In making this assertion, my research builds on the contention of Fives & Alexander (2004) that the sources of efficacy building information described by Bandura (1986) contribute to the development of teachers' knowledge and belief systems rather than leading directly to 'cognitive processing', a feature of Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) model (Figure 1, above) that involves selecting, integrating, interpreting and recollecting information (Pajares, 1997). I maintain that these cognitive processes are part of PK, realized through reflection, the quality of which influences the development that takes place. Mariyam, for example (Chapter 8), chose to initiate a post-lesson discussion by selecting an experience to reflect upon she felt dissatisfied with: at the end of the lesson, the learners performed rather listlessly and mechanically in the final activity (8.7, above). During our discussion, she then engaged in exploring the problem and raising solutions in a wholehearted, open-minded and responsible way, which would be conducive, I felt, to improved practices and the development of stronger PK and TSE beliefs. During the discussion, her PK shaped the way she processed the experience. A few years earlier, when she still found it very difficult to talk about her teaching, she would not have processed the experience in the same way. Her PK in reflecting would have been very different at this stage of her career, as would her TSE. I believe that through exploring PK and TSE development together we can gain a deeper understanding of both.

11.4.5 Reflective practice is vital for PK and TSE growth, as argued (in 2.14) above. My empirical data supports different facets of this claim. Comparing Waleed and Fawziya (11.2.1, above), I argued that while both teachers reflected deeply during the course and developed considerably, Waleed's more intense prior engagement in analysing and adapting materials may have led to subsequently higher levels of PK and TSE in these aspects of his teaching. This implies that the deeper the involvement in reflective practice, the greater the spiralling growth that may occur, as learning cycles, such as that developed by Ur (1996) (Figure 2) suggest.

I have also argued (in 11.2.2, above) that if teachers do not reflect on experiences that could lead to efficacy building, then these are unlikely to be accommodated into their PK (or have much impact on TSE, Bandura's, 1986, argument). The example I provided was of Omar, who had a very positive experience of using a big book for a shared reading, but then appeared to forget about it, not capitalizing, therefore, on the experience.

For reflection on negative experiences to lead to growth, self-efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2001) need to be subjected to thorough self-examination. I was disappointed with Rashid's reflections on a reading race (9.8, above), as failure was attributed to external (and also stable and uncontrollable) causes, which is an unhelpful type of attribution, according to Weiner (1986). In this case, it appeared to limit experiential learning and the development of planning skills, leading to the possibility of contextual problems looming larger (11.2.5).

I am not arguing however that, without deliberative reflection, TSE beliefs will not develop at all. Mariyam's account of her early development (8.4, above) suggests that even without deliberative reflection on-action, she did experience TSE growth in the more mechanical aspects of teaching that concerned her at the time. I have argued (11.2.4, above) that she was supported by reflection in-action (Schön, 1983) in this.

11.4.6 The quality and quantity of effort put into any given task will be mediated by a complex interplay of TSE and other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and physiological states, as suggested (in 2.6 & 2.9) above. Moral responsibility orientations (Ames & Ames, 1984) emerged as an important driving

force in my study (11.2.10), as did beliefs in the pedagogical value of activity types (e.g.; CTs), as well as in materials and modes of interaction (e.g.; groupwork) in promoting language skills and learning processes (e.g.; motivation). Fawziya, for example (Chapter 5), expressed strong beliefs in the value of CTs and the need to incorporate learner-centredness into her teaching on moral grounds before she had developed very strong TSE beliefs in these areas.

We also need to consider GSE beliefs, which I have argued (in 2.9, above) are more stable over time, more central, and therefore more fixed than TSE beliefs. They can function in a protective way, I have suggested (in 2.4) above, as teachers take on an unfamiliar task. Fawziya's general level of confidence, for example, in teaching across the English curriculum to Grade 9 classes seemed to protect her when she focused on the specific and challenging task of using CTs to develop speaking. However, her well-developed GSE beliefs with Grade 9 were apparently unable to protect her when she took on the fresh challenge of controlling/trying to manage Grade 1 (11.2.6, above), possibly as the task was too different.

One of the main challenges that novice teachers face is developing strong, resilient GSE beliefs (2.7, above). However, developing stronger TSE beliefs can be an important first step here. I have argued (11.2.9, above) that spiralling TSE growth across a range of PK areas leads to the development of more stable and central GSE beliefs, as teachers generalize from particular instances to a broader picture of their own successes, gaining a greater sense of their own professional competence in the process. Freeman (2007) found that an outcome of the particular BA programme under investigation was a greater sense of professional identity, gained from increased confidence in adopting flexible practices and being able to justify them in English (3.6, above). Through focusing on TSE growth at the core of this development, I believe I have gained insights into these spiralling processes.

11.4.7 Summary

To summarize, empirical data from my research into language teachers supports Bandura's (1997) clarification of the TSE construct. With Bandura, I argue that TSE is task- and context-specific, and open to growth, given favourable conditions and opportunities to engage in reflective practice that provide concrete experiences. Apart

from supporting Bandura in these points, I believe that my work makes its major contribution to the teacher efficacy literature in two ways. Firstly, building on work by Ames & Ames (1984), I have demonstrated how a complex interplay of TSE and other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and psychological states influence the quality and quantity of effort put into any given task (11.4.6, above). Moral responsibility orientations emerged as an important construct in my research (11.2.10, above), and I was able to highlight the relationship between TSE and GSE beliefs (11.2.9, above), the latter a term I coined (2.3, above). Secondly, I have shown that growth in TSE is intimately linked with growth in PK. Only recently was the link between TSE and knowledge highlighted (Fives & Alexander, 2004), and, prior to my study, there was an absence of empirical qualitative research linking PK with TSE. I believe that these links should be explored in studies investigating the TSE of teachers of other subjects.

Besides contributing to the teacher efficacy literature in these ways, I believe my work makes an important contribution, too, to the emerging *language* teacher efficacy literature, if one can describe two published studies in these terms. It does so, largely through this exploration of TSE in relation to PK. One of these studies (Chacón, 2005) sought to investigate language teachers' self-efficacy in instructing and engaging learners in relation to their self-efficacy in using the language being taught, which Chacón relates to subject matter knowledge. Her findings, dependent on self-reported data and using GSE measures, suggest that teachers who feel more efficacious in using the language also feel more efficacious in teaching it (2.10, above).

My longitudinal research would appear to support this finding. In 10.2.8 (above), I provide evidence that teachers developed in use of language while reflecting, particularly in terms of fluency and complexity, and were aware of their greater language proficiency in settings that required them to talk about their work. This PK growth in use of language while reflecting supported TSE growth in the same area. I have quoted Mariyam, who had earlier lacked self-confidence in her spoken English, as declaring: "I can express any idea or anything that I want to say with the language, in different ways and focusing on the meaning" (MI.7). TSE growth contributed to spiralling GSE growth, I have argued, and a greater sense of professional competence

that affected the way in which they approached their work (11.2.9, above). I believe my research goes beyond Chacón's, though, as I have not stopped at subject matter knowledge, but have investigated developing TSE in relation to PK growth in various methodological and curricular areas, the topic of the next section (11.5, below).

11.5 What have I learned about language teachers' PK?

I believe my work contributes to the growing body of research into the PK of language teachers, which, until recently, has been limited in various ways, in terms of quantity, as well as contexts and topics covered (Borg, 2006). Indeed, Richards (1997), as cited in Hayes (2005, p. 169), argues that although “how the teacher believes, thinks, acts and reacts is central to educational endeavour... about the language teacher we know almost nothing”. The situation is changing now, though, and Borg (2006), in surveying literature on the cognitions and practices of in-service language teachers, cites research that covers themes including cognitive change during in-service training (one study – Freeman, 1993, discussed in 2.14, above), narrative studies of teacher cognition, comparisons of novice and expert language teachers (2.10, above), second and foreign language reading instruction and practical theories of communicative language teaching (CLT). I will discuss my research in relation to these themes, as well as to literature on reflective practice.

Like Hayes' (2005) study of three Sri Lankan English language educators, one of the two narrative studies of teacher cognition Borg (2006) cites, my research focuses on teachers in a hitherto little explored geographical context. As Hayes (2005, p. 191) argues, more of such studies are needed to “enrich our collective understanding of TESOL in all its complexity worldwide”.

Furthermore, within this under-researched context, my focus is on a BA project that is surely worthy of study as it has been described as ‘ambitious’, ‘complex’, ‘unique in the region’ as well as highly successful (Richards & Rixon, 2002, p. 4). Evaluating the project more recently, Freeman (2007, p. 52) has argued that he was unaware “of any other national context currently in which the confluence of professional training and capacity-building with educational policy and curricular reform have played out as positively”. One would expect to find evidence, then, of the in-service programme influencing cognitive change, and, indeed, this has been manifest in various ways

(11.1, above). Focusing on growth in relation to TSE (10.2, above) and elaborating on Elbaz (1981), I analysed PK in the following inter-related areas; the learners and learning, teaching approaches, organizing the class, analysing the coursebook, adapting materials, evaluating lessons and learning, developing reflecting skills and use of language while reflecting, justifying pedagogical decisions, developing reflective attitudes, researching practice, supporting other teachers and coping with contextual demands. My cross-case analysis (10.2.14, above) revealed substantial though uneven PK growth across these areas.

As to the specific curricular topics that provided the themes of the five case studies, some of these have been more researched than others, as Borg (2006) reports. One topic, communicative language teaching (CLT), of relevance to Fawziya's story (Chapter 5), has been the subject of two studies; Sato & Kleinsasser (1999) on the practical understandings of CLT of ten teachers of Japanese; and Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood & Son (2004) on the practical theory of CLT of one teacher of German, both studies set in Australia. Of the teachers in Sato & Kleinsasser's (1999) study, there was a lack of congruence between beliefs and practices, with practices showing little evidence of CLT, though reported beliefs were positive. In this, I can recognise Fawziya, when one considers the first two observed lessons (Chapter 5). However, Fawziya's PK was perhaps more mature. For example, the teachers in Sato & Kleinsasser's (1999) study believed that CLT activities involved little grammar instruction. In contrast, Fawziya felt that CLT activities could support the proceduralization of grammatical knowledge (5.11, above).

During the course, Fawziya developed, and by the end of it there was much greater congruence between her beliefs and practices. Indeed, her PK became much closer to that of Doreen, the German teacher in Mangubhai et al.'s (2004) study than to the teachers described by Sato & Kleinsasser (1999). Doreen "had a sophisticated and well-developed practical theory of CLT that was reflected in her classroom practices" as Borg (2006, p. 98) reports. She believed that tasks should be real, meaningful, useful and related to students' interests, encouraged learners to express themselves without worrying about errors, felt that she had to teach them patterns of grammar, wanted them to feel comfortable in the language, listen to each other, support each other, take responsibility and become independent. She wanted learners to hear the

language in use and have the opportunity to talk spontaneously in closed pairs (Mangubhai et al., 2004). This is a description of Doreen, but it could also be a description of Fawziya, which indicates her development throughout the course.

A second curricular topic that has been researched is second and foreign language reading instruction, of relevance to Omar's story (Chapter 7). Omar was originally selected as a deviant case as his practices in teaching reading seemed resistant to input on more learner-centred methods (4.5.4, above). However, research by Johnson (1992) suggests that teachers' beliefs in literacy instruction stem from methodological approaches that were prominent when they began teaching and are resistant to theoretical shifts in the field, as Borg (2006) relates. It may, therefore, have been very difficult for Omar to adopt more learner-centred practices in this aspect of his work.

His difficulties could have been confounded by the widespread confusion that exists as regards best practice in teaching reading. After surveying 69 teachers of reading comprehension in the Netherlands, Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard (1999), as cited in Borg (2006, p. 147), concluded that: "no large shared knowledge base could be found in the teachers' practical knowledge". Furthermore, in an Omani, and therefore local context, El-Okda (2005), as cited in Borg (2006), found that pre-service teachers held views contrary to contemporary understandings of reading instruction; e.g.; reading aloud around the class was a useful strategy for developing learners' pronunciation. Given such beliefs in traditional practice in the local context together with the resistance in teachers to methodological shifts in reading instruction identified by Johnson (1992), perhaps it would have been very difficult to influence Omar's beliefs and practices. Highly consistent input was required, but unfortunately the input he received might have sent out contradictory messages (7.16, above), which may have affected others too. After surveying 55 graduates of the BA programme, Freeman (2007) found some uncertainty amongst them as to best practice in initial literacy and reading instruction (3.6, above), which he regarded as a cause of concern.

A third curricular topic that has been the subject of research is reflective practice, of particular relevance to Mariyam's story (Chapter 8). Several studies (Ho & Richards, 1993, Farrell, 1999, Liou, 2001, set in a variety of East Asian contexts; Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan) have explored developments in the ability to reflect critically in

groups of language teachers, focusing on traits identified by Ho & Richards (1993). Did reflection become more varied, make more use of personal and public theory, draw more fully on teaching experiences and relate increasingly to the broader context beyond the classroom? Did the ability to evaluate both positively and negatively develop, and what of the ability to solve problems? Did the number of 'why?' questions increase? The findings of these studies were inconclusive, but the research periods were short (7-16 weeks), and while the methods of collecting data (journal writing, group discussions, observation reports and reports on practice) stimulated reflection, this was not enriched by feedback on teaching practice. Mariyam (Chapter 8) clearly did develop during the BA Programme in the traits described above, although her development had started earlier.

It is interesting to contrast Mariyam with the Emirati (and thus local) girls described by Richardson (2004) in preservice teaching practice; uncomfortable with male supervisors and awed by power distance, avoiding uncertainty and unwilling to take risks, fitting Hofstede's (1980) cultural framework, Richardson (2004) argues. Perhaps Mariyam had been similar in some ways earlier in her career, before becoming more confident with age and growing in PK and TSE. Now, with her mind 'open' (MI.7) she did not seem to fit Hofstede's (1980) cultural framework at all. As a mentor, she also sought to reduce power distance and encourage risk-taking; not at all 'directive, judgemental and prescriptive', as Kullman (1999) suggests new mentors often are. Indeed, to facilitate her work she had already developed 'politeness strategies' (Vásquez, 2004) and asked 'why?' questions.

The other curricular areas that are the themes of the five case studies (materials design and groupwork) have not been addressed in the same depth in language teacher cognition research, although comparisons of novice and expert language teachers provide insights; e.g.; into expertise in task design (Johnson, 2003), of relevance to Waleed's story (Chapter 6). Johnson (2003) compared specialist task designers (textbook writers) with non-specialists (experienced teachers studying for MAs) and found certain differences. The better task designers invested more effort in producing rich and complex tasks that were logistically well developed and sensitive to the learners. In contrast, one of the non-specialists was criticized for producing a hurried design that was 'confusing' and 'unrealistic' in lacking clear overall purpose and

contextualization. These are not criticisms one would level at Waleed. His tasks became increasingly more logically structured throughout the research period as he carefully thought through problems while focused on motivating learners to be more active in their learning.

Besides studies of expertise, the narrative studies referred to above, such as Hayes (2005), can provide insights into development in these curricular areas. Hayes' findings about the value of peer learning in teacher education settings resonate when one considers Rashid's negative experiences in this respect (9.2, above). The teacher efficacy literature also casts light on Rashid's case. We can compare his experiences of using groupwork with those of Katie (Mulholland & Wallace, 2001) or relate his drive to support low achievers to that of the teachers working with children suffering from behavioural / learning / emotional difficulties in Henson's (2001b) study. Rashid was caring, sincere, and clearly able to use groupwork for most purposes much more efficaciously than Katie (2.11, above). However, contextual factors and reduced peer learning opportunities limited his growth.

Insights gained from these comparisons between the five teachers' stories and accounts from the literature have shed light on cognitions in curricular areas little researched, and so suggested future research directions. As Waters (2007) argues, to counteract 'native-speakerism', the voices of such teachers need to be heard.

As to these five, their PK growth was considerable, both in terms of particular topics, and more broadly (10.2, above). So, in supporting the development of PK, this unique in-service language teacher education programme in a hitherto generally unexplored geographical context seems to have been largely successful. I discuss the implications for language teacher education in the next section.

11.6 Which characteristics of language teacher education programmes support PK and TSE growth?

Of the three main strategies for in-service language teacher education identified by Roberts (1998) and discussed (in 2.14) above, the BA Programme involved all, encouraging reflection and deep learning as it made use of each. Loop input and discussion were features of taught sessions, practical assignments often involved

teachers in designing tasks and activities, while post-lesson discussions focused on helping them link practice to theory (3.4, above). Risk-taking and reflection were thus encouraged. Wideen et al. (1998, p. 159) argue that programmes characterized by such elements lead to the “flowering of empowered teachers” and the changing of beliefs. The ability to reflect was facilitated by the development of a professional discourse that supported the articulation of ideas, as in Freeman’s (1993) study. Furthermore, reflective skills, such as those described by Malderez & Bodóczy (1999), were encouraged through mentoring. Crucial to this was the sense of trust created by regular contact with RTs through day release sessions, tutorials and school visits (3.6, above). As the programme contained such a strong reflective element, PK relating to every aspect of a learning cycle, as argued (in 11.1) above, was developed.

As to the academic programme, the teachers were helped to develop stronger PK and TSE beliefs in areas of particular interest to them through the programme’s structure. After providing a solid grounding in TESOL methodology, this structure encouraged teachers to study and research areas of interest in the final year (through the options and the dissertation), which helped empower them. As Henson (2001b) argues, if teachers are encouraged to work towards self-determined goals then efficacy growth is more likely to occur. However, some threads within the BA Programme were more successful than others in leading to growth, as argued (in 10.3), above. While the CLT thread involved the recycling of ideas, as new and sometimes more complex concepts were introduced, supporting Fawziya and Waleed in achieving growth in PK and TSE (Chapters 5 & 6), the literacy/reading thread may have inadvertently confused Omar (Chapter 7).

Processes were also important, with Rashid’s disappointments, beside contextual factors, relating mostly to a lack of peer learning opportunities (9.2, above). These were important to the Sri Lankan educators in Hayes’ (2005) study, but less so to graduates of the BA Programme, as Freeman’s (2007) survey of 55 of them found (3.6, above). Nevertheless, Fawziya, Waleed and Mariyam all appeared to contribute meaningfully to peer interaction, with Fawziya and Waleed, in particular, frequently taking on a leading role in this. During break-times in the last year of the course, Waleed was often surrounded by peers, explaining concepts to them.

To support TSE growth, we need to support the development of PK in a warm, supportive environment. If teachers are given the opportunity to experience success in multiple tasks, receive feedback that supports them in reflecting on their work and have access to fresh input, their PK and TSE will grow, leading to the formation of more central and stable GSE beliefs. Contextual demands need to be managed, though, and schools can help by providing supportive environments where teachers can be encouraged to reflect in an open-minded, responsible and whole-hearted way, read about and discuss ideas that help them solve problems in their teaching and formulate strategies that may include the new and daring.

To recap, then, various implications for the design of in-service language teacher education programmes stem from this research. Firstly, my findings demonstrate how valuable the use of a reflective model of teacher education (Wallace, 1991) can be for stimulating PK growth, supporting behavioural as well as cognitive change, and inviting teachers to develop TSE in relation to context-specific tasks. Research suggests that developing behavioural and cognitive change together can be difficult to achieve (Freeman, 1993), and, indeed, it has often been complained that in-service teacher education seems to have a minimal impact on classroom teaching (ibid). I think part of the problem may be that many teacher education programmes unfortunately take teachers away from their teaching contexts, so that they have little opportunity to experiment with new ideas. Such programmes may correspond more closely to the applied science model of teacher education (Wallace, 1991), in that there is greater emphasis on theory than practice. Conversely, other teacher education programmes, influenced by the craft model (ibid), appear to induce behavioural change in teachers, without necessarily having an impact on their corresponding cognitions, as Borg (2006) maintains, after reviewing a study by Gutierrez Almarza (1996). Indeed, teachers in this particular study, on a post-graduate certificate in education programme, seemed to amend their practices to conform to the expectations of lecturers while doing the course, before relaxing them afterwards (Gutierrez Almarza, 1996). Such a tendency to conform was mitigated against in my research as teaching practice was not assessed, though I cannot rule out that the 'Hawthorne Effect' (Cohen et al., 2000) may have had some influence.

Besides possessing the general characteristics of a reflective model of teacher education, the BA Programme encouraged reflection and deep learning in many ways. Input was recycled and support provided in a developing research culture that encouraged teachers to focus on areas they were particularly interested in exploring and so develop PK and context- and task-specific TSE.

More broadly, the programme could be described as constructivist, in that the project created a learning environment conducive to knowledge construction. The eight key features of a constructivist approach to teacher education, as identified by Dangel & Guyton (2004), who focused on teachers in general, were present in the project design: Instruction was learner-centred (including loop input and discussion) and collaborative learning was encouraged, through the use of groupwork in taught sessions and the formation of study groups, while the teachers moved through the programme in mutually-supportive regional cohorts. Analysis of course materials involved problem solving, as teachers adapted them in various ways, e.g.; to create communicative tasks, while the practical assignments themselves could be described as 'authentic', as lessons were created for a real purpose, to actually use in the classroom and reflect upon. Furthermore, field placements were 'extensive', as the teachers were part-time students with reduced 4-day a week timetables, and, finally, many chose to do action research for their dissertations, including all the teachers in my study. From Cohort 5 (the following cohort), all teachers were encouraged to use action research for their dissertations to promote deep learning.

Language teacher education programmes that can be described as constructivist are rare. Of the 40 pre- and in-service teacher education programmes worldwide reviewed by Dangel & Guyton (2004), only one, set in the USA, was developed for language teachers. Chiang's (2008) intervention (2.12, above) was also designed from a constructivist perspective, though, and reported powerful GSE growth in the pre-service teachers. "I really think I have the ability and courage to be an English teacher in the future", one of them told her (*ibid*, p. 1280). While Chiang's intervention (involving each pre-service teacher in teaching only once) was rather more modest than that provided by the BA Programme, it does nevertheless offer support for the argument that language teacher education programmes designed on constructivist

principles can impact GSE (and, by inference, TSE, given the relationship earlier established between the two).

Of course, the BA programme was flawed in some ways. There was simply too much assessment (3.5, above), which Rashid (9.14) commented on, declaring he wanted to focus more of his energies on classroom-based research, and the initial literacy / reading thread (3.6, above) could have been more carefully thought through, on the basis of research evidence that indicates how challenging it is to impact teachers' cognitions in this area (11.5, above).

Nevertheless, I believe that the programme led to such beneficial outcomes that the broad design (described in detail in 3.4, above) could be used as the blueprint for further language teacher education projects around the world aimed at supporting teachers of a similar language and educational level to take a more active role in curriculum renewal. Any such projects would require a similar major investment in resources, but my evaluation of the outcomes of this project, in terms of PK and TSE growth, would suggest that this investment was worthwhile.

11.7 What have I learned about research methodology appropriate for investigating these constructs and processes?

There is a rich tradition of qualitative methodology in investigating PK (e.g.; Connelly et al., 1997). However, in TSE research, qualitative case studies, as called for by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), have only just started to emerge. Potentially, these are very valuable. In Chapter 2 (above), with reference to Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy (2003), I demonstrated how thick description facilitates an understanding of a complex and multi-layered teaching context, allows for an exploration of the teacher's conceptualisation of the task, provides ways of triangulating to assess the depth of TSE beliefs, and offers insights into the relationship between TSE beliefs and other motivational constructs. With reference to Mulholland & Wallace (2001) in the same chapter, I demonstrated how qualitative methods shed light on the relationship between PK and TSE beliefs, and provide insights into the role of efficacy building experiences in influencing these constructs as change occurs longitudinally. In short, when planning the research I felt that qualitative methodology was needed to help me establish links between PK and TSE, examine the basis of TSE beliefs and investigate

their sources. I feel my empirical research has allowed me to do all this, and better understand both the role of reflection in supporting PK and TSE growth, and the complex interplay of TSE and other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and physiological states affecting the quality and quantity of effort put into any given task (11.1.5-6, above).

Qualitative methods have allowed me to produce accounts characterized by thick description to facilitate the vicarious experience of the reader. In constructing these, I have drawn upon data predominantly from observations, interviews and reflective writing, appropriate methods for eliciting TSE, as I have argued (Chapter 4) above. By examining what teachers do and say and write, we can look for congruence, form judgements about the depth of TSE beliefs, consider the impact of contextual factors and look for explanations of behaviour. More narrative studies of TSE using these methods would enrich our understanding, particularly if, from a language teacher education perspective, these focused on little-researched curricular areas. With regard to TSE in general, it would be useful to have narrative studies of teachers of other subjects that explored their TSE growth with particular regard to their developing PK in the subject area.

Other methods for investigating TSE might be appropriate too. For example, if a teacher provided an intense analytic reflective commentary while engaged in a sequence of task cycles, the processes of TSE growth (Figure 4) might become more open to analysis. Unfortunately, this method was suggested to me by my findings only at the conclusion of the study.

Further to this method of investigating reflection in-action in relation to TSE, another avenue I would like to see explored in future research concerns the role of reflection on-action in the development of beginning teachers' TSE as they grow into career teachers (those with at least 4 years' experience, as defined by Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2007). The focus of qualitative and longitudinal investigations into teacher efficacy seems to have been either on teachers in their first year (Nimmo & Smith, 1995, Mullholland & Wallace, 2001) or on experienced teachers (Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2003), with a gap inbetween, including from the first up to the fourth year, which the quantitative research of Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2007)

suggests may be a crucial time. It was, of course, outside the scope of this study to investigate this period of development, so this is simply a suggestion for future research. Indeed, I feel privileged to have been able to work with teachers of experience (8 to 12 years) and maturity (late twenties to early thirties), with the energy and commitment to take on new challenges. Through studying these teachers longitudinally I have gained valuable insights into the nature of their development.

In the following chapter, I summarize my discussion in this, focusing on the study's findings and limitations, as well as highlighting the recommendations that emerged from it.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

12.1 Reflections

When I started this research, my focus was more or less purely on the developing self-efficacy beliefs of teachers. My immediate background was in teacher training, and I imagined that the more practical aspects of the in-service teacher education programme I had just started working on would prove most beneficial to self-efficacy growth. I later found that these elements of the course were indeed valuable. However, as I engaged in the research, gaining a deeper understanding of the change processes that were taking place, I gradually realized that crucial to an understanding of TSE development in such a context was an understanding of growth in the language teachers' PK, which led to a shift in focus. Highlighting this hitherto neglected relationship (between PK and TSE) is, I believe, one of the achievements of this work.

I now summarize findings with regard to PK, TSE, the characteristics of in-service language teacher education programmes that support growth in these areas, and research methodology appropriate for investigating these constructs and processes. Later in the chapter, I discuss the limitations of the study and recommendations arising from it.

12.2 Summary of findings

In the last chapter, I concluded that the BA Programme supported PK growth in relation to each of the main reflective actions that are part of a learning cycle; conceptualising, planning, performing and reflecting (11.1.5). I then made a number of assertions about TSE growth. Of efficacy building experiences, I claimed that physiological arousal is likely to be felt most keenly before challenges that are perceived as particularly new and stressful (11.2.6), and I argued it is important that positive concrete experiences are reflected upon. Otherwise, they are unlikely to have any lasting impact on performance, and their effect on TSE growth will be minimal (11.2.2). I argued, in fact, that deep engagement in reflective practice is crucial to achieving TSE growth (11.2.1). However, I also asserted that TSE growth will occur over the first few years in the more mechanical aspects of teaching, supported by

reflection in-action, even if more deliberative reflection on-action is limited (11.2.4). For their own development, it is important that teachers do reflect critically. If they are unwilling to entertain self-efficacy doubts, attributing failure to external causes, this may have an effect on both their ability to solve their own problems and their TSE in planning. Contextual problems may then loom larger (11.2.5). Dealing with the context is vital, for if contextual challenges cannot be dealt with, TSE growth is likely to be inhibited and frustration may set in (11.2.3). I argued that TSE is task-specific, and that teachers may experience contrasting levels of TSE in relation to distinct tasks engaged in concurrently (11.2.7). However, since many tasks are linked, TSE in relation to any one particular task can be influenced by TSE in related or constituent tasks (11.2.8). There is also a relationship between TSE and GSE. Growth in TSE across a range of tasks may support the development of GSE beliefs, leading to a greater sense of professional competence (11.2.9). Amongst motivational constructs other than TSE beliefs influencing teachers' behaviour, moral responsibility orientations seem to play a particularly important role in affecting the quality and quantity of self-regulated effort (11.2.10).

After making the above assertions, on the basis of findings from research with language teachers and with reference to PK growth in areas specific to their field, I then presented a revised model illustrating growth in language teachers' self-efficacy (Figure 4) (11.3.1). I argued, however, that this model may be of interest not just to those involved in language teacher education but also to researchers into TSE growth in general, and to those investigating the construct in relation to other subject areas. This is because the only published model available seeking to illustrate the process (Figure 1) appears to under-represent the roles of knowledge, learning, doubt and reflection in TSE growth (Wheatley, 2005) (11.3.2). These elements were integral to the design of Figure 4.

Turning next to what I have learned about TSE and its development, I emphasized how empirical data from the research supports Bandura's (1997) conceptualisation of the TSE construct as being task- and context-specific and open to growth (11.4.1-3). Then, building on Fives & Alexander's (2004) contention as to the relationship between self-efficacy and knowledge (2.7), I affirmed that growth in TSE is intimately linked with growth in PK (11.4.4), using examples specific to language

teaching. I further maintained that reflective practice is vital for growth in PK and TSE (11.4.5), and argued that the quality and quantity of effort put into any given task will be mediated by a complex interplay of TSE and other beliefs, moral responsibility orientations, affective and physiological states (11.4.6).

Summarizing these points, I argued that, besides supporting Bandura's (1997) conceptualisation of the TSE construct, my work contributes to the teacher efficacy literature in two main ways; in uncovering links between TSE and other cognitions influencing behaviour, and in demonstrating the need to study PK in relation to TSE. With regard to this second point, I believe my work also makes an important contribution to research into *language* teacher efficacy; building on Chacón's (2005) study in this area that explored links between language proficiency (seen as part of subject matter knowledge) and the self-efficacy of language teachers, finding positive relationships between the two. I found that teachers' PK in use of language while reflecting grew during the three-year programme, together with their TSE beliefs in the same area, thus providing some support for Chacón's (2005) findings. For, as the teachers developed proficiency in using language for professional purposes; in arguing a case more fluently and coherently, in learning to support arguments through using more complex vocabulary (10.2.8), they also became more efficacious in talking about their work, which contributed to the development of stronger GSE beliefs and a greater sense of professional competence (11.2.9). After relating my work to Chacón's (2005) in this way, I then argued that, by investigating TSE in relation to PK growth in various methodological and curricular areas that concern language teachers, my research led into uncharted territory in the study of language teachers' TSE and to new understandings (11.4.7).

Next, I focused more fully on language teachers' PK (11.5), reminding the reader of my cross-case analysis (10.2.14), which revealed substantial though uneven PK growth across the following inter-related areas; the learners and learning, teaching approaches, organizing the class, analysing the coursebook, adapting materials, evaluating lessons and learning, developing reflecting skills and use of language while reflecting, justifying pedagogical decisions, developing reflective attitudes, researching practice, supporting other teachers and coping with contextual demands.

I then explored PK in relation to the specific curricular topics that provided the themes of the five case studies. These topics have generally been little explored. However, I was able to gain insights into Fawziya's development as a communicative language teacher by comparing her development in this with that of teachers described by Sato & Kleinsasser (1999) and Mangubhai et al. (2004). Various studies, including Johnson (1992), shed light on Omar's development in the area of second and foreign language reading instruction. Several studies into reflective practice, all set in East Asian contexts, including Ho & Richards (1993), provided criteria I could relate to Mariyam's development as a reflective practitioner. Johnson's (2003) study of expertise in task design proved useful for putting Waleed's growth as a materials designer in context. Mullholland & Wallace's (2001) account of a teacher's struggles to use groupwork put Rashid's development in using groupwork in perspective. Overall, I concluded, the teachers in my study grew considerably in PK during the course, both in broader methodological terms (10.2.14) and in the specific curricular areas they researched for their dissertations, which were the focus of the case studies. There was unevenness in growth, though, with Omar's development clearly more limited.

I then identified characteristics of the BA Programme that supported PK and TSE growth (11.6). These include the use of teacher education strategies that encouraged risk-taking and reflection, and the structure of the programme itself, as this allowed for recycling of input and encouraged independence in goal setting through the Dissertation in the final year. I argued that these features align the BA Programme with a constructivist approach to teacher education (Dangel & Guyton, 2004), an approach under-used with language teachers, but one that has been found to support GSE growth in pre-service EFL teachers (Chiang, 2008). I argued that, through adopting a constructivist approach to *in-service* language teacher education, the BA (TESOL) Programme achieved success in influencing both teachers' cognitions and practices.

Next I explained how my investigation into the processes of PK and TSE growth had been helped by the use of qualitative research methodology (11.7). Studying qualitative data drawn from observations, interviews and reflective writing enabled me to gain deeper insights into the links between PK and TSE, examine the basis of

TSE beliefs and investigate their sources. I gained a clearer understanding of the role of reflection in supporting PK and TSE growth, and of the relationships between TSE and other cognitions influencing achievement behaviour in specific contexts. Triangulating data from these various sources helped me produce accounts of longitudinal growth that were characterized by thick description, facilitating the vicarious experience of the reader. These accounts were verified as far as possible through member checking and the use of a critical friend. Other tactics, such as deviant case analysis, were also used to enhance the study's trustworthiness (4.9). The study was not without limitations, though, and I summarize these in the next section.

12.3 Summary of limitations

Limitations identified in Chapter 4 (above) included threats to trustworthiness posed by researcher biases, respondent biases and reactivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I tried to overcome these threats by being reflexive in constantly checking, questioning and theoretically re-interpreting findings, as Kvale (1996) suggests (4.8.3). Furthermore, I tried to enhance credibility through using tactics recommended by Lincoln & Guba (1985); prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, the use of a critical friend, member checking and deviant case analysis. However, as argued in 4.9 (above), observation was not as persistent as I would have liked, as my work schedule for visiting schools dictated that there were sometimes lengthy gaps between data gathering opportunities. Accordingly, examples of particular types of classroom behaviour I was interested in were limited. For example, I only saw Rashid manage a reading race once. Consequently, in such instances, triangulation was less achievable, which increased the contestability (Stake, 1995) of findings. There were also limitations in my use of other tactics, such as member checking, partly due to restricted opportunities for carrying this out. Indeed, gender issues interfered (4.9).

I became aware of other methodological limitations subsequently. I realized, for example, that the processes of TSE growth (Figure 4) might have become more open to analysis through asking a teacher to provide an intense analytic reflective commentary while engaged in a sequence of task cycles (11.7). Reading Freeman's (2007) evaluation of the project, I realized, too, I could have used techniques he employed to good effect while data gathering, chiefly the use of ranking tasks in interviews (3.6-7). This may have proved beneficial while I was eliciting from

teachers which aspects of the programme they felt most crucial to their development, as it may have focused our discussions.

To recap, therefore, although I affirm that I made every effort to conduct the research in a rigorous manner, I acknowledge that the data could have been richer in places, while certain methodological procedures, such as triangulation and member checking, could have been more thorough. The findings summarized above (12.2) and the recommendations below (12.4) need to be seen in this light.

12.4 Summary of recommendations

My recommendations relate to in-service language teacher education programmes, as well as to the study of PK and TSE. Regarding the former, I have asserted that, to support TSE growth, we need to support growth in PK. Programmes are needed that embrace a reflective model of teacher education (Wallace, 1991), and encourage risk-taking and deep learning (Wideen et al., 1998), allowing teachers to experience success in multiple tasks while receiving feedback and gaining input that takes them forward. The educational systems they are part of therefore need to allow these teachers space and time in which to develop, which requires careful consideration of their learning / teaching situations. They also require tutoring sensitive to both their needs and to the school contexts they work in, and access to culturally-appropriate 'state-of-the-art' input (Richards & Rixon, 2002) (3.5, above). A constructivist approach (Dangel & Guyton, 2004) is therefore desirable.

My findings suggest that the BA Programme was highly successful in inducing both behavioural and cognitive change, and I have argued that the broad design of the project could usefully be replicated in other geographical contexts to support the development of teachers of a similar language and educational level. Contextual factors and research evidence need to be considered carefully, though, in the fine-tuning of programme design (11.6, above).

Regarding the study of PK, clearly more work needs to be done in little-researched geographical contexts (Hayes, 2005) and with regard to little-researched curricular areas (Borg, 2006), exploring the cognitions of non-native speaker teachers, a group often neglected in the EFL literature (Waters, 2007) (11.5). Knowledge generated by

research is needed to inform the design of teacher education programmes created for this group, as otherwise native-speakerist assumptions may hold sway.

More qualitative research of a longitudinal nature into the growth of TSE is called for. There is a lack of such studies, particularly involving beginning teachers between the first and fourth year, a period in their development that the quantitative research of Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy (2007) suggests may be a particularly crucial time (11.7). Narrative studies exploring growth in TSE amongst in-service language teachers are also needed. These could examine whether the findings presented in 12.2 (above) hold in other geographical and educational contexts.

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Appendix 1: Cohorts of the BA Educational Studies (TESOL) Programme

<i>Cohort</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Number of regional groups</i>
1	April 1999 – April 2002	2
2	December 1999 – December 2002	8
3	December 2001 – December 2004	5
4	December 2002 – December 2005	8
5	December 2004 – December 2007	3
6	December 2005 – December 2008	5

Appendix 2: The University of Leeds BA (TESOL) programme of study followed by Cohort 4 students in Oman (2002-5)

<i>Date introduced</i>	<i>Module</i>	<i>Date assessed</i>
December 2002	Pre-Sessional Course	-
January 2003	Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)	March 2003
January 2003	Language Description for Education 1 (LDE1)	June 2003
January 2003	English For Academic Purposes (EAP)	-
March 2003	Advanced Communication Skills 1 (ACS)	September 2003
June 2003	Tasks in Language Learning	October 2003
June 2003	Discourse for Professional Purposes (DPP)	January 2004
June 2003	Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL)	July / December 2003
July 2003	Stories in Language Learning	December 2003
July 2003	Initial Literacy in English (IL)	April 2004
January 2004	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L)	May / October 2004
January 2004	Language Description for Education 2 (LDE2)	March 2004
June 2004	Technology in Language Learning (TILL)	August 2004
June 2004	Advanced Communication Skills 2 (ACS2)	August 2004 / January 2005
July 2004	Researching TESOL	November 2004
July 2004	Assessing Children's Language Learning (ACLL)	January 2005
January 2005	Teaching Grammar & Vocabulary (TG&V)	March 2005
January 2005	Teaching Reading & Writing (TR&W)	June / July 2005
February 2005	Dissertation	December 2005
June 2005	Two of four Options: English as an International Language (EIL), Materials Design & Development (MDD), INSET & Mentoring, Supplementary Communication Skills (SCS).	November 2005

Appendix 3: Sources of data referred to in the text

A: In constructing a natural history of the research (Chapter 4)

Date	Code
31/1/03	RP (Research Proposal)
24/6/03	RSM.1 (Report on Supervision Meeting 1)
20/8/03	PR.1 (Progress Report 1)
28/8/03	ER.1 (Email in reply 1)
19/9/03	PR.2
12/12/03	PR.5

B. In constructing the case studies (Chapters 5-9)

List of observations

Date	Code
22/2/03	OO.1 (Omar Observation 1)
24/2/03	MO.1 (Mariyam Observation 1)
3/3/03	RO.1 (Rashid Observation 1)
6/10/03	RO.2, FO.1 (Fawziya Observation 1)
12/10/03	OO.2
18/10/03	WO.1 (Waleed Observation 1)
26/10/03	MO.2
21/3/04	WO.2, FO.2
22/3/04	RO.3
12/4/04	OO.3
19/4/04	MO.3
10/10/04	WO.3, RO.4, FO.3
17/10/04	MO.4
25/10/04	OO.4
16/4/05	MO.5
17/4/05	RO.5
18/4/05	OO.5
25/4/05	WO.4, FO.4
12/9/05	OO.6
17/9/05	RO.6
24/9/05	WO.5
2/10/05	FO.5

List of interviews

Date	Code
6/10/03	RI.1 (Rashid Interview 1), FI.1 (Fawziya Interview 1)
12/10/03	OI.1 (Omar Interview 1)
18/10/03	WI.1 (Waleed Interview 1)
26/10/03	MI.1 (Mariyam Interview 1)
22/11/03	WI.2, RI.2, FI.2
23/11/03	OI.2

6/12/03	MI.2
21/3/04	WI.3, FI.3
22/3/04	RI.3
12/4/04	OI.3
19/4/04	MI.3
10/10/04	WI.4, RI.4, FI.4
17/10/04	MI.4
25/10/04	OI.4
1/2/05	OI.5
5/2/05	MI.5
6/2/05	WI.5, RI.5, FI.5
16/4/05	MI.6
17/4/05	RI.6
18/4/05	OI.6
25/4/05	WI.6, FI.6
12/9/05	OI.7
17/9/05	RI.7
24/9/05	WI.7
1/10/05	MI.7
2/10/05	FI.7
30/1/06	OI.8
9/7/06	RI.8, WI.8

List of assignments

<i>Date</i>	<i>Module</i>	<i>Code</i>
26/3/03	Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)	FA.1 (Fawziya Assignment 1)
22/10/03	Tasks	FA.2, WA.1 (Waleed Assignment 1),
9/12/03	Stories in Language Learning	OA.1 (Omar Assignment 1)
17/12/03	Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL)	OA.2, RA.1 (Rashid Assignment 1), WA.2,
14/4/04	Initial Literacy in English (IL)	OA.3,
26/5/04	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), Part 1	FA.3, WA.3
6/10/04	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), Part 2	FA.4
6/11/04	Researching TESOL	FA.5, MA.1 (Mariyam Assignment 1), OA.4, RA.2, WA.4,
12/11/05	Materials Design and Development (MDD)	FA.6, WA.5
12/11/05	INSET & Mentoring	MA.2, RA.3
5/12/05	Dissertation	FA.7, MA.3, OA.5, RA.4, WA.6,

List of feedback corresponding to the above assignments

<i>Date</i>	<i>Module</i>	<i>Code</i>
26/3/03	Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)	FF.1 (Fawziya Feedback 1)
22/10/03	Tasks	FF.2, WF.1 (Waleed Feedback 1),
9/12/03	Stories in Language Learning	OF.1 (Omar Feedback 1)
17/12/03	Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL)	OF.2, RF.1 (Rashid Feedback 1), WF.2,
14/4/04	Initial Literacy in English (IL)	OF.3,
26/5/04	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), Part 1	FF.3, WF.3
6/10/04	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), Part 2	FF.4
6/11/04	Researching TESOL	FF.5, MF.1 (Mariyam Feedback 1), OF.4, RF.2, WF.4,
12/11/05	Materials Design and Development (MDD)	FF.6, WF.5
12/11/05	INSET & Mentoring	MF.2, RF.3
5/12/05	Dissertation	FF.7, MF.3, OF.5, RF.4, WF.6,

Appendix 4: First draft of the beginning of Fawziya's story (using communicative tasks to develop speaking) – October 2005

Fawziya remembers, as a young girl, the house being full of foreign guests. Her father, who worked for the admiralty and had studied in England for five years, had invited British naval officers and their families for the day. Fawziya was attracted by the laughter and the easy informal talk in this foreign language she was learning at school. She wanted “to share with them”, to understand, but she listened and found she couldn't understand, and when she opened her mouth to speak she found she had no words.

Fawziya has often reflected on this experience in the last two years. She has mentioned it to me in interviews at least four times. She recalls her initial feelings of disappointment and hopelessness, of frustration as she wondered what was the use of learning English if she couldn't use it to speak. This has prompted her to think back to how she had learned English in school, focusing on grammar rules, focusing on passing exams. Unfortunately, at school, she had never been encouraged to use the language to talk about herself, her feelings, her likes and dislikes, she reflects. And that is why, when, as a young girl, she met native English speakers in her own house, she had no language to use with them, she feels.

Appendix 5: Research questions and sub-questions relating to Waleed's story, (used between March 2005 and August 2006 before further revision)

Research questions

RQ 1: In which ways has his efficacy in enhancing intrinsic motivation through materials design and use changed during the BA Programme?

Sub-questions:

1a) Can he analyse the course materials provided to assess their suitability for his context?

1b) Can he create materials that are appropriately motivating and challenging for his learners, and can he make practical use of these in a way that enhances learning?

1c) Can he reflect on his materials design and use in such a way that allows for personal development?

1d) Can he explain and justify his use of materials?

1e) Can he enhance the intrinsic motivation of other teachers by encouraging them to design and use their own materials?

RQ 2: What has influenced changes in his efficacy in enhancing intrinsic motivation through materials design and use?

Sub-questions:

2a) Has he been influenced by input on the characteristics of young learners (EDUC 2031), language acquisition and learning (EDUC 2028), materials and task design (EDUC 2032, EDUC 2027, EDUC 3067)?

2b) Has he been influenced by any specific authors?

2c) Has he been influenced by friends and colleagues on the BA programme, by the regional tutor or by Leeds lecturers and teaching fellows?

2d) How have his own direct teaching experiences influenced him?

2e) What else has been influential?

NB. These questions were used as the basis of the matrix analysis (4.7.3, above), influenced the drafting process (4.8.1, above) and were later discussed with Waleed during member checking (4.8.2, above).